

ELIA Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Policy

ELIA rejects racism and systemic discrimination on the basis of gender, sexuality, religion, race, class, ethnicity, age, and ability. As discrimination in its many forms is prevalent in our societies today it influences higher arts education (HAE) institutions.

ELIA continues to raise awareness of the complex and intersectional aspects of anti-discrimination within and beyond the higher arts education sector. As a network organisation, ELIA leads as an example of good practice, through embedding equity, diversity and inclusivity in our core values and through the development and implementation of a clear set of actions and policies. ELIA aims to not only uphold these principles within its own organisational structure, but also, to promote and advocate for them. ELIA strives to inspire its member institutions and other organisations to adopt similar practices, creating a more equitable and inclusive environment for all.

The ELIA Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Policy outlines ELIA's approach to equity, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) across its organisation and activities.

Related Policy Frameworks

ELIA's EDI Policy is in compliance with related Dutch and European Union (EU) laws and regulations. We acknowledge the importance of connecting to broader international movements with a strong potential of creating positive institutional and societal change with regards to anti-discrimination and anti-racism. The most important references informing ELIA's EDI policy are the policy frameworks in place at the European Union and the United Nations (UN). These are outlined in [Annex](#) at the end of the document.

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Definitions

Equity	Equity refers to fair and just practices and policies that ensure all in a community and/or organisation can thrive. Equity is different from equality in that equality implies treating everyone as if they have the same starting point and opportunities. Being equitable means acknowledging and addressing structural inequalities — historic and current — that advantage some and disadvantage others. Equity can be achieved only if everyone starts with equal access to opportunities.
Diversity	Diversity refers to all aspects of human difference, social identities, and social group differences. These include but are not limited to age, caste, civil status, community associations, disability and neurodiverse conditions and medical condition/history, economic or social status, gender, political affiliations, pregnancy, maternity/paternity/parental guardianship, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. There are types of diversity we can see (relating to visible characteristics) and types that we cannot see (relating to invisible characteristics).
Inclusivity	The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised. We will understand inclusivity in the sense of an inclusive community, where everyone feels valued, respected, and supported and gets the opportunity to optimally develop their talents, irrespective of their characteristics, background or preferences. Inclusivity refers to the way that people experience and navigate a community and/or organisation and relates to the sense of belonging and the culture of the referred community and/or organisation.
Inclusion	The action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure.
Accessibility	Accessibility refers to the intentional design and provision of resources, spaces and opportunities to ensure that individuals of diverse abilities, backgrounds, and identities can fully participate and contribute to activities without barriers.

Our Values with Regards to EDI

ELIA values openness, inclusivity and equal opportunity. ELIA rejects racism and systemic discrimination on the basis of gender, sexuality, religion, race, class, ethnicity, age, and ability – to name some categories - both of which are unfortunately still prevalent in our societies, and thus also influence our education institutions.

Our network is grounded on democratic values and a transparent and accountable governance structure. ELIA raises awareness within the sector and beyond regarding the complex and intersectional

aspects of anti-discrimination. ELIA aims to show itself as an example of good practice, taking on an outreach function to other networks as well.

These values apply across every element of how ELIA operates as an organisation, and all the ELIA activities.

Our Aims

We aim to foster a work culture in which every person, irrespective of their characteristics, background or preferences:

1. feels welcome, respected, valued and supported
2. feels as safe as possible and comfortable to come in authentically and thrive and gets the opportunity to optimally develop their talents
3. feels empowered to raise their voice and feel heard, however difficult or challenging the issue

Our Commitments

ELIA commits to:

1. Actively encouraging equity, dignity, fairness, inclusivity and respect for all those who work for or with ELIA in any capacity.
2. Recognising and value individual differences and the contributions of all.
3. Creating a working environment free of discrimination, harassment and violence in all locations in which the organisation's activities are carried out.
4. Taking complaints of discrimination, harassment and violence in the course of the organisation's work activities seriously and act promptly to support the affected person(s).
5. Ensuring transparency in decisions and equality in pay, benefits and job evaluations.
6. Making opportunities for training, development and progress available to all team members so that everyone can develop their full potential.
7. Making reasonable accommodations according to the needs of each individual, for example, accessibility, medical, parenting, caring or other needs.
8. Monitoring and evaluating recruitment, appointment and employment practices and processes to review their effectiveness and appropriateness and address any issues in a timely manner.

