



Equality, diversity and inclusion
strategy 2024-26



Introduction

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Everyone is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. The ability to live and work without prejudice is a fundamental right, regardless of your background, identity and experiences.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is integral to the work of the FDA. Our approach is based on intersectionality and social justice principles. Intersectionality means understanding the ways in which multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage intersect, such as those based on race, gender and disability, and how this impacts our members and colleagues. We embed intersectionality in our work by listening to others, examining our own privileges, asking questions about who may be excluded or adversely affected by our work and taking steps to remedy this. Equally, we must take measurable action to invite, include and centre the voices and work of marginalised individuals.

The FDA is focussed on improving our members working lives, for fairness and equality in the workplace and beyond. Challenging discrimination and winning equality is at the heart of everything the FDA does. Besides the right not to be discriminated against or bullied, fair treatment also includes dignity at work, access to opportunities and equal working conditions and pay.

We're committed to being an inclusive union where everyone belongs. We'll only achieve this if we advance equality, diversity and inclusion for everyone.



The right to fairness and equality

Employees are protected against discrimination and unfair treatment by the Equality Act 2010 and relevant regulations in Northern Ireland. The Equality Act contains something called the public sector equality duty, which requires public bodies to actively promote equality and eliminate discrimination.

If a member has been discriminated against or treated unfairly at work, FDA negotiates with employers on a member's behalf, offers legal help and makes employers aware of the law and where necessary will pursue employment tribunals on behalf of members. The Equality Act makes it unlawful for employers to treat you unfairly because of:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

It also may be unlawful for employers to have a rule, policy or practice that someone is less likely to be able to fulfil than other employees because of one of the reasons above.

How the FDA fights for fairness and equality

We encourage all members to join the discussion on how to provide public services and how equality can be promoted when delivering them.

The FDA works with employers, universities and members to promote social mobility through our public sector mentoring and development scheme to ensure the civil service can be representative of the public it serves.

The FDA has a history of winning on equality, including:

- helping a member with a disability to change their department's HR policy;
- supporting a member in working with civil service HR to create a new guidance package and special leave rules following a miscarriage;
- assisting an FDA health and safety rep in updating her department's stress policy; and

- working with a member who'd been bullied at work to produce a reps' guide to lobbying for change around workplace bullying.

We continue to fight against discrimination wherever we encounter it and regularly help members challenge unequal or unfair treatment, including all forms of prejudice and discrimination, racism, bullying and harassment and equal pay.

Language and terminology

Please note that this strategy was written in 2023 and language around equality, diversity, and inclusion is constantly evolving. Usage of terms may have changed during the period of the strategy and we will keep our website and strategy updated with any appropriate changes.



The FDA equality, diversity and inclusion strategy 2024-26

Equality, diversity and inclusion is central to everything that the FDA does

What will this look like by 2026?

Members will know about the work we're doing in this space and the impact it is having.

We will have a good understanding of our demographic data, where there are opportunities to increase our presence and where we need to diversify our representation.

We will influence employment and HR policies which impact our members to avoid barriers to inclusion, and support local branches and sections to take this work further.

We will collaborate with employer networks and union affiliates to ensure our influence is broad, and that our standing as experts in this space is underlined.

We will seek to influence the development of equality legislation and guidance.

We will engage with the TUC, through equality conferences and collaborative work, using our influence as an affiliate to shape the agenda.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion subcommittee (EDIC) of the FDA Executive Committee (EC) will identify our next priorities and work programme by examining member needs.

We will develop members' skill sets in effective management and leadership.

How will we get there?

We will develop a comprehensive communications strategy and find the best way to cascade information across the union.

We will ensure members, at all levels, have opportunities to influence, develop and engage with our equality work, prioritising listening to feedback and lived experiences before identifying ways forward.

We will engage with the Government People Group (GPG) and Civil Service Diversity Strategy (CSDE). We will engage and negotiate with employers on HR policies. We will develop member-led focus and working groups for key projects and increase member engagement within employer consultation structures.

We will engage with our affiliates and civil service staff networks to listen to their perspectives and experiences, and identify opportunities to support and collaborate.

We will work with appropriate bodies to lobby for change.

We will send delegates and submit motions at TUC equality conferences and encourage members to contribute and participate.

We will undertake an annual equality analysis to present to EC.

We will deliver FDA Learn training on EDI matters, Women into Leadership and Ethnic Minorities into Leadership events.



We bargain effectively for equality within workplaces, removing barriers, tackling discrimination and lobbying for change

What will this look like by 2026?

We will provide regular guidance and briefings for our negotiators and representatives to ensure they are well-briefed and able to secure local improvements.

We will ensure pay and grading structures are equality proofed with regular equal pay audits, using data to ensure equity.

We will monitor casework to pick up on common issues where we can and ensure systemic issues are challenged.

We will campaign and work on priority issues for our members.

How will we get there?

We will produce quality, reliable publications on issues across the EDI spectrum in consultation with our expert representatives, which provide insights into the experiences of our members and outline tangible suggestions to improve working conditions.

We will use our communications resource to distill information in an accessible format that puts power into the hands of our local representatives.

We will support local branches and sections to ensure employers undertake equality audits and implement action plans for change.

We will provide networking opportunities to share good practice, develop ideas and listen to lived experiences.

We will consistently monitor the data produced by the civil service, identify trends and collaborate with the employer to outline priorities and identify actions to make improvements.

The EDIC will develop and implement a work programme to both ensure relevant EDI Annual Delegate Conference (ADC) motions are actioned and to pursue equality based campaigns.



We're a growing union, full of passionate activists, who are representative of our membership and the broader civil service

What will this look like by 2026?

We will have a network of dedicated equality reps across our branches and sections.

We will have a membership that reflects the diversity of the civil service.

We will identify and develop a diverse pool of future reps and leaders within the membership.

We will seek to reflect and profile the diversity of our membership and the civil service in our communications and our website.

How will we get there?

We will continue to roll out quality training for new equality representatives. We will create new training opportunities and bespoke resources, driven by the priorities of our members through FDA Learn.

We will use our equality work to drive our ongoing organising and recruitment campaigns by supporting local events.

We will operate a development scheme for underrepresented members (ethnic minority, disabled, LGBT, and women members) to help identify and develop a diverse pool of future leaders within the membership.

We will review our communications strategy and content for our new website to ensure we represent our members in all their diversity.



**For more information on the FDA's equality,
diversity and inclusion work, visit
www.fda.org.uk/Equality
or contact us at
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