

# **MANAV RACHNA INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH AND STUDIES**

**(Deemed to be University under section 3 of the UGC Act 1956)**



**Policy No. MRIIRS-IQAC-PL-EDI/2022-23**

**MRIIRS POLICY ON EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS**

**(Effective from the date of notification)**

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# **MRIIRS POLICY FOR EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSIVENESS**

In pursuance of the provisions of Section 26 of the Bye Laws of Manav Rachna International University, the Board of Management of the Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies hereby makes the following policy relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness.

## **1. SHORT TITLE AND APPLICATION**

This Policy and Guidelines may be called Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness - Policy No. MRIIRS-IQAC-PL-EDL/2022-23 and titled as "MRIIRS Policy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness".

**APPLICABILITY:** This policy shall apply to all the members of the MRIIRS community including all the staff, faculty members, students, researchers and others and they shall be governed by this policy.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, believes in the inherent value of every individual, recognizing the unique qualities, perspectives, and experiences that each person brings to our vibrant community. Guided by our unwavering commitment to fostering an environment of respect, fairness, and acceptance, we establish this **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusiveness (EDI)** Policy to ensure that all members of our community thrive, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances.

The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policy comprises a framework of principles and protocols that an organization embraces to guarantee impartial and equal treatment for all individuals, irrespective of factors such as age, gender, disability, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity status.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSIVENESS (EDI)**

The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusiveness (EDI) Policy aims at :

- I. Promoting Equal Treatment: Ensuring that all individuals are treated with fairness and equity, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, or any other characteristic.
- II. Preventing Discrimination: Creating a work or social environment that actively prevents and addresses discrimination, harassment, and bias based on any protected characteristic.
- III. Enhancing Diversity: Encouraging a diverse range of people to participate and contribute, which can lead to increased creativity, innovation, and different perspectives.
- IV. Providing Equal Opportunities: Ensuring that everyone has equal access to opportunities for growth, advancement, education, and participation, irrespective of their background.
- V. Creating Inclusive Environments: Fostering an atmosphere where individuals feel welcome, respected, and valued for who they are, allowing them to bring their whole selves to the community or organization.
- VI. Promoting Collaboration: Encouraging collaboration among people from diverse backgrounds, which can lead to a richer exchange of ideas and better problem-solving.
- VII. Improving Organizational Performance: Recognizing that diverse and inclusive environments can lead to improved performance, increased employee morale, and better decision-making.

- VIII. Compliance with Laws and Regulations: Adhering to legal requirements and regulations that prohibit discrimination and promote equality.
- IX. Building a Positive Reputation: Demonstrating a commitment to equality and inclusivity can enhance an organization's reputation and attractiveness to potential Faculty, staff and students.
- X. Continuous Improvement: Establishing mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, and improving the effectiveness of the EDI policy over time.

#### **4. SCOPE**

EDI policy is essential to maintain its relevance and effectiveness by reviewing regularly. MRIIRS offers comprehensive guidance documents for its staff regarding an expanding array of these factors. The following points briefly outline these areas:

**Age:** Institution is committed to uphold a non-discriminatory stance towards its employees' age. This implies the equitable and uniform treatment of all employees, irrespective of their age. For example, the institution should not set a specific age limit when hiring, and it should avoid saying no to someone's job or promotion just because they are older.

**Disability:** Disability is a wide idea that covers things like physical challenges, problems with senses, learning difficulties, mental health concerns, and both ongoing and changing health conditions. MRIIRS units shall always make an effort to include people with disabilities, understanding the valuable skills and knowledge they often if required for particular duties. University committed to addressing unjustified discrimination against and promoting the inclusion of disabled people in our workforce and work and public life.

**Gender or Gender reassignment:** MRIIRS is Committed to address gender discrimination. The goal is to advance fairness and eliminate unfair bias, particularly concerning women and girls who often face challenges like social and economic inequality, negative perceptions, isolation, mistreatment, and violence on a global

scale. The institution has dedicated policy for Gender Equity, which ensures all genders study and work in an environment that protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of all. For dealing with complaints the University has a special Internal Complaints Committee, along with this the University has a Women and Gender Sensitization Committee and a Committee for Prevention of Sexual Harassment to empower and bring justice to the victim.