9. Reviewing policies on a 2-year timetable to review their effectiveness and appropriateness and address any issues in a timely manner, based on a set of indicators and monitoring systems.
10. Informing and engaging all board and team members about their rights and responsibilities under this policy.
11. Issuing communications and operate with a view to maximising accessibility and inclusivity in language and design.
12. Organising events with attention to equity, diversity, inclusivity and accessibility in all aspects and in respect of all participants and stakeholders, asking for feedback and evaluating for continuous improvement. Stakeholders can include, but are not limited to, the participants, host institutions, Steering Groups, speakers, the ELIA Team and everyone commissioned under the facilitation of the event.
13. Prioritising diversity and inclusion centrally in the organisation's merit-based recruitment.

Our Responsibilities

Every Representative Board and team member shall be made aware of their role in helping the organisation actualise its values, pursue its aims and meet its commitments.

The Board of ELIA has ultimate responsibility for the policy and is responsible for championing EDI.

The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy within the team, including ensuring the implementation, development, monitoring, and review of this policy in collaboration with team members.

Training and Support

To facilitate compliance with this policy, team members will be offered training on topics relevant to equity, diversity and inclusivity annually. The Representative Board will remain engaged on the policies, by including a training session in one of their annual meetings, in the form of a workshop and reviewing the annual report.

Policy Scope

The relevant parts of this policy apply to everyone operating in the ELIA working environment, including employees, contractors, members, speakers, facilitators, guests, volunteers or other stakeholders.

The policy applies to any characteristics, background or preferences for which people are marginalised, including [legally protected characteristics](#) and social positionings in aspects of identity such as, but not limited to:

- age
- caste
- civil status
- community associations
- disability and neurodiverse conditions and medical condition/history
- economic or social status
- gender
- political affiliations
- pregnancy, maternity/paternity/parental guardianship
- racial or ethnic origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Our Supporting Policies and Processes

To uphold and implement the ELIA EDI policy, we have created the following accompanying documents. These documents are established to ensure the translation and integration of the EDI Statement throughout all ELIA procedures, policies, and endeavours. Additionally, they will serve as guidelines for monitoring and evaluating the statement. These documents include:

Document Title	Relationship to this Policy	Last Review Date
ELIA Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Policy	Provides ELIA's positioning on Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity	approved in October 2024
ELIA Statement on Gender Diversity and Inclusivity	Provides ELIA's positioning on Gender Diversity and Inclusivity	approved in October 2024
ELIA Internal Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy	Provides a mechanism for team and board members to report harassment and discrimination within the organisation	approved in October 2024
ELIA EDI Event Guidelines	Contains procedures for ensuring that the inclusivity of ELIA events is considered by all stakeholders involved in the different aspects of event planning and organisation	approved in October 2024
ELIA Event Anti-Harassment Policy	Provides a mechanism for anyone at an	approved in October 2024

	ELIA event to report harassment and discrimination	
ELIA Policy on the Management of Reports of Discrimination / Harassment at Events	Provides a detailed internal process on ensuring any reports of harassment or discrimination received at ELIA events are handled promptly, effectively and with sensitivity	approved in October 2024
ELIA EDI Communications Guidelines	Contains procedures for ensuring that the inclusivity of ELIA's communications is considered across channels	approved in October 2024
ELIA Recruitment Guidelines	Sets out the procedures implementing ELIA's commitment to fair and merit-based recruitment and selection with an active focus on accessibility and diversity	approved in October 2024

Annex: Policy Framework of ELIA's EDI Policy

A key reference in Europe is the [EU's equality and inclusion framework](#), also promoted by the European Commission as 'Building a Union of Equality'. This framework contains five building blocks: [LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#), [Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#), [Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030](#), [EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025](#), [EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation 2020-2030](#). The EU's approach to equality and inclusion is rooted in its Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ([TFEU](#)). Non-discrimination is stated as one of the key points of the treaty, which:

- outlaws nationality-based discrimination (Article 18);
- states the EU will 'combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation' (Article 19);

This is also institutionally supported by the work of the [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights \(FRA\)](#) and the [European Institute for Gender Equality](#).

The UN have many resources and conventions that relate to EDI, for instance, on [inclusion in education](#), the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#). The UN's [Sustainable Development Goals](#) are particularly relevant as a framework. Many different goals relate to EDI to some extent, it might be particularly worth noting [#4 Quality Education](#) [#5 Gender Equality](#), [#10 Reduced Inequalities](#), [#16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions](#). An important aspect of this framework to note is that it stresses for a holistic approach to societal and institutional change. In that spirit, ELIA works towards increased synergies between its Eco-Policy and EDI policy.