

Diversity, *Equity and* Inclusion



STRATEGY | 2022 - 2024

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Chief Executive Foreword



by **Imelda Hurley** | Chief Executive

Coillte's vision is to deliver a sustainable future for all by delivering the multiple benefits of forestry; forests for climate, wood, nature and for people. Balancing these multiple benefits will support the delivery of solutions to the challenges of our time, including the climate emergency, biodiversity crisis and the delivery of sustainable homes.

What is certain is that the delivery of our vision can never be accomplished by a singular perspective or mindset. It is a fact that inclusive organisations with a diversity of perspectives and experiences make better decisions and ultimately perform better. As such, Coillte's vision will be best delivered by ensuring we have a truly diverse, inclusive, and equitable workforce, and by creating a culture of belonging where everyone feels heard, valued, and empowered to contribute fully.

I am committed to our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programme, not only because it is good for Coillte and will help us realise our ambitions, but equally importantly, because it is simply the right thing to do. Against this backdrop, we will be continuing our work towards building a truly inclusive culture, one where we seek out diverse talent, where we listen to the varying perspectives of our colleagues, and respect each point of view raised. Life experience tells me that if you take steps forward every single day, it is amazing where you can get to – I know our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programme is a journey, the important thing is that we are on the path and will, by taking the right steps, make solid progress in the years ahead. Please join me on this journey to enable the best possible Coillte, one which is diverse, inclusive and equitable.

Thank you.





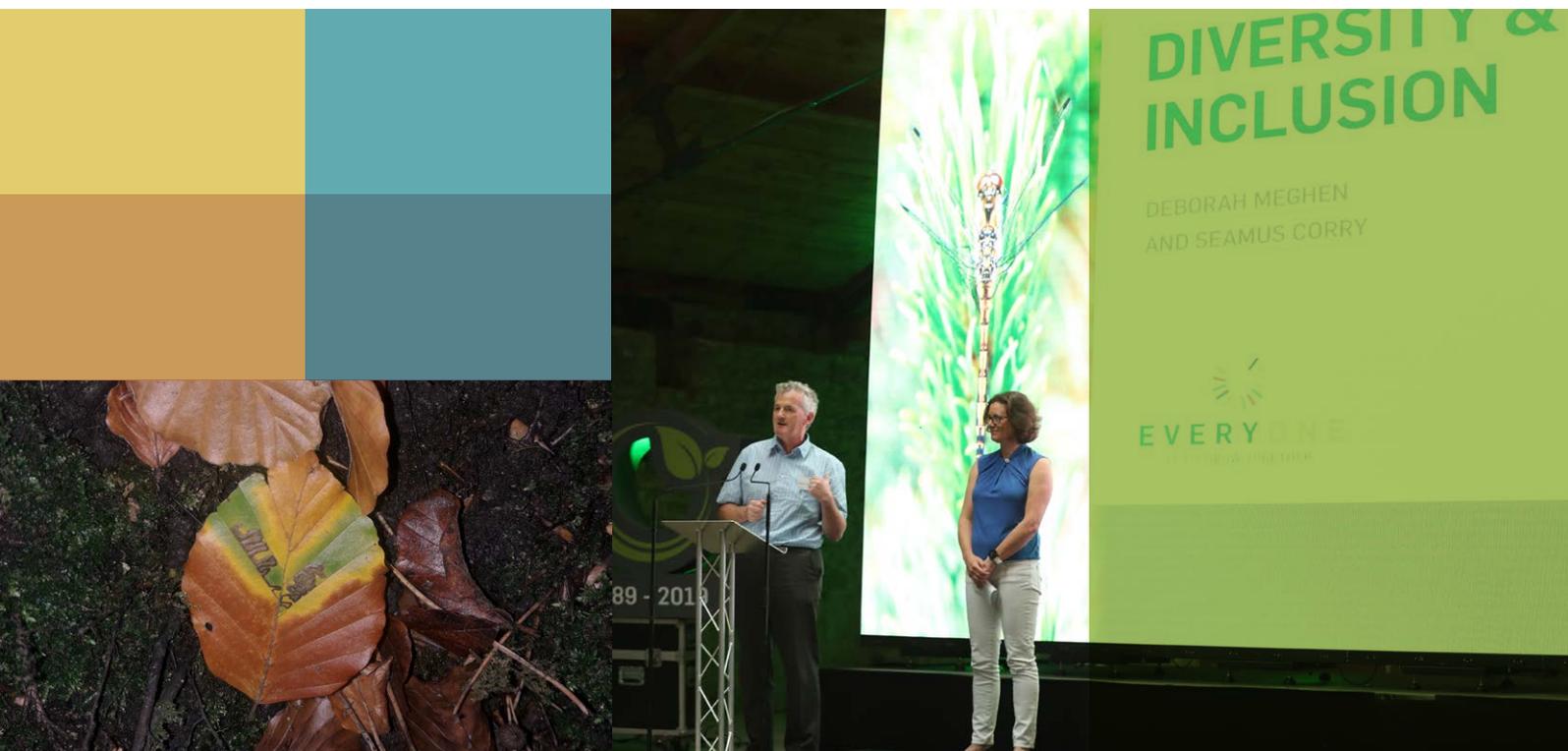
Introduction

Message on behalf of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

Since the creation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee in 2018, representing colleagues from across the Coillte Group and from all levels in the organisation, we have recognised the importance of having an open, diverse and inclusive workplace where everyone can bring their whole self to work.

