



# DIVERSITY STATEMENT

At CIVICUS, we know that understanding, appreciating and cherishing diversity is essential to our mission to strengthen civil society and citizen action worldwide. As a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists, we strive within the CIVICUS secretariat and across the alliance to sustain an organisational culture that recognises, respects and values the diversity of our members, partners, staff and volunteers.

For us, this means putting in place, implementing and regularly reviewing policies and practices that safeguard against discrimination, acknowledge and respect everyone's unique identities and belongings - including, but not limited to, a person's nationality, citizenship status, geographical location, linguistic background, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, indigeneity, faith, religion, age, disability status, health status, HIV status, family/relationship status, caregiving status, educational background, employment status, social class and cultural identity.

We are committed to ensuring that respect for diversity, inclusion and the fundamental human rights of every person underpins everything we do, including our decision-making structures, actions and operations.

## MEMBERSHIP AND NETWORKS

CIVICUS is a global alliance that acts together by mobilising our collective knowledge, skills, expertise, influence and power. This alliance is at the heart of everything we do. Our membership is diverse, located in over 170 countries, working on wide-ranging themes and

issues, and including organisations of varied types and sizes, as well as individuals. This diversity and reach, and our commitment to recognising it, is central to our ability to build solidarity across borders, amplify excluded voices, promote the strengthening of a diverse and resilient civil society and advocate for systemic change.

## ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING

Our advocacy and campaigning efforts foster and mobilise solidarity with our members and others who work in challenging contexts, bringing their concerns to wider attention. We connect and amplify diverse voices and promote nuanced, deeply informed and intersectional responses to contemporary challenges. We speak out on issues that impact on fundamental freedoms and social justice, but believe our position is best used to provide platforms for diverse voices, particularly from the local level and excluded groups, and facilitate connections to global audiences and high-level power-holders. We actively seek opportunities to raise our voices on issues of diversity and exclusion, including at events and speaking

engagements we attend, and we refuse to participate in men-only panels.

## RESEARCH

Our research initiatives are collaborations with a diverse pool of researchers, writers, contributors, interviewees and consultants, particularly working with people from excluded groups and the global south. Diversity is a significant research focus, both as a topic in its own right, as in our [2016 State of Civil Society Report's](#) thematic focus on exclusion, and as a lens we apply to all our work. We expand knowledge about how diverse groups of people experience civic space, acknowledging that excluded groups often experience disproportionate civic space restrictions and access to participation in decision-making forums. We believe that by better understanding drivers and enablers that create and perpetuate exclusion, civil society and active citizens can take actions to promote inclusion. Our multidisciplinary approach brings together perspectives from many different academic and non-academic disciplines. We also collect and share disaggregated statistics, including those related to gender, age and geographic location.

## CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

We work to strengthen capacities across the CIVICUS alliance, addressing specific needs identified by members and partners. As part of this, we recognise that excluded groups, and those working with them,

often face multiple layers of capacity challenges. We seek to create and share accessible and useful resources by piloting and testing new learning methods and platforms, working in a range of languages and exploring alternative learning methods. Through partnerships and collaboration, we draw on the knowledge and expertise of a diversity of people and organisations in the global south and north. We recognise that capacity needs exist in all contexts. One of our recent [collaborative toolkits](#) is a workbook for organisations and networks to improve their operations and organisational cultures to respond to social inclusion.

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## EVENTS

Our events are guided by our [Event Principles](#), which outline a roadmap for planning and covering events:

- **Inclusion:** ensuring people relevant to our work and the issue in focus are represented in our events
- **Equality:** reflecting gender equality and non-discrimination in our speakers, facilitators and participants
- **Sustainability:** being environmentally conscious and minimising harm to the planet
- **Transparency:** sharing our successes and failures to contribute to a learning environment
- **Diversity:** bringing together diverse stakeholders to discuss complex problems
- **Participation:** providing space for event attendees to engage in meaningful dialogue

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## COMMUNICATIONS

We work to include a diversity of voices and perspectives in our communications and amplify excluded voices in particular. We seek to communicate the work of the CIVICUS alliance, in all its diversity, through a range of channels, including online,

print, traditional media and social media. We strive to experiment with formats and multimedia approaches that enable diversity of access, and to communicate in an ever-expanding range of languages. We provide editorial guidance and mentorship where needed to enable our members to communicate more effectively. We commit to using inclusive and human rights-based language that respects diversity in all our communications.

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## GOVERNANCE

As part of our governance structure all voting members are eligible to participate in an annual general meeting and to elect our board of directors. We strive for a board comprised of members who bring a diversity of identities, experiences and perspectives into our decision-making. We believe this diversity strengthens our position to plan for the future, make prudent decisions, manage risks, take full advantage of opportunities and be informed by the views of a wide range of civil society. Diversity also contributes to the retention of talented board members and the professional growth of each board member.

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

Our recruitment and selection process is designed to prevent any bias, conscious or unconscious, from influencing our hiring decisions. We advertise positions both broadly and in specific publications to try to reach people from excluded groups. We aspire to ensure that our staffing and decision-making reflects the diversity of the world we live in, including with regards to gender balance and representation of excluded and under-represented groups. We use fair and consistent methods of selection and provide guidance to recruiting line managers on recruitment practices. We try to ensure that all roles are open to

all candidates who may be suitable, that our recruitment process is transparent to all who apply for positions and that our workplaces are accessible. By doing so we aim to select the best person for the job, give all our staff members and volunteers an equal chance to progress in their careers and retain talented staff.

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## FINANCE

We strive to ensure that our financial policies and procedures are applied in a fair, inclusive and transparent manner, both within the CIVICUS secretariat and across the CIVICUS alliance, including with our members, partners, suppliers and consultants. Our supplier selection process, for example, considers questions of gender, ethnicity and race, while our contracts for sub-grants promote fair funding conditions.

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## CONCLUSION

CIVICUS values and promotes an inclusive and diverse working and operating environment. Activities that leverage the unique contributions of individuals, members and partners mean that we can collectively work towards a more just, inclusive and sustainable world. But we know that statements alone will not accomplish this. To become the diverse and vibrant alliance we want and need to be requires sustained commitment and energy, meaningful interactions with our stakeholders, ongoing learning and measurement and the reporting of progress on our diversity and inclusion efforts. We are committed to creating a safe and healthy work environment for all with zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination of any kind.

We invite everyone to hold us to account on our performance against these principles and to suggest additions to this statement of principles. More information on our accountability and online feedback mechanism can be found [here](#).

