



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM
Amsterdam Law School

Action Plan 2024

Diversity Committee (DC)

FdR Diversity Committee Action Plan 2024

With the objective to continue our efforts of inclusion, equity, and diversity at the Law Faculty, the FDO, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Safety Policy Officer and Diversity Committee will focus on continuing building bridges among departments of our faculty as well as between efforts of the Central Diversity Office and UvA-wide initiatives in matter of Diversity. The Central Executive Office has hired over the past year employees in different organisational levels who focus on priorities for Diversity and Inclusion (Human Resources, Academic Affairs-AcZ, Communications and Teaching Learning Centre- TLC).

Our objective is to work in synergy with the initiatives established in these instances and adopt and modify those that serve the purposes and needs of our faculty, taking into consideration the unique context of our discipline, population, and priorities.

FdR Agenda for Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

The current Dean's [Agenda for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) was drafted in 2019, following the guidelines and principles established by the UvA-wide [Diversity Policy](#). In the year 2024, a new version of this policy will be drafted at a central level. The FDO recommends a re-evaluation of our faculty's agenda upon completion and publication of this UvA-wide document.

Structure of the Diversity Committee

As of now, the Diversity Committee will establish programmes and projects that will have a project chair and collaborating team members. This method of organisation allows for continuity of programmes and projects in hopes of preventing the discontinuity of said programmes as the rotation of members occur. As mentioned in the DC annual report, the additional collaboration with PPLE Diversity Board will continue for the upcoming year, in which said board will host events that contribute to the initiatives of the agenda at a faculty and department level.

Action Plan

For the year 2024, the FDO will focus on the following points of action, already assigned as projects for groups of work within the Diversity Committee, following specific points in the Faculty's Agenda.

1. Curriculum and Inclusive Education

Agenda action points: H

a. Diversity Reflection Tool

The work led by Maïke Steen regarding the Curriculum Scan (from now on referred to as **Diversity Reflection Tool**) is in the phase of implementation, led by DC member Ivana Isailović. This tool aims to provide support in the revision of the course content and instruction methods based on principles of Equity and Inclusion to contribute to diversity goals. The development of the tool and execution of the pilot is conducted in collaboration with the CDO who is simultaneously developing a voluntary tool for all university faculties.

FdR decided to work with our own Reflection tool in synergy with the general and more comprehensive tool developed by the CDO to accommodate to the needs of our faculty, taking into consideration the need of a condensed version (6 questions for the pilot).

The pilot of this project will be launched in 2024 and will function as a tool of revision and adjustment for the courses, as well as a diagnostic tool for our faculty to further develop tools and strategies that attend the gaps brought up via this reflection tool (e.g. a possible toolbox for Diversity with the support of TLC, FdR Library and Diversity trainings). The target audience for this pilot will be all course coordinators from masters and bachelor's programmes who would like to **voluntarily** revise their materials and instruction programmes. This project intends to support teaching staff who is already revising their course content based on current academic accreditation, education innovation processes or who are developing new courses.

The timeline of the pilot is as follows:

- 1- Promotion and invitation for participation from January to April.
- 2- First implementation workshop (2-hour session) by mid 2024.
- 3- Follow-up and analysis of results at the end of 2024.

b. Bachelor's and Master's Programmes

In collaboration with the director of education we are inviting directors of masters programmes to participate in reflection evaluations in their year plans regarding their initiatives of inclusion, equity and diversity at different levels of their programmes. Additionally, meetings with individual programme directors can be planned throughout the academic year to assess the best ways to support their own initiatives pertaining DEI, including possible conversations on inclusive practices of admissions selection procedures; support in for course coordinators for the revision of the course content; use of diversity reflection tool; support for teaching staff; promotion of research with intersectional approaches.

2. Library resources

Agenda action points: K

With an eye on contributing to the production of research in topics that include an intersectional approach on aspects of our society relevant to diversity, inclusion and equity, the DC will draft an initiative to formulate a database with information on academic literature related to Law and important topics of diversity (LGBTQIA+ populations, disability, gender equity, diversity in ethnic backgrounds, etc). This proposal comes as an incentive to allow students to use literature that might aid in the production of new knowledge in their specific field of research for both Bachelor's and Master's Theses.

