

CFUW Policy on Gender Equity

GENDER EQUITY:

Introduction

Not only is gender identity an advocacy matter for CFUW, but it also affects our membership and fellowship policies with respect to accepting transgender, queer, non-binary, and intersex persons as members and as fellowship applicants. Though CFUW started as a movement to promote the inclusion of women in greater society, we understand that over the past 100 years, our definition of women may limit the feelings of inclusion of some people, and we will continually seek to ensure that we include and advocate for human rights for all people, in all of their diversity.

Policy

CFUW adopts the policy that people who share the committed goal of promoting human rights and education may apply and will be accepted as members of CFUW Clubs. Similarly, people who self-identify as a woman, whether they are cisgender, transgender, intersex, as well as non-binary, will be considered eligible to apply to the CFUW Club Fellowships and Awards program.

External promotions or advertisement of Club Fellowships and Awards must have inclusive language.

CFUW is committed to safeguarding all personal information, including gender identity, entrusted to us by our club members, employees, Club Fellowship applicants and the public where applicable. CFUW will respect and protect the privacy of personal information by complying with the privacy principles required by the federal Privacy Act 1) and the related regulations.

CFUW regional, provincial councils and clubs should be advised that they must follow their provincial human rights code on the matter of gender identity and expression.

If a provincial human rights code is silent on the matter, they will be governed by the Canadian Human Rights Code. Similarly, they are governed by the privacy legislation in each jurisdiction. Where there is no specific legislation, each will be governed by the federal Privacy Act and related regulations.

Definitions

Note about Terminology

It is important to acknowledge that due to the evolving nature of language and the personal meanings attributed by groups and individuals, these definitions are not rigid - they are mutable and ever changing. When referring to an individual's identity, the words and definitions that they use to describe themselves overrule and supersede the definitions in this section.

Gender identity-A person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is a person's sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their sex assignment at birth.

Gender Expression: Is how a person publicly presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender. All people, regardless of their gender identity, have a gender expression and they may express it in any number of ways.

Non-Binary or Nonbinary: An umbrella term to describe gender identities that do not fit within the gender binary system of man/woman. It is important to note that some non-binary identities are culturally specific, and that some people may use the term itself as a specific identity. Identities that may fall under this umbrella include 37 but are not limited to: agender, bigender, genderfluid, and genderqueer.

Intersex: People who are not easily classified as "male" or "female," based on their physical characteristics at birth or after puberty. This word replaces the inappropriate term "hermaphrodite."

Trans or Transgender: An umbrella term referring to people whose gender identities differ from the sex they were assigned at birth. "Trans" can mean transcending beyond, existing between, or crossing over the gender spectrum. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, transsexual, non-binary or gender non-conforming (gender variant or genderqueer).

Two-Spirit: An umbrella term encompassing gender and sexual diversity in Indigenous communities. Two Spirit people often serve integral and important roles in their communities, such as leaders and healers. There are many understandings of the term Two Spirit – and this

English term does not resonate for everyone. Two Spirit is a cultural term reserved for those who identify as Indigenous.

Cis-gender: A term relating to a person who identifies with the gender identity assigned to them at birth; not transgender.

For a more expansive list on queer vocabulary, please see the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity [list here](#).

Outdated and Harmful Language (new section)

Terms which are considered harmful and should be avoided. These terms do not capture the experience of the 2SLGBTQQA+ community and are often used to perpetuate stereotypes.

Transsexual: A person whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth. They may or may not undergo medically supportive treatments to align their bodies with their gender identity, such as hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery or other procedures or changes. This term is dated and can be considered offensive if someone does not use it to refer to themselves.

Crossdresser: A person who, for emotional and psychological well-being, dresses in clothing usually associated with the “opposite” sex.

Governing Legislation

The Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) provides for equal rights and opportunities and freedom from discrimination. People who are discriminated against or harassed because of gender identity are legally protected.

- OHRC policy on gender identity has not been updated since 2014
- In 2017, federal government passed legislation on gender identity and gender expression ([bill C-16](#))
 - [Breakdown of changes here in plain language](#)

Update on [Bill C-279 - Gender Identity Bill](#):

- Believed to not have passed initially in the Senate because of “transphobic senate”
- Has been reinstated, passed in House of Commons, but stalled in committee in the Senate in 2015

Under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) people are protected from discrimination and harassment because of gender identity and gender expression in employment, housing, facilities and services, contracts, and membership in unions, trade or professional associations.

Resources: <https://ccgsd-ccdgs.org/resources/>
<https://www.the519.org/education-training/our-resources/>
https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/code_grounds/gender_identity

Vocabulary: <https://ccgsd-ccdgs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CCGSD-Vocabulary.pdf>
<https://www.the519.org/education-training/glossary/#A>