



Inclusion & Diversity Strategy 2018

Poetry Ireland: Inclusion & Diversity Strategy 2018

Poetry Ireland's mission is to connect people and poetry. That mission can only be achieved when we fully represent the diversity of voices within our poetic community.

It is for this reason that Poetry Ireland has embarked on a review and analysis of its activities and policies to ensure poetry from Ireland in all its diversity is visible.

We do not believe this mission to be altruistic; we know that it is necessary for the health and relevance of Irish poetry.

Poetry Ireland has sought out feedback from poets from marginalised communities, with particular consideration to the nine grounds of the Equal Status Acts: gender (including transgender), civil status, family status, sexual orientation,

religion, age, disability, race, and membership of the Traveller community.

We have also sought feedback from poets from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

In response to the feedback provided, we have focused this strategy on four key areas in an attempt to confront and correct the existing inequities in Irish poetry.

This commitment will be met by piloting a series of initiatives during 2018, as well as a schedule of actions for 2019-2020. The piloted 2018 events and initiatives will be reviewed at year-end by the staff and director of Poetry Ireland, and reported to the organisation's Board, with a view to ensuring those successful initiatives are continued and developed in future years.

Theme	Objectives	Actions 2018	Actions 2018-2020
<p>Breaking Down Barriers</p> <p>Poetry Ireland recognizes the importance of highlighting and developing diverse voices. We will encourage poets with disabilities and of all genders, ethnic and social groups to develop and present their work by providing an increased number of specialized opportunities.</p>	<p>Right now, not all poets receive equal opportunities in Irish poetry. To correct this imbalance, Poetry Ireland will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer professional development seminars and workshops on a wide variety of topics for poets falling under the protection of the Equal Status Acts. Poetry Ireland will take steps to ensure that these opportunities are made as physically and financially accessible as possible to everyone who wishes to participate. • Offer specialized mentorship opportunities for poets. • Facilitate networking events for poets from diverse backgrounds. • Seek feedback on an ongoing basis from poets from marginalized groups to assess and modify existing needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A writing workshop geared towards poets of colour was facilitated by Jackie Kay in January 2018. • A writing workshop geared towards LGBTQI+ poets was facilitated by Eileen Myles in March 2018. • A seminar on reviewing poetry will be held in autumn to upskill poetry critics from diverse backgrounds. • We will host a seminar in autumn 2018, responding to the debate concerning gender representation in the Irish poetic canon, featuring papers exploring 'Missing Voices: Irish Women Poets, 16th-21st centuries'. A call for papers will be announced later in the spring. • The 'Access Cúirt' bursary will be offered by Poetry Ireland and Cúirt for an emerging poet from a marginalized community to attend the Cúirt festival in April 2018. • Rafeef Ziadah will deliver a workshop in Poetry Ireland on May 10th. Four of the 12 places in the workshop will be reserved for free attendance by Creative Space and Direct Provision writers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings will be hosted at Poetry Ireland three times a year for poets who face discrimination in Ireland to discuss their experiences and to assess and modify existing plans to combat discriminatory practices. • <i>Poetry Ireland Review</i> will undergo a redesign to make it more appealing to a wider readership. If necessary we will solicit submissions for <i>Poetry Ireland Review</i> from excellent writers from underrepresented groups. We will ask each new editor of the review to write their own inclusive manifesto for <i>Poetry Ireland Review</i>, which will be available on the submissions page. • We will ensure that the submissions process for <i>Poetry Ireland Review</i> is promoted widely to a diverse market, and that our submission guidelines include an explicit invitation welcoming poets from diverse or under represented communities to submit.

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<p>Communication & Outreach</p> <p>Poetry Ireland will be more proactive about developing audiences from diverse communities. We want Poetry Ireland and more broadly the Irish poetry community to represent a space of inclusivity and equality.</p>	<p>In order to achieve this, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Poetry Ireland's commitment to inclusivity is communicated clearly and energetically in all our promotional material and publications. • Build new connections to actively market existing Poetry Ireland resources and opportunities to more diverse communities. • Collaborate with a wider range of organisations to welcome new audiences and broaden the idea of what is considered 'proper' or 'legitimate' poetry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poetry Ireland will run a year-long campaign from summer 2018 – 2019 to increase the visibility of poets of all backgrounds. • Poetry Day Ireland 2018 will digitally spotlight a number of diverse voices. • Poetry Ireland will work in conjunction with organisations such as Mother Tongues to facilitate events that celebrate multiculturalism and multilingualism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poetry Ireland will increase its communications with organisations that work with diverse communities to ensure that the opportunities that we provide are signposted as open to all. • Poetry Ireland will develop ongoing relationships with organisations that have expertise in the field of diversity & inclusion, eg. Artsekta.
<p>Leadership</p> <p>As Ireland's national organisation for poetry, Poetry Ireland has a responsibility to set a standard not only for itself, but for other poetry organisations across the island.</p>	<p>We will meet this objective by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promoting and recognising diversity and inclusion efforts through our online platforms. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poetry Ireland will develop guidelines for its event partners, which will be listed on our website beginning in 2018, and circulated to partners prior to funding agreements.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before confirming financial or promotional support to events, Poetry Ireland will ensure that adequate efforts have been made to meet guidelines around diversity and inclusion. We will ensure that our values around inclusivity and diversity are communicated to all our partners. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The progress of this strategy will be an item on the agenda of every second Poetry Ireland board meeting. Poetry Ireland will utilise our social media platforms to ensure all relevant diversity and inclusion activities are shared and promoted.
<p>Opening Doors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poetry Ireland can take increased steps as a physical and online space to ensure that people from all backgrounds feel that our premises is welcoming. On a practical level, Poetry Ireland's new home at 11 Parnell Square East, Dublin 1, is currently in the process of fundraising to become Ireland's first dedicated Poetry Centre. As an integral aspect of this development, a lift will be added to make the building more accessible. 	<p>Poetry Ireland will nurture a more inclusive environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertaking an assessment of the ways in which it currently does and does not offer equitable access to all. Poetry Ireland will work in conjunction with specialized organizations to ensure that we are equipped to provide a space that is as inclusive as possible. Poetry Ireland will clearly display a code of conduct, requesting that visitors to Poetry Ireland are expected to behave in a way that is respectful and never exclusionary or demeaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poetry Ireland will have practical access advice available on its website from 2018. Poetry Ireland will carry out an online survey in summer 2018 to obtain feedback on what a welcoming space looks and feels like to people from all backgrounds. Poetry Ireland staff will undertake Disability Equality Training in April. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poetry Ireland will work with Access Consultancy Ireland to conduct an access audit. Poetry Ireland will include an increased emphasis on accessibility in our ongoing discussions around the architectural plans for 11 Parnell Square East. From winter 2018 onwards, Poetry Ireland will utilize its social media platforms to livestream an increased number of events. Consideration will be given to the accessibility of our submission and application processes, as well as to the accessibility of our workshops, performances and other events.

If you have any comments or suggestions on Poetry Ireland's Inclusion & Diversity Strategy, please contact us at the details below. We welcome all feedback.

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