3. Teacher Trainings

Agenda action points: A and I

a. Hot Moments TLC

In collaboration with TLC Centraal and with the input of the Hot Moments training developed by the Vrije Universiteit, our faculty intends to develop an in-house training that will serve the purpose of providing teaching staff (lecturers, course coordinators and tutors from Bachelor's and Master's programmes) with the didactic tools to navigate difficult conversations that arise as current international and national events emerge. In the past, we have seen a rise in the need to foster discussions that contribute to the academic progress of our discipline, where teaching staff has reported to feel unprepared to guide said discussions. In hopes of contributing to our principles of

academic freedom and not shy away from said conversations, FdR TLC will work with FDO and Diversity Committee chair of this project Burcu Özkan, in the development of this training, with real examples that occur in the classrooms of our Law Faculty.

b. Our Bodies Our Voice in collaboration with TLC

FdR is allocated funding for 3 workshops per year by the CDO. In the previous years, the unused workshops intended for students, staff and student associations have accumulated, allowing our faculty to use a total of 8 workshops in the coming year. The first of these series has been completed on 30 November with the collaboration of FdR TLC and the remaining 7 workshops will be scheduled for 2024. The planned workshops (led by Burcu Özkan) will follow important moments on the year in which teachers and students can benefit from the learnings of these trainings and the information will be disseminated with the support of the communications team. The available and scheduled trainings will be in the following sequence:

- i. Bystander intervention (staff)
- ii. Foundations of Allyship and Inclusion (students and study associations)
- iii. Foundations of Allyship and Inclusion (staff)
- iv. Alcohol and Party Culture (students)
- v. Teaching for Inclusion and Social Safety (staff)
- vi. Boundaries, Communication and Consent (students and study associations)
- vii. Foundations of Allyship and Inclusion (study associations)

4. Legal Research

Agenda action point: K

The Diversity Committee searches to support and promote events and activities of active faculty members who seek to foster research on these under-explored issues, such as the Sustainable Global Economic law project. The recommendation from the FDO is continuing the search for strategies to champion research and support of researchers around the themes of equity, diversity and inclusion in the field of Law.

5. Human Resources Initiatives

Agenda action points: A-6, B-1, C-12, D and E.

The involvement of the FdR HR Unit is fundamental for the implementation of our current diversity policy at multiple levels, for which reason, this collaboration will remain as one of the most important points for the upcoming academic year. The current Diversity and Social Safety Policy Officer, Franka Wegkamp will work as a main liaison for projects relevant to Human Resources at our faculty, in line with the objectives of our agenda discussed. The current projects involve the investigation of best practices relevant to **Exit Interviews and Inclusive Recruitment and Objective Selection.**

The training 'inclusive recruitment and objective selection' will be central in contributing to a more inclusive hiring process, the plan of action will therefore map out how the training will be implemented structurally. In 2024 it will be analysed how the exit interviews and/or exit surveys can be implemented within the FdR.

6. Gender Lunches

Agenda action points: A and C

The experience of the previous FDO regarding Gender Lunches (led by DC member Ivana Isialović) proved to be a positive one. We will continue implementing this initiative with the objective to provide cohesion amongst faculty staff who wish to discuss aspects of Gender Equity in our work environment. Furthermore, we plan to gather data to provide suggestions to policy based on experiences fostered in a safe(r) space.

Amongst the topics that have been raised during said meetings, we have encountered the following topics with our Diversity Committee, FDO and DI&SS Policy Officer will work. These include:

- Mediation of non-recognised work within our teaching staff (coordination of events, communication tasks, informal mentoring, etc.)
- Recognition of voices amongst women researchers who promote research relevant to gender, equity, inclusion, and intersectionality.
- Social safety in classrooms and undesired behaviour from course evaluations.

7. Diversity Monitor

Agenda action points: D and I.

- a. Central level project – The Executive Board of the University of Amsterdam is currently working on developing a strategy to incorporate a Diversity Employee and Student Monitor in the coming years. This project led by Helma van den Berg, Policy Advisor for Diversity, Inclusion and Social Safety will determine benchmarks for D&I in the coming year and design a suitable monitor for all faculties. FdR FDO will continue the collaboration at a central level to incorporate the measures for the indicators interesting for our faculty.