Our new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy will help to guide us all so we can recognise and celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of our colleagues, contractors and customers. We are personally invested in making everyone's experience of working with Coillte to be one of inclusivity, respect and belonging.

Coillte's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy will be delivered through an action plan which has a number of short-term, mid-term and long-term tasks. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee are committed to the delivery of the Action Plan focusing on the key areas of Policy, Training, Communications and providing a Platform for Internal and External Voices. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee will monitor and evaluate the impact of this Action Plan on an annual basis, and report on same in Coillte's annual report going forward.





Overview of Diversity in Coillte

Coillte has been in operation for over 30 years and is responsible for managing 440,00 hectares of primarily forested lands and delivering the multiple benefits of our forests. We currently employ 850 people and our organisation is made up of three divisions: Coillte Forest, Land Solutions, and MEDITE SMARTPLY. Despite the fact we have long traditions and strong work ethics - we are a dispersed organisation with many micro cultures across different parts of our business. In recent years, we have undergone a significant transformation. We have steadily increased diversity of new recruits; we have also had some visible changes in the company's culture. In 2018, we set up a Diversity & Inclusion Committee which for the last four years have been actively promoting awareness of diversity and inclusion through a wide range of initiatives.

Even though we have made some progress to date, we recognise there is more to be done and there are some internal and external challenges which we need to address such as:

- Obtaining more detailed data on Coillte colleague demographics.
- Developing a shared understanding in the organisation regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that informs how Coillte promotes and supports a diverse workforce - regardless of age, gender, size, sexual orientation, origin, religious beliefs, socio-economic background, ability or disability; where everyone gets equal opportunities.
- Ensuring that the forestry sector and the industry represents all members of society.
- Developing a more inclusive and authentic leadership model.
- Strategically allocating additional resources to successfully implement Coillte's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan.

- Increasing buy-in across the company and all levels for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy and initiatives.
- Examining, discussing and working towards resolving any cultural challenges.



This document has been developed by Coillte's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and it outlines our three-year strategy for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Our strategy's main objective is to enable a diverse and engaged workplace by promoting an inclusive leadership model that builds on our key value of Respect. We plan to deliver on our strategic objectives through a range of actions to ensure we can become a more diverse and a truly inclusive organisation. As we implement this strategy, our aim is to be clear and transparent on our actions and targets; and to highlight where it is working well and where it needs to improve. This openness will ensure that our employees and stakeholders can input into our strategy and ensure it evolves over time. As we make progress towards our targets and gain a greater understanding of our own diversity and inclusivity, we will be driven by the principles and commitments set out in this document.



What Diversity means in Coillte

Diversity is about appreciating and acknowledging differences between people in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, national origin, or any other form of difference. It is also about ensuring that these different perspectives are sought, heard and incorporated into all aspects of our business. This reflects the diverse society that we live in.





Context for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The best performing companies are investing in sustainable development and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Stakeholders are also demanding more, and this is being reflected in increased legislation and a growing number of companies adopting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is more than just policies, equal opportunities, or employee engagement events. It is also about social justice, the feeling of belonging and psychological safety. A safe, open-minded, transparent and a welcoming environment supports a culture that allows everyone to reach their full potential and thrive.

Focusing on inclusion is a smart thing to do. Recent data* shows that truly inclusive employers who understand both the social and the business value of equality are seeing higher business returns. Diverse and inclusive workplaces earn deeper trust and more commitment from their employees. Companies that foster diversity

and respect the unique needs, perspectives, and potential of all their employees have better chances of maximising profit and making a positive impact on society.

This will become even more important for Coillte for the future, as we work towards a truly sustainable business model. Challenges associated with climate change, the biodiversity crisis, global pandemic and increased regulatory requirements can potentially add to the complexity of how we do our business. However, with challenges always come unique opportunities. To stay agile, innovative, and resilient we will need a talented and skilled workforce who can identify those opportunities and will lead the organisation into sustainable and progressive solutions. By building a more inclusive culture and introducing flexible working options we want to create an environment where all our current and potential employees feel welcome, thrive and can identify with our purpose, values and business vision for the future.

