



Practice of the Profession

Women in Architecture

ACE Gender Equality Policy Statement

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ACE Gender Equality Policy Statement

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1. INTRODUCTION AND PREAMBLE

DIVERSITY INCREASES THE VALUE OF OUR PROFESSION AND OUR (BUILT) ENVIRONMENT.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT FOR A HEALTHY ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION.

1.1. Existing ACE policy positions

- According to the ACE Mission Statement, its purpose is to: *"Act as the Single Voice for Architects in Europe: "To stimulate effective cooperation between the Member Organisations of the ACE within the context and spirit of the European Treaty, thus giving the profession a single voice in EU affairs while respecting it's rich diversity and cultural identity."*
- According to the ACE Quality Charter 2009: *"The profession is organised in a manner that respects European and local laws, culture and traditions, via regulations that are proportionate, non-discriminatory and transparent"*.
- According to the ACE Deontological Code – Principle 4: Obligations in the interests of the Profession: *"no provider of architectural services shall discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, disability, marital status or sexual orientation"*.

1.2. The benefits of a diverse and equality driven profession's key factors are:

- Improved overall performance
- Competitive advantage
- Better economic results
- Variety of perspectives
- Increased client satisfaction
- Improved performance of social impact design
- Increased creativity

1.3. Context/ Background

- Key facts & figures from the ACE Sector Study
- Key International reference policy documents
 - o [UN SDGs](#) (in particular SDGs 4 + 5+ 8 + 11 + 17)
 - o [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
 - o [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#)

1.4. Definitions of key EDI concepts (arrange the three headings to reflect the order in the acronym - Equality, Diversity, Inclusion)

- ***Diversity:** "is about recognising, respecting and valuing different needs. This means everyone can live their lives free from discrimination, knows their rights will be protected, and has a*



*chance to succeed in life. It is about ensuring equality of opportunity by addressing the barriers that some groups face. It is also about making our world fairer by narrowing the social and economic divides between people. It means understanding that the opportunities we get are impacted by characteristics beyond those protected by legislation”**

- Equality: *is about treating everyone fairly, recognising and respecting differences, including different needs; recognising that people are different and that those differences require us to meet their needs differently. It is also about ensuring equality of opportunity by addressing the barriers that some groups face and making our world fairer by narrowing the social and economic divides between people.*

- Inclusion: *“means removing barriers that stand in the way of participation in society. It’s about taking steps to create equality, harness diversity and produce safe, welcoming communities and cultures. This will encourage new ways of thinking and allow people to speak up, especially to suggest where things could be done better”**

**Source: Anne Cosentino, RIBA*

2. HIGH LEVEL PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES:

- 2.1. Promote gender equality within the architectural profession
- 2.2. Communicate best practices in achieving gender equality
- 2.3. Ensure equality, transparency + fair pay; equal pay for equal work
- 2.4. Promote work-life balance policies (as part of the overall health and well-being goal);
- 2.5. Challenge the long-hours culture
- 2.6. Champion career progression and diverse professional development;
- 2.7. Develop transparent/ fair/ inclusive/ unbiased recruitment, employment processes and conditions:
 - Advertising
 - Recruiting
 - Terms of contract

3. AUDIENCES

The following Specific Recommendations are offered to encourage Member Organisations and in turn their member practices and architects, to adopt diversity- based principles within their core activities, tailored to each jurisdiction.

3.1. Professional Bodies (Institutes / Chambers)

- Advise / Update Members on relevant International / EU Directives & Initiatives etc regarding Equality Legislation and Best Practices;
- Promote gender equitable activities within all Institute programs and activities;
- Demonstrate the value of diversity within the profession including financial incentives to employers and benefits to society;
- Promote to Members fair and equitable recruitment policies and the benefits of equal employment arrangements;
- Champion role models and mentoring within the profession regarding diversity;



3.2 Practices / Architects

- Support flexible career paths and activities;
- Recognise benefits and value of diversity;
- Facilitate transparent recruitment, employment and progression procedures;
- Promote work/life balance culture;
- Be aware of bias language and images in PR materials. The idea that offices can be active bodies that have a role in unaware unconscious to aware conscience

3.3 Employees

- Recognise the relevant diversity context of the profession regarding employees rights
- Promote diversity related work practices;

3.4 Third Parties

This Policy sets out optimum Principles and Recommendations for the Architectural profession which should be respected, promoted, facilitated and encouraged by Industry Stakeholders, Architectural Educational Institutions and other relevant parties.

4. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

4.1. ACE calls on

- All statutory policy makers (International, EU, MS, regional, local levels) to:
 - Share the best practices and the exact knowledge of how the successful countries implemented policies into practice.
 - Invest in funding research programs
 - Adapt regulation embedding gender equality issues in all policies and program
- ACE Member Organisations and Partners to:
 - devise and implement a set of measures and toolkits to implement the gender equality policy at the level of ACE MOs and their members (individual architects and practices) and Partners (Construction industry associations/ educational bodies/ clients)
 - We need to create the main indicators in order to measure the lack of equal treatment between architects of all genders.

4.2. Specific recommendations for applying the principles

- Publication of a toolkit as a helpful and well designed guide to implement the policy (case studies, stories different kind of offices, small offices as well as large offices)
- Organisation of events for the key audiences to build awareness of the policy and the toolkit with its suggested measures
- PR campaign to make this policy and the toolkit visible
- Participation in EU-funded research project to cross-reference the research with issues from professional architectural bodies and practices
- Workshop tailored for the key audiences with application examples for the toolkit
- Exchange the policy with its key audiences