8. Accessibility and Inclusion

Agenda action points: I and J

- a. Accessibility

With the objective to empower teaching staff to understand and implement accessibility principles in the classroom, FDO and DC (support from Burcu Özkan) will continue the collaboration with the UvA Central TLC as well as FdR TLC in the development of tools and trainings for tutors and teachers to promote inclusivity in education (e.g. how to conduct an accessibility check in documents uploaded in digital learning environments to ensure they are suitable for TTS software for students with visual impairments, best practices to consider inclusion of neurodivergence, and hearing impairments in classroom, etc). Until this moment, an **Online Training “Accessible teaching materials: Getting rid of barriers”** training has become available through FDO and TLC for implementing digital accessibility (<https://tlc.uva.nl/article-category/e-learning-nl/?faculty=6>). Further projects in line with this objective will be developed in collaboration with the Teaching and Learning Centre of our faculty, including a **Digital Accessibility Checklist**, following the guidelines and protocol from our University Communications unit.

Furthermore, and in response to the low score of the 2023 NSE where a low score of students reporting satisfaction of receiving support related to support needs (Ondersteuningsbehoefte), the FDO and DC intend to prioritize events and campaigns of awareness regarding the existing support structures for students with disabilities. These

initiatives will take place in collaboration with Study Advisers and other actors associated with pathways of Student Well Being at our institution.

b. Contemplation Rooms

Further conversations with student bodies as well as facility services management will explore the possibilities of incorporation of new contemplation rooms in our faculty to serve as environments for decompression in silence (to aid students with overstimulation needs such as long covid, neurodivergence and other mental health priorities) and prayer. This work will seek support and collaboration of the CDO and Executive Board Project Manager in charge of this initiative (Soumia Akachar).

9. Student Well Being

Agenda action points: A, I and J

Routes for well-being communication

A member of the DC (Justine Zwarthoed) will create a communication strategy with journals and articles relevant to student mental health and well-being to be disseminated amongst students. In collaboration with Study Advisers, Confidential Advisers, Social Safety Policy Officer, and other institutional members leading programs for student well-being, a series of articles will be shared with the support of the faculty's communication team to promote routes of access to resources provided by our faculty in matters of social safety and accessibility support.

10. Student Bodies Involvement

Agenda action points: I,

- a. Programme Committees, FSR, Study and Student Associations Diversity Policy.
In 2024, the Diversity Committee intends to connect at different levels of student bodies to make an invitation to establish diversity policies within their committees. In the previous months, members of these diverse organs have reached out with inquiries on inclusion and accessibility. It is important for us to continue the work in which the responsibility to account for diverse populations remains within said organisations, receiving advice and support from FdR FDO and the Diversity committee.
- b. Our Bodies Our Voice Trainings for student organisations – Among the allocated trainings by CDO, FdR will dedicate trainings for allyship, bystander intervention, inclusion and social safety to study associations and other student bodies based on their request. The support from the Diversity Committee will continue through said trainings and guidance to coordinate these. This project is currently led by Burcu Özkan.

11. De Eerste Generatie

Agenda action points: I.

The invaluable support this programme has provided to first-generation university students in the previous years will continue in an effort to connect students from diverse migration and socio-economic backgrounds who represent the first generation of university-attending members of their family with guidance, mentorship and support through this programme. This programme will be led and managed by 4 members of our Diversity Committee (Heleen van Galen, Mohammed El Idrissi, Guusje Westhof and Loren Karsten) with the guidance of one of the founding members of DEG, Ali El Hri. The objectives of this project will focus on the following roles:

- a. Get Ready Programme (Revised programme). The introduction programme led by the Central Diversity Office will continue working with FdR students next academic year. The adjustments to this programme will focus on: inclusion of other students who do not speak Dutch (possibility of English programme), coordination of the timeline with other university introduction week programmes, promotion of participation through channels of communications and admissions. FdR is incorporating elements of our introduction with in-person presentations of resources including study advisors, international study office and the Law Library among others.
- b. Mentoring/Buddy Programme via Alumni network
The promotion of the Mentoring/Buddy programme will continue in 2024, where students will be paired with professionals in the legal field who are also first-generation students and can bring guidance and mentorship to students in their academic and professional journey. The development of a database and a campaign to invite alumni will be fine-tuned by members of the diversity committee in charge of this component.
- c. Collaboration with external organisations (Bridges Network, ECHO)
Coordinating members of DEG will continue the conversations and collaboration with network programmes that support first-generation students such as ECHO and Bridges Network.
- d. Ongoing events throughout the academic year for First-generation University Students FdR.

