

Scouts Australia's Diversity and Inclusion Standards

Version 1, August 2020



Diversity and Inclusion

Objectives and Context

The objectives of these Standards are to:

Ensure Scouts Australia and its members embrace the diversity of our communities, and inclusion that enables Scouting for all, in line with our Promise and Law; and Demonstrate our organisational commitment to diversity and inclusion as a responsible part of the Australian community.

These Standards provide overarching diversity and inclusion direction for all Scout Branches and formations in Australia. Branches are also to ensure their relevant policies and practices conform to the legislative requirements of their jurisdiction. Where local legislation mandates prescribed actions or other duties, that legislation is to apply.

The development of these Standards has been through reference to several other organisation's policies, and the working documents and direction coming from the World Organization of the Scout Movement. As community standards and legislation changes over time, so will these Standards; it should be regarded as a 'living' work that will be updated from time to time, and supported by other documents and tools to ensure Scouts Australia achieves and maintains best practice.

This document should be read and applied with reference to the related updates in Scouts Australia's Policy and Rules (P&R), with supporting tools (procedures, guidance documents etc.) to be provided from time to time through the National Sustainability Toolkit.

Policy Statement

The Scout Association of Australia (Scouts Australia) is inclusive of all (within the scope of its membership) regardless of gender, sexuality, race, spiritual beliefs, abilities or socioeconomic status and does not tolerate any form of harm, abuse, exclusion or neglect. Scouts Australia embraces the diversity of its community, aiming to reflect this diversity through its policies and practices, and provide inclusion that ensures access to Scouting for all.

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Standards

The following standards should be followed when applying the policy:

Specialist groups

Scouts Australia will encourage and support inclusion of people from all cultural and spiritual backgrounds and abilities into mainstream, existing Scout Groups. However, there is provision for Specialist Groups that meet particular cultural, spiritual or disability support needs of their members, providing those groups remain open to all youth members.

People with Disability

Scouts Australia provides for the admission of young people with physical, mental, intellectual, neurological or sensory impairments as members of regular Scout Groups, or as members of Specialist Groups. Scouts Australia will endeavour to provide reasonable adjustments to enable participation of people with disability on an equal basis as others. This may include (for example) reasonable physical adaptations to infrastructure such as halls or campsites to improve accessibility, adaptations to communication methods, adaptations to delivery of the program and implementation of the award scheme, and supporting involvement of support people to assist with youth participation. In some cases, youth with high support needs may be better suited to membership of specialist disability groups which have tailored equipment and specialised leaders.

Gender

Scouts Australia is open to all, regardless of gender identity, and gender diversity is supported and respected. Genders are integrated for the delivery of the youth program in all sections to achieve the goal of promoting equality, mutual acceptance, understanding and respect. Some activities may be conducted in gender-specific groups, where this is necessary for cultural or spiritual reasons.

Transgender or gender diverse members should be supported to use ablutions and changing facilities in line with their affirmed gender identity, or gender-neutral facilities if available and preferred. Sleeping arrangements should align with what transgender and gender diverse members are comfortable with, in line with their affirmed gender identity. For minors, this should be in consultation with their Parent(s) or Guardian(s).

When updating/ building facilities, if financially viable, preference should be given to suitable gender-neutral bathroom facilities that provide individual privacy (rather than gender-based bathrooms).

Financial hardship

Scouts Australia recognises that membership of the Movement incurs a cost to members and their families. Scouts Australia's policy is that membership should not be denied on the basis of financial hardship or the inability of a member or potential member to meet the cost associated with participation in the Scout Program.

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Scope

These Standards (and any related procedures) applies to all Members of Scouts Australia, Adult Helpers & Supporters, Employees, as well as Young People and other community members who may participate in Scout activities from time to time.

The Standards recognises the shared roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders of Scouts Australia in supporting diversity and inclusion in Scouting, and requires that we all uphold the highest standards of equity and respect for all persons. Branches are required to ensure that all relevant State-based policies and procedures are consistent with this Standard, as well as applicable State-based legislation.

Definitions

Most definitions for this Standard can be found in the current version of Scouts Australia's Policy & Rules and 'Child Protection Policy and Prescribed Procedures' (CPPPP). Definitions not included in Policy & Rules or the CPPP (or interpreted differently in this Policy) are outlined below.