**Race:** MRIIRS shall treat all employees and students fairly, regardless of their race. For instance, the organization should not say no to hiring or promoting someone because of their race. Also, they shouldn't make the work environment uncomfortable for employees of a certain race. Conflict based on ethnic, cultural, and other factors, including stateless people, asylum seeker and refugee status must be avoided to ensure unjustified discrimination on grounds of race / ethnicity and to promote positive and equitable relations between different races / ethnicities and cultures.

**Religion and Belief:** MRIIRS shall develop a better understanding of other people's religions and beliefs and will contribute to improved cultural relations. University is aware of laws that are particularly hostile towards religious minorities. Institution seeks to offer a supportive environment to all colleagues and customers regardless of their religion / belief and working context.

**Sexual Orientation:** MRIIRS shall ensure no discrimination across their Employees, staff and students on the basis of various sexual identities. All units shall be made aware of laws related to anti-discrimination and harassment due to sexual orientation and exert from unfair treatment and bullying based on someone's sexual orientation.

**Marriage and Civil Partnership:** MRIIRS shall treat all employees equally, regardless of their marital status or civil partnership status. Institution shall ensure that employees who are married or in a civil partnership are treated fairly and provided equal opportunities for their growth.

**Refugees and Asylum Seekers:** MRIIRS shall ensure to attend all employees staff and students fairly, without any discrimination based on their refugee or asylum seeker status. This ensures that employees who are refugees or seeking asylum are given equal treatment and opportunities.

**Pregnancy and Maternity:** Institution shall uphold fairness for all employee's staff and students, regardless of their pregnancy or maternity status. This means that employees who are pregnant or on maternity leave should receive fair and equal treatment, with the same opportunities as other employees. For instance, the organization should not decline employment or promotions to someone because they are pregnant or on maternity leave, and it should foster an environment that supports these employees.

**Anti-Discrimination:**

Institution shall be firmly committed to fostering an environment of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) where every individual is treated with the utmost respect and fairness. Discrimination in any form has no place within the organization. University uphold the values of equality and non-discrimination, and recognize the inherent worth and dignity of all people, irrespective of their backgrounds, identities, or characteristics. EDI policy stands as a testament to our unwavering dedication to creating a workplace that is free from bias, prejudice, and harassment.

Institution shall firmly stand against any discriminatory practices and pledge to uphold these principles in all aspects of our operations, interactions, and decision-making processes. Through ongoing education, open dialogue, and a collective commitment, Institution strives to build a diverse and inclusive community where each individual's unique contributions are celebrated and valued.

**Anti-Harassment:**

MRIIRS shall steadfast in its commitment to maintain an environment of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness (EDI) that is free from all forms of harassment. Institution believes in fostering a safe and respectful atmosphere where every

member of our community can thrive. Harassment, whether verbal, physical, visual, or written, undermines the core values and will not be tolerated. We are resolute in our stance against any behavior that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment for individuals based on their backgrounds, identities, or characteristics. EDI policy of MRIIRS underscores its dedication to nurturing a culture where mutual respect, empathy, and understanding prevail. Through clear communication, education, and prompt action, MRIIRS is committed to eradicating harassment from the institution and ensuring that every person's dignity and well-being are upheld.

### **Inclusiveness**

University believes in the creation of a barrier-free, inclusive environment that is right based, values diversity, is free from unlawful discrimination or harassment and ensures equality of opportunity, dignity and respect for all irrespective, of his or her disabilities / disadvantage / special needs and challenges.

The University shall extend all the necessary facilities to make the campus barrier free and accessible for Specially abled students. All the details shall be made available in the form Guide/Handbook for Specially abled Students.

Manav Rachna holds the responsibility to demonstrate inclusivity among students, employees and staff by providing an opportunity to display and share their own culture by enhancing representation of all communities. The university shall treat everyone fairly and allowing the same opportunities to all regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or background.

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

MRIIRS ensures that appropriate arrangements are made for both staff and students with disabilities. Moreover, allocation of a specific section on the ground floor of the hostel premises shall be ensured for staff and student with disabilities. Within the campus hostel, various amenities such as wheelchairs, tactile paths, ramps, and blind sticks shall be provided to enhance accessibility and convenience for disabled students and staff members.



## **Non-Discriminatory Admission Rules**

MRIIRS prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, political belief or affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under Indian law in any aspect of the access to, admission, or treatment of students in its programs and activities, or in employment and application for employment. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, MRIIRS shall make reasonable adjustments in its policies and practices to ensure equal opportunity and access for qualified students, employees, and members of the public to applicable programs, services, activities and facilities.