12. Communications FdR

Agenda action points: A and I.

- a. Inclusive Calendar: The Central Diversity Office is currently finalizing an inclusive calendar to share amongst faculties. At the moment, FdR FDO and DC are working in collaboration with the CDO in the development of said calendar. The objective of this tool is to raise awareness among staff/students about the importance of inclusive thinking when planning events, lunches, meetings, etc., on special days, as well as to inform employees/students about holidays and days that deserve special attention. The calendar will also seek input from focus groups, panels, and other means to ensure that a broad group of people at our University can identify with the choices made, including cultural/religious observances, DEI important dates, Dutch holidays and other important cultural days of impact. Once this tool is developed, it will be shared with the communications team for a comprehensive use in the broadcast of information at our faculty.
- b. Collaboration with Communications Unit: In the previous months, the work with the communications team at our faculty has been instrumental to raise awareness of events, and bring light to important accomplishments from members of our faculty from diverse backgrounds, such as the announcement of nomination and winners of the ECHO awards (Expertise Centre for Diversity Policy) that honors students of color in higher education and young professionals for their outstanding efforts and work that contribute to the advancement of Diversity and Inclusion. The prize creates opportunities for students to achieve an equal starting position and contributes to a dialogue that recognizes societal challenges and illustrates the power of diversity.
- c. Social Media and Website management: Members of the Diversity Committee (Guusje Westhof, Heleen van Galen and Ange Asar) will work in the maintenance of the communication channels of our committee while upholding the principles of inclusion

including consideration of relevant calendar observances that take diversity into account, and having a protocol for alternative text (for visually impaired audiences).

13. Events. The following events are contemplated for the following academic year.

Agenda action points: A, I, J, K.

- a. Diversity Month: October 2024.
At least 2 events and communication campaigns will be developed for Diversity Month in line with the initiatives of other UvA Faculties. This year, one student member coordinated a list of academic and non-academic resources for understanding of inclusion and equity.
- b. Lectures and Conferences
At least one conference/lecture in matters of Gender & Race in Law and Political Economy will be presented at our faculty. In 2023, Ivana Isialović led the conference on 7 December 2023. See link: <https://sgel.uva.nl/content/events/2023/12/gender--race.html?origin=c95y5SveRQCpDcBre3iwRw>
- c. Week against racism (led by PPLE Diversity Board)
With the objective to facilitate a critical dialogue on the pervasive issue of racial bias within the legal system and in this way contribute to the ongoing discourse on the topic. By bringing together professionals and students to explore this complex topic, we seek to shine light on the different perspectives and foster a deeper understanding of the challenges at hand. PPLE Diversity board will host a panel and series of events in March for the week against racism open to all FdR students and staff members.
- d. Book Clubs(led by PPLE Diversity Board)
PPLE Diversity Board will foster a book club on literature about inclusion and diversity. Through allowing spaces for discussion and learning parallel to their formal education, students aim to raise awareness of current societal issues related to aspects of inequality and discuss how these intersect with our discipline. The DC will explore the possibility to host a similar space for other students of the faculty at large.
- e. Drawing for Diversity (led by DC member Ange Asare)
An event of shared knowledge, visibility and validation through individual experiences will be held in 2024 to continue the positive impact of last year's event amongst students and staff from diverse backgrounds.
- f. Neurodivergence Awareness Events (led by PPLE Diversity Board)
The Diversity Committee will work in collaboration with IDEAS and Study Advisers to promote awareness of neurodivergence through communication campaigns in June 2024 to shine light on Neurodiversity Day (14 June 2024).
- g. Paarse Vrijdag
On 13 December 2024, the Diversity committee will promote awareness of the initiative led by COC Netherlands and Student Pride NL to raise awareness against bullying and discrimination of students from the LGBTQIA+ community.
- h. Further events TBD
The diversity committee intends to incorporate further events according to the inclusion and diversity calendar mentioned in point 11-a to enhance our efforts to empower staff and students with tools to contribute to equity, diversity and inclusion in our faculty.