Toolkit to ensure equality, diversity and inclusivity at our events

Resolution is committed to enhancing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity amongst all our staff and members. As a leading training and learning facilitator for the profession, we want to promote greater inclusivity at our conferences, training events, networking sessions, and on our panels. We want to ensure that speakers and attendees reflect the diversity of all family law practitioners and communities, as well as allowing members of all backgrounds and career stages to participate and feel welcome, accepted and included.

This practical guide for event organisers will help to give consideration at the outset, when organising an event, and provide suggestions to ensure that our commitment is achieved. It is an accessible step-by-step toolkit to assist in ensuring inclusive participation at every stage of each event, to help you consider the needs of individuals from a range of ages, religions, disabilities, and ethnicities when you are making any decision about your event.

We hope it will help to create inspirational content for your events, increase the visibility of under-represented groups, energise audience participation, and avoid accessibility difficulties, therefore raising greater interest in the work you are doing.

Why does it matter?

Diversity and inclusivity improves performance, and drives innovation. Therefore, following this guide will ensure your event is more successful, as you will attract more diverse attendees.

Diversity is much more than just gender, race, and ethnicity. It includes people of different ages, religions, physical and learning abilities, education levels, and other characteristics of personal identity. Members and speakers may have intersectional identities which include more than just a single diversity element, and these should be managed appropriately.

Resolution wants to draw on mentors who represent the wide diversity of individuals who work within family law, and who wish to embrace our shared vision of building a cohesive, respectful and inclusive professional body. Our teams need to be diverse so we deliver a range of views and avoid unconscious bias.

Participants in training courses are far more likely to be more motivated and enjoy a more productive learning experience if they feel included and supported.

Pre-event considerations

Speaker selection

- Commit to ensuring gender and ethnic or racial diversity when choosing speakers and/ or panellists for events.

- Avoid all male or all female speaker panels.

- Select speakers who can add valuable insights from a variety of backgrounds.

- Consider the role or visibility different speakers are given; is there diversity across all speaking roles (i.e. key notes, session chairs, panellists etc)?

- Make sure that all speakers have an equal opportunity to speak and contribute.

- Is there an opportunity to support the development of junior colleagues? Consider giving less experienced speakers the opportunity to present alongside more experienced presenters.

- Are there any barriers to speakers from underrepresented groups participating such as childcare responsibilities, or clashes with religious festivals?

Programme development

- Think carefully about the format of the event. Traditional lectures or panel events in large lecture theatres tend to celebrate individual excellence and may limit participation from under-represented groups. Consider other formats – for instance, small interactive sessions, networking sessions, workshops and knowledge cafes – these may help to encourage more active participation from a wider range of people and encourage the sharing of a diversity of ideas and knowledge.

- Consider ways of making the event content as relevant to as many of the membership as possible (and not just a select group).

- Make sure speakers are fully briefed and provided with all necessary materials/ full list of delegates so they can prepare appropriately for the event.

Considerations for speakers

- Invite questions from diverse attendees.

- Treat all questions from delegates with the same degree of formality and respect and engage substantively with all questions asked.