Term	Definition
Diversity	The concept of diversity encompasses recognising people as individuals, understanding that each one of us is unique, and respecting our individual differences. These differences may be based on age, gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, philosophy, abilities and disabilities, language, religion/spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, geographical areas, experiences, viewpoints, health status and backgrounds. ¹
Equity	Ensuring everyone is treated in a fair manner (according to their circumstances and individual needs) and adopting practices which provide everyone with equal opportunities to succeed.
Gender	The way in which a person identifies or expresses their feminine or masculine characteristics.
Gender identity	A person's deeply held internal and individual sense of gender. ⁴ A person's gender identity or gender expression is not always exclusively male or female and may or may not correspond to their sex. ²
Inclusion	Inclusion implies valuing the diversity of individuals, giving equal access and opportunities to all and having each person involved and participating in activities to the greatest extent possible ³ .
Reasonable Adjustment	Reasonable adjustments refer to changes made to enable a person to safely and productively participate on an equal basis as others. To determine whether an adjustment is considered 'reasonable', the organisation must consider the need for the change with the expense or effort involved in making the change. If an adjustment requires a disproportionately high expenditure or disruption it is not likely to be reasonable. ⁴
Respect	Treating individuals fairly, courteously and with consideration, acknowledging differences in opinion or approach, ensuring they are free from harassment and bullying.

¹ Diversity in Scouting (WOSM subpage), accessed 13 October 2018 (<https://www.scout.org/node/310936/subpage/329201>)

² Australian Human Rights Commission, 2011, Addressing sexual orientation and sex and/or gender identity discrimination: Consultation Report

³ Inclusion in Scouting (WOSM subpage), accessed 13 October 2018 (<https://www.scout.org/node/310936/subpage/329171>)

⁴ Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (2019) "Reasonable Adjustments" (webpage), accessed 13 October 2019 (<https://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/discrimination/exceptions-exemptions-and-special-measures/reasonable-adjustments>)

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Background and Commitments

The World Organization of the Scouting Movement (WOSM) has a clear commitment to ensuring diversity and inclusion, in line with WOSM's Vision 2023 and Triennial Plans, as well as the commitments to the United Nations (UN) Women's HeForShe movement and Global Goals for Sustainable Development (the SDGs). WOSM is working towards ensuring that Scouting is truly open and accessible to all, better reflecting the composition of our communities and different societies in our countries. Scouting is proud to have given generations of young people equal opportunities to grow and develop their full potential through empowering and enriching experiences regardless of their background.⁵

Scouting strongly opposes all forms of prejudice and discrimination of any kind that could threaten a person's rights and freedom, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Many World Scout Conferences have passed resolutions in support of diversity and inclusion, including the 1977 Conference which reaffirmed their support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In Australia we have opened Scouting to all regardless of gender for over thirty years, and provide programs that embrace the diversity of our communities and aim to be inclusive of all abilities.

In addition to these commitments relating to diversity and inclusion, we also have additional legal responsibilities, some of which are covered by existing Scouts Australia policies (such as our Child Protection Policy and Prescribed Procedures). As our approach to diversity and inclusion is embedded across many aspects of Scouts Australia's practice, it is important to consider these policies as part of the way we embrace diversity and ensure inclusion.

In line with Scouts Australia's Values, Goals, Principles and Law set out in Policy and Rules, all adult and youth members, supporters, helpers and employees are committed to embracing diversity and ensuring inclusion. This Standard does not articulate a new position for Scouts Australia and its Branches – it just brings together and clarifies what has been the accepted approach for several decades.

Scouts Australia's members and supporters are respectful, ensuring that they do not discriminate against people on the basis of race, geographic or ethnic origin, religious or spiritual belief, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital or family status, mental or physical ability, health status, educational background or socioeconomic status, except where specific exclusions are necessary and permitted by law (for example, see Scouts Australia's Child Protection and Prescribed Procedures).

For further support on putting this Standard into practice, please visit the National Sustainability Toolkit for guidance documents, example procedures, checklists and other tools. These will be developed and revised from time to time to reflect current legislation, issues, and community standards.

⁵ WOSM Diversity & Inclusion website, accessed 13 October 2018 (<https://www.scout.org/diversityandinclusion>)

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Australian and State Legislation

Scouts Australia and its Branches always comply with the relevant State, Territory and Commonwealth legislation and standards. The following is a list of major current legislation relating to diversity and inclusion:

Commonwealth legislation⁶

- » Age Discrimination Act 2004
- » Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- » Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- » Fair Work Act 2009
- » Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- » Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- » Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act 2013
- » Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012

State and Territory legislation⁷

- » Australian Capital Territory – Discrimination Act 1991, Human Rights Act 2004
- » New South Wales – Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- » Northern Territory – Anti-Discrimination Act 1996
- » Queensland – Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- » South Australia – Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- » Tasmania – Anti-Discrimination Act 1998
- » Victoria – Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001
- » Western Australia – Equal Opportunity Act 1984, Spent Convictions Act 1988

⁶ Commonwealth Anti-Discrimination legislation, accessed 18 October 2018 (<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/legislation>)

⁷ State and Territory Anti-Discrimination legislation, accessed 18 October 2018 (<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/employers/good-practice-good-business-factsheets/quick-guide-australian-discrimination-laws>)

