![Ontario Council for International Cooperation (OCIC) logo]

ANTI-OPPRESSION POLICY

1. Preamble

The *Ontario Council for International Cooperation (OCIC)* is a membership association of Ontario-based, not-for-profit, voluntary organizations and individual associates working in both the North and South for global justice. As a Council, OCIC strives to increase the effectiveness and collective impact of its members' efforts to promote sustainable and people-centered development in a peaceful and healthy environment, and to educate and engage the Canadian public on global issues.

OCIC's Development Principles recognize that global justice requires the transformation of social structures and changes in human relations. With this Anti-Oppression Policy we outline strategies for the Council to go further than our Development Principles, to move from principle to practice.

We want to thank our members for sharing their policies with us and those in the broader community whose work has also contributed to the development of this document. This policy is a living document that is meant to be re-examined and re-configured as part of an evolving process which will reflect changes in thinking surrounding anti-oppression. We invite constructive feedback and from our members and the larger community to assist us in constantly improving our practice.

This policy will not automatically make OCIC oppression-free, eliminate oppressive organizational structures and personal behaviours, or erase the grievances of previously oppressed and marginalized people. This policy aims at informing and increasing our commitment to addressing and confronting oppressive behaviour and systems. We intend that our membership can use this policy as a starting point to create and adopt Anti-Oppression policies and practices for their own organizations.

2. Definitions

- Discrimination is the treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit and that can be used to privilege (special treatment in favour of) as well as disadvantage (special treatment against) a particular group or individual.
- Oppression is the use of power or privilege by a socially, politically, economically, culturally dominant group (or groups) to disempower (take away or reduce power), marginalize, silence or otherwise subordinate one social group or category.
- Systemic Oppression consists of practices, policies, laws and standards that disadvantage a particular group or category of people.
- Individual Oppression is demeaning and oppressive behaviour towards and treatment of a particular group or category of people, expressed through individual attitudes, beliefs and values.
- Anti-Oppression is the work of actively challenging and removing oppression perpetuated by power inequalities in society, both systemic oppression and individual expressions of oppression.

3. Policy Principles

OCIC's Anti-Oppression Policy is based upon the following principles:

- To actively challenge systemic and individual oppression as a result of power inequality expressed through attitudes, beliefs, values, and actions.
- To promote international cooperation practices that include the elimination of all forms of inequity, exploitation, and discrimination based of peoples and individuals based on factors including: age, race, colour, culture, religion, ethnicity, language, ability, socio-economic class, ancestry, gender identity and expression, sexuality, family status and residency/migratory status.
- To integrate equity, equality, inclusiveness, access and respect in all organizational decision-making processes, day-to-day practices, and programming.

4. Strategies

Personnel
- Every employee will be treated without any discrimination, interference, restriction or coercion in hiring, firing, training, upgrading, promotion, transfer, lay-off, recall, discipline and ongoing management regardless of age, race, colour, culture, religion, ethnicity, language, ability, socio-economic class, ancestry, gender identity and expression, sexuality, family or marital status, number of dependents and residency/migratory status.
- OCIC will actively seek and invite applicants for volunteering, employment, board and committee membership from diverse communities and partners.
- The board of directors will select new staff from a field of candidates with the requisite knowledge and experience in managing or working in a culturally diverse workforce.
- Through the annual performance review, all staff will be evaluated in helping OCIC achieve its goals for anti-oppression.

Programs
- OCIC acknowledges that programming inequities exist and therefore is committed to working to ensure that all members, volunteers, staff, board members, partners and funders see themselves and their needs reflected in the programming.
- OCIC will adopt an overall program framework that strives for equity, social justice and an end to all forms of oppression.
- OCIC will ensure all program materials or practices are assessed for discriminatory bias, stereotyping, marginalization or exclusion, and revised as necessary.
- OCIC will actively seek collaboration with members, diverse community partners and participants in program development, activities, events, working groups and committees.
- OCIC shall provide adequate resources and training to assist all staff, volunteers, board members, and OCIC members to design and use programming effectively in order to promote critical thinking and to challenge all forms of oppression.
- OCIC will work using a consensus-based approach where possible in program committee meetings to ensure equal access for all involved in decision-making processes.

- OCIC will strive to create a positive, safe, inclusive, and physically accessible space for all meetings, orientations, trainings, gatherings, and conferences.
- OCIC will screen all content submitted for inclusion in any external communications for language or ideas that can be perceived as discriminatory or oppressive.
- OCIC will use external communications as an opportunity to challenge bias, discrimination and oppression.

Governance
- OCIC will identify and strive to overcome barriers that may prevent individuals from diverse communities from becoming board members and/or accessing its services.
- OCIC's board of directors nominations committee will recruit board nominees that represent the diversity of the province of Ontario.
- New members of the board of directors will receive an orientation to the mission, vision and policy statements, organizational goals, board functions and responsibilities with respect to anti-oppression.
- Board members will be accountable for providing leadership in helping the organization fulfill its mission and goals relating to anti-oppression.

Membership
- Every member will be treated without any discrimination, interference, restriction or coercion regardless of age, race, colour, culture, religion, ethnicity, language, ability, socio-economic class, ancestry, gender identity and expression, sexuality, family or marital status, number of dependents and residency/migratory status.
- OCIC will actively seek and invite applicants for organizational and associate membership from diverse communities.
- The membership committee will seek feedback from members on issues related to inclusion and the removal of barriers to their active participation in the Council.

Policy
- The development of all OCIC policies will occur within an inclusive and anti-oppressive framework.
- OCIC policies will be revisited by the board of directors and staff to ensure that they are reflective of current values.

Sustainability
- OCIC will screen all potential sources of funding for alignment with OCIC's anti-oppression model and will endeavour to avoid partnerships with companies and organizations which are known to be discriminatory or oppressive.
- OCIC will share its anti-oppression focus with all donors, funders and supporters and will encourage the adoption of a similar policy.

5. Monitoring

OCIC will incorporate anti-oppression indicators and targets into its annual work plans for ongoing annual review.