* "Diversity wins: How inclusion matters" McKinsey & Company Report, May 19th, 2020

Our values:

Responsible

Respect

Simplicity

EMPOWERMENT

Outward looking





Our Vision and Strategic Priorities

Our vision is to make Coillte a more diverse and inclusive organisation which represents the best of our traditions; values an open minded and progressive culture and is welcoming to our employees, recreation users, contractors and customers. Through implementation of this strategy, we would like to create an environment in which all

our employees have equal access to resources and opportunities; everyone is treated fairly and respectfully; and people can be at their best while supporting the organisation in achieving its overall vision and business strategy.

The following strategic priorities will help us to realise this vision:



1. Building awareness

Raising awareness of diversity and inclusion across all Coillte employees is the key to building a more inclusive working environment that respects and celebrates our differences in experiences, backgrounds and ways of thinking. By showing how diversity and inclusion fits within our vision and values, we can set out the behaviours that support those values. Inclusive behaviours can lead to transformational cultural changes and have a positive impact on employee engagement and wellbeing at work; but also, on how we interact with our customers, contractors and stakeholders.



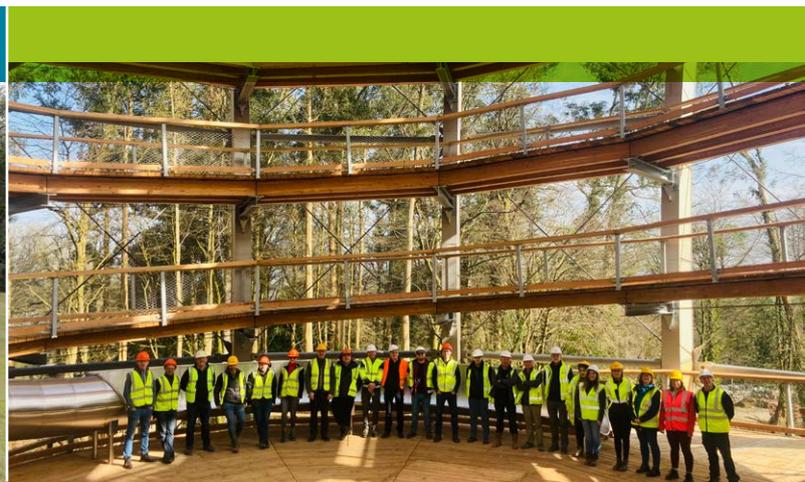
2. Focus on Inclusion

Coillte recognises that inclusion is the foundation for building a sense of belonging, connection and community at work. Our goal is to create a modern culture which is rooted in our values and best traditions but at the same time is progressive and welcoming to all employees. Inclusive leadership, supported by inclusive policies and procedures, provide an environment where all our employees can be at their best and enjoy a consistent experience across the organisation. It is important that our colleagues have a voice and feel they can contribute to the success and the future of the organisation.



3. Talent Pipeline

Coillte continues to significantly transform as an organisation. Attracting talent and new capabilities is critical to our success. To do this we need to compete as a modern, diverse and inclusive employer. Building diverse capability using an equitable and inclusive approach to developing future leaders and employees, will give us greater potential for better organisational outcomes.





Strategic Objectives

To bring our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Vision to life, the following strategic objectives have been established:

- 1.**
Build awareness of unconscious bias across all Coillte employees and **support initiatives** which reduce the negative impact of bias on the organisation's diversity and inclusion agenda. Potential for better organisational outcomes.
- 2.**
Promote more visible and authentic **leadership behaviours that fosters employee wellbeing** at work and creates more consistent work experiences across teams and business departments.
- 3.**
Gather data, set diversity targets and report publicly to **create accountability** and increase follow-through.
- 4.**
Celebrate diversity and inclusion and develop a communication plan to **encourage integration** of same in daily activities and to raise awareness of Coillte's positive culture internally and externally.
- 5.**
Develop guidelines and initiatives to **support talent management, learning and development**, to ensure Coillte has the required knowledge, skills and abilities, to deliver its vision, business strategy and meet future challenges.





Action Plan

Coillte's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy will be delivered through a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan which lists a number of short-term, mid-term and long-term tasks under one of the following categories:

- Policy
- Training
- Communication
- Platform for Internal and External Voices

The execution of the Action Plan is managed by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. All actions are reviewed on a monthly basis to assure continuity of progress. The impact of the Action Plan will be evaluated on an annual basis and disclosed in Coillte's annual report going forward.





Statutory Legislative Framework

Coillte employees work in a number of countries, and we adhere to all relevant statutory legislative frameworks of the countries in which we operate. We embrace the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which sees equality as a fundamental principle in terms of a

person's human rights - 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights', Art. 1. We are also committed to follow the principle of equality enshrined in our National, International and EU treaties and declarations.



