

IRC UK BOARD GEDI PLAN

IRC UK BOARD OF TRUSTEES GENDER, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (GEDI)
PLAN 2023-2024



In 2022, IRC UK launched a new [Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(GEDI\) Strategy](#) that sets out how the organisation will continue to make IRC UK a more diverse, equitable and inclusive place to work through to 2024. It summarises work to date driven by IRC UK teams and sets out key gaps – and strengths – that exist. Based on these learnings, it defines IRC UK's strategic focus areas and situates them within the framework of the global IRC GEDI vision and objectives. At the core of this strategy is action: in it, IRC UK commits to 75 targeted actions to drive meaningful and needed progress through 2024. These actions keep a necessary focus on race and ethnicity while strengthening commitments to people with disabilities, to LGBTQ+ staff and clients, and to people with lived experience of conflict and displacement.

As the IRC UK Board of Trustees, we are proud of the progress IRC UK has made to date, yet recognise there is more to do. We endorse the UK GEDI Strategy and the commitments contained within it and believe it will make IRC UK a more diverse, equitable and inclusive organisation that is in turn better equipped to support those we serve.

We will continue to support IRC UK with regard to the Strategy, including by holding management and staff to account in delivering on its ambitions. The Board also plays an important role in living the values of diversity, equality and inclusion in its own work, which we see as a crucial part of good governance of IRC UK.

The IRC UK Board set out its own diversity and inclusion plan in 2021.¹ This plan included a number of actions for Trustees, like appointing GEDI Board champions, including diversity and inclusion as a standing item at all Board meetings, participating in annual race sensitisation and unconscious bias training and providing Trustees' GEDI data and setting goals and timeframes for increasing the diversity of the Board of Trustees. All of these actions were completed or embedded in the Board's work by the end of 2021, including meeting Trustee diversity goals: the Board is currently made up of thirteen Trustees with one vacancy. There are six women (46%) and seven men (54%), four Trustees who identify as people of colour (31%), and three (23%) with lived experience of conflict and displacement.

We are now building on this with a new 2023-2024 Board GEDI Plan, which seeks to complement the strategic focus areas of the IRC UK GEDI Strategy. The IRC UK Board therefore commits to the following actions, aligned to the IRC's strategic GEDI framework of Who We Are, What We Do and What We Say/How We Engage:

WHO WE ARE: We have a diverse and inclusive workforce so our programmes reflect the needs of the communities we serve.

1. Undertake an external Board Effectiveness Review, which includes a review of the Board's approach to GEDI as well as the wider components of the Charity Governance Framework.
2. Continue to nominate two Trustees (ideally of different genders, and at least one person of colour or with other protected characteristics) to be joint Board GEDI Champions. They will be responsible for oversight and support for IRC UK's progress on diversity and inclusion and engage directly with staff and/or staff groups to monitor progress.
3. Continue our commitment to upholding the IRC Way: Standards for Professional Conduct, which is signed by all Trustees and included as part of Trustee induction

¹ IRC UK Board Plan on Diversity and Inclusion, 2021: <https://www.rescue-uk.org/sites/default/files/document/2531/ukboarddiplanfinal.pdf>

4. All existing and new Trustees will continue to participate in at least one annual training on a GEDI topic, e.g. BOND trustee training or sessions with staff.
5. All existing and new Trustees will be asked to provide their GEDI data, and IRC UK will publish Trustee data on gender and race and ethnicity in our annual report.
6. Trustees will maintain and seek to expand the current levels of diversity on the Board achieved, including:
 - Maintaining lived refugee experience on the Board
 - Maintaining the gender balance on the Board
 - Maintaining racial diversity so that at least one third of positions continue to be held by Trustees who identify as people of colour
7. The Board will select new Trustees through a transparent and open public recruitment process, with a particular emphasis on:
 - Ensuring that all Trustee recruitment targets both particular skills which are needed on the Board, and particular protected characteristics, or people with lived experience of conflict and displacement, as recommended by an external Board Effectiveness Review
 - Involving staff representation in the recruitment process for new Trustees
 - Ensure that Trustee vacancies are advertised in online spaces likely to be utilised by a wide pool of potential candidates

WHAT WE DO: Our programmes maximise power for communities that we serve who are respectfully represented and included in our communications.

8. The IRC UK Board will increase its direct engagement with IRC clients, both in the UK and globally. Each Trustee will commit to at least one engagement with UK or international clients over the course of 2022-2024. In the UK, this could include attending in-person events like graduation ceremonies, or online trainings with clients.
9. The Board will consult with members of the UK Community Advisory Group² to seek its input and feedback on the Board's priorities and approach.

WHAT WE SAY AND HOW WE ENGAGE: Our communications, engagement and branding represent the diverse voices at the IRC and the communities that we serve.

10. The People and Culture Committee of the IRC UK Board will share learnings from IRC UK's GEDI Strategy and related activities with the new People and Culture Committee of the IRC Inc. Board.
11. Diversity and Inclusion will continue to be a standing agenda item for discussion at each full Board meeting. The Board will:
 - Receive a report on progress towards the UK GEDI Strategy
 - Ensure that IRC UK annual reports describe GEDI work at IRC UK, and the role of the Trustees in this
12. Board members will consider external communications on GEDI-related themes as appropriate.

² This will be a group of UK clients who will volunteer as advisors to the UK RAI team on programme design. The ambition is that this group can eventually be consulted on other things, as well. Once the group is formed and has capacity to consult on projects outside programming, the Board will seek to engage with them. In the meantime, we will continue to engage with clients informally, e.g. through staff events and meetings.