



Disability Action Plan

2019 - 2023

If you need this document in another format or language, please get in touch with us. Our contact details are on Page 3.

April 2019

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), requires InterTradelreland to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties')

Section 49B of the DDA 1995 also requires InterTradelreland to submit to the Equality Commission a Disability Action Plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

1.2 The Chairman (Ken Nelson) and the Designated Accounting Officer (Aidan Gough) of InterTradelreland are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. InterTradelreland will therefore:

- Allocate all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans;
- Put in place internal arrangements to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this disability action plan effectively implemented;
- Ensure effective communication of the plan along with training and guidance to staff on the disability duties and implementation of the plan;
- Submit an annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of the Disability plan which will include a review of progress in meeting Action Measures (set out in section 3)
- Carry out a five yearly review of this plan;
- Carry out a review and update the Action Measures annually (section 3)
- Carry out timely, open and inclusive consultation in accordance with Equality Commission guidelines. Appendix 1

Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating the plan disability action plan and the point of contact within InterTradeIreland is:

Sharon Hughes

HR Manager

InterTradeIreland

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Should you require this plan in an alternative format (such a large print, in Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/or language, please contact the above person to discuss your requirements.

1.3 We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual progress report on the implementation of this plan to the Equality Commission and carrying out a five-year review of this plan, or plans submitted to the Equality Commission over the five-year review period.

A copy of this plan, our annual progress to the Equality Commission and our five year review of this plan will be made available on our website www.intertradeireland.com

1.4 Functions of InterTradeIreland

InterTradeIreland is the only organisation which has been given responsibility by both Governments to boost North/South economic co-operation to the mutual benefit of Northern Ireland and Ireland. By encouraging better use of our collective resources we help to expedite trade and business growth across the island and create an environment where it is easier to do business.

We support SMEs across the island to identify and develop North/South trade and innovation opportunities. We do this through business programmes, research and statistics and networks and partnerships.

InterTradeIreland helps small businesses explore new cross-border markets, develop new products, processes and services and become investor ready. We offer practical cross-border business funding, information, advice and support to SMEs.

1.5 Public Life Positions

Although InterTradeIreland has limited opportunity to directly encourage disabled people to apply for/participate in public life positions, we will continue to clearly communicate our goal of encouraging the participation of disabled people in public life by direct recruitment to InterTradeIreland.

2. Previous Measures

Outlined below are the key measures which InterTradeIreland has already taken to **promote positive attitudes** towards disabled people and **encourage the participation of disabled people in public life**.

These have included

- Our office building in Newry provides a suitable environment for disabled workers. Disabled toilet facilities are provided; a lift is provided for access to the first floor. Arrangements have been put into place to ensure the smooth evacuation of people with disabilities in the event of an emergency.
- Car parking is provided on site for staff who have a disability.
- We rely on the principle that everyone has the right to equal access to information.
- A Textphone number is printed on all publications and on our website to ensure accessibility to our offices and staff.
- The InterTradeIreland website has been reviewed and meets AA accessibility. This ensures the highest standard of accessibility for people with different disabilities for whom it may be difficult to use conventional websites for example, people with sensory and motor disabilities.
- All our documentation is made available in alternative formats to help encourage people with disabilities to apply for and participate in public life positions.
- When we make information available in a format that an individual or group prefers we will do it quickly and for free.
- When we cannot provide preferred formats we will make the information available in other ways. For example, we can arrange face-to-face meetings to pass on information; give an oral briefing; or give staff time to help clients understand and complete forms.

- We also, where reasonably possible, will provide an interpreter and signers for those who would wish to attend any of our events.
- During Recruitment and Selection activities, Job advertisements to InterTradeIreland publicly state that all appointments are made on the basis of merit and can offer job details and related information in alternative formats upon request;
- Applicants are requested on their application form to advise us of special provisions or facilities required at interview;
- Invitations for events will also include a request for details of any special requirements
- We have delivered equality awareness training to all staff in accordance with our Equality Scheme, which has raised awareness of our responsibilities concerning people with disabilities.
- Through our staff Health and Wellbeing E-zine which is distributed to all staff we have communicated information to staff a range of issues regarding disability.