## **5. EXIGENCY, IF ANY**

Notwithstanding anything stated in this Policy, for any unforeseen issues arising, and not covered by this Policy, or in the event of differences of interpretation, the Vice-Chancellor may take a decision, after obtaining if necessary the opinion/advice from the Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee. The decision of the Vice-Chancellor shall be final.

## **6. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP'S)**

Implementing an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusiveness (EDI) policy involves a strategic approach to ensure its effectiveness and integration into the organizational culture. Here are some key Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to consider for successful EDI policy implementation at MRIIRS:

1. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the policy.
2. Collecting and analysing relevant data to guide in planning and programming.
3. Awareness and communication plan to inform all stakeholders about the EDI policy. Utilize various channels to raise awareness, share updates, and foster understanding about the importance of EDI.

4. Design and deliver EDI training programs for faculty, staff, and students. These programs should cover topics such as unconscious bias, inclusive language, and cultural competence to enhance awareness and skills.
5. Review and enhance curricula to ensure diverse perspectives and introduce course related to Diversity and inclusiveness enhance the awareness among the students.
6. Review and revise recruitment and hiring processes to ensure fairness and minimize bias. Implement strategies to attract and hire individuals from underrepresented groups.
7. Develop clear procedures for providing reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities. Ensure that facilities, services, and digital content are accessible to all.
8. Provision of Adequate funding for the students with Disabilities. Dr. O.P. Bhalla Foundation stands as unwavering inclusivity and equal opportunities in education. In pursuit of this noble mission, the foundation ensures the provision of substantial financial support tailored to the unique needs of students with disabilities. Recognizing the importance of leveling the playing field, the foundation's unwavering commitment to adequate funding empowers these students to excel in their educational journey. By extending a helping hand through targeted financial assistance, the Dr. O.P. Bhalla Foundation not only transforms lives but also paves the way for a more inclusive and equitable educational landscape.
9. Establish a confidential reporting mechanism for incidents related to discrimination or bias. Ensure a swift and fair response to address such incidents.
10. Forge partnerships with external organizations focused on EDI. Collaborate with local communities to create mutually beneficial initiatives that promote diversity and inclusiveness.
11. Regularly assess the effectiveness of EDI initiatives through surveys, focus groups, and feedback mechanisms. Use insights to refine strategies and address emerging challenges.

By implementing these SOPs, MRIIRS shall effectively translate its EDI policy into concrete actions that foster a diverse, inclusive, and equitable learning and working environments for all its members.

## **7. REDRESSAL OF COMPLAINTS AND ISSUES COMMITTEES/CELL**

The University based on the policy has formed formal bodies for awareness and for redressal of complaints and issues. These constituent bodies are:

i) **Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee:** The aim of constituting this Committee is to implement policies and organize programmes related to equity, diversity, inclusion and human rights on campus. The committee would organize awareness drives, campaigns, seminars, panel discussions, workshops etc for this purpose.

ii) **Internal Complaints Committee** – In pursuance of UGC (Prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions) Regulations, 2015 with Sexual Harassment of Women at workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013, Internal Complaints Committee is constituted to deal with complaints related to sexual harassment at work place.

The policy of the University encompasses people from all genders and any aggrieved person belonging to any gender from Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies can approach the committee.

The Internal Complaints committee to be formed by the Vice Chancellor would be formed as per the UGC /Govt. of India guidelines.

iii) **मनोव्रति: Counseling and Wellness Centre** – is a critical and pioneering undertaking for enhancing psychological, mental, emotional and spiritual health and wellness. The मनोव्रति: Counseling and Wellness Centre consisting of clinical and counseling psychologists of the University will undertake counseling sessions for Staff and students of all genders to help them cope and deal with various issues they are facing with respect to gender, Mental health issues and disabilities . It would also undertake training for the issue.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusiveness (EDI) policy for Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies (MRIIRS) stands as a testament to the institution's unwavering commitment to creating a harmonious, respectful, and enriching environment for all members of its community. By embracing the principles outlined in this policy, MRIIRS reaffirms its dedication to nurturing an inclusive ecosystem that celebrates the unique qualities, perspectives, and experiences of every individual.

Through this policy, MRIIRS strives to uphold the values of fairness, equality, and respect, ensuring that no one is marginalized or discriminated against based on factors such as age, gender, disability, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity status. This commitment to diversity and inclusion serves as a foundation for fostering collaborative learning, innovative thinking, and holistic growth among students, faculty, staff, and visitors.