3. Action Measures April 2019 – March 2023

Measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and Encourage Participation in Public Life

Action Measure	Performance Indicators	Timescale
<p>InterTradelreland will take both direct and indirect action whilst striving to meet these 2 measures.</p> <p>These will include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of a Staff Forum and invite/ seek views from disabled staff and others who wish to join this Forum, on how to meet the 2 particular measures, how we can promote disability equality in the work place and establish their views on current policies practices and procedures. 2. A review of InterTradelrelands External and Internal Communication Policies practices and procedures in order to ensure that disabled people are portrayed in a positive role. 	<p>This team will be Chaired by the HR Manager (Sharon Hughes) and ensure cross-directorate responsibility for the creation /ongoing review /delivery of the Disability Action plan 2019-2023.</p> <p>A review of the achievement of action measures to be collated and presented as a quarterly agenda item at the Senior Leadership Team Meetings.</p>	<p>April 2019 – Quarterly thereafter</p> <p>April 2019 – review every 6 months</p>

<p>3. Following the review InterTradeIreland will ensure all new/revised promotional publicity or information materials that we produce e.g. leaflets, booklets, advertising campaigns portray disabled people in a positive role. It is hoped that such imagery will help to remove pre-conceived perceptions of the capabilities of people with disabilities.</p> <p>4. To promote positive attitudes amongst our own employees, and other stakeholders (such as the wider public customers service user's) We will produce and distribute targeted articles /communications materials which portray disabled positive role models within internal communications distributed to staff (e.g. newsletters) and when appropriate within external communications including blogs/e-zine which are distributed to public service users</p> <p>5. Provision of information to staff of national awareness days – these will be highlighted through monthly newsletters. Additionally, we will provide direct information to staff during our annual Health and Wellbeing Day.</p>	<p>Number of photographs /images of people with disabilities in corporate publications, on social media and websites. Images of disabled people will have prominence across visual branding</p> <p>Number of targeted articles produced and distributed both internally and externally</p> <p>We will record numbers who participate and monitor staff feedback from the sessions provided.</p>	<p>Six monthly</p> <p>Six monthly</p> <p>Monthly (newsletters) November 2019 – annually (Health and Wellbeing days)</p>
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InterTradeIreland has limited opportunity to directly encourage disabled people to apply for / participate in public life positions other than becoming an employee of the Body. In this regard the following measures will be maintained

- 6. Ongoing review of InterTradeIreland's Recruitment & Selection procedures to ensure that no applicant will be discriminated due to disability during any process.
- 7. For each appointment Job Advertisements /Job descriptions/Personnel Specifications/ Application Forms/Offer of Employment, information that is sent to applicants will be reviewed to remove any unnecessary barriers to disabled people applying.
- 8. Additional Applicant information will be prepared that outlines the support that is available to disabled applicants from recruitment to appointment
- 9. In advance of interviews, individuals will be asked if they require any reasonable accommodations /special requirements and these will be accommodated.

Monitor the number of applicants who declare a disability and the number of reasonable adjustments requested

Ongoing on completion of each recruitment competition

April 2019

Ongoing

<p>In relation to participation in other public life positions other than becoming an employee of the Body the following measures will be introduced</p> <p>10. InterTradeIreland will endeavour to influence the North South Ministerial Council to ensure participation of disabled people on the Board</p> <p>Training /Guidance and Employment Measures</p> <p>11. In collaboration with people/organisations with personal /professional expertise in the field we will deliver training to all members of staff including members of the Senior Leadership Team (Directors)</p> <p>This training will be targeted and cover two key topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disability equality legislation, to include an understanding of employer and employee’s duties and responsibilities under the DDA and in addition to this act. And - Disability awareness and etiquette to includes issues and topics such as: an explanation of the barriers faced by disabled people in society including attitudinal and environmental factors and a greater understanding of the social model of disability 	<p>Correspondence to be drafted as appropriate – responses will be recorded /monitored.</p> <p>Attendance and participation at training /information sessions</p>	<p>All staff in post will receive this training within 3 months of the revised Plan being in force. These sessions will be then be delivered annually 2019- 2023</p>
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<p>12. We will engage with specialist disability organisations and together explore the creation of work experience /volunteer placements for disabled people or other appropriate outreach measures</p> <p>13. We will carry out annual exercises to encourage staff to declare disabilities/long term health conditions and ensure consideration is given to implementation of all identified reasonable adjustments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing information/support to both line managers /staff if this arises. 	<p>Monitor the uptake of this measure</p> <p>This data will be monitored regularly to ensure the Body is aware of employees needs and acts upon them appropriately. The aim is that because of this measure Staff in the workplace will feel more supported and a greater number of staff will feel comfortable declaring that they have a disability</p>	<p>June 2019 – annually thereafter</p>
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