

October 2020

Building Equality - Terms of Reference

Who we are:

Building Equality is an alliance of consultants, engineers, developers, contractors, and institutions who are passionate about working together and harnessing our collective power to drive LGBT+ inclusion in the construction, engineering and built-environment industry.

Our vision:

To have a construction, engineering and built environment industry that is wholly welcoming, inclusive and supportive of LGBT+ professionals across the UK.

Our objectives:

- To enable cross-industry collaboration, to drive initiatives to build a more LGBT+ inclusive industry;
- To support other organisations within the industry in setting up and maintaining their LGBT+ employee networks;
- To promote the industry to university / college students and early career professionals as an LGBT+ inclusive place to work;
- To make LGBT+ inclusion a boardroom topic, encouraging visible LGBT+ and Ally role models from the top down; and
- To encourage, influence and enable the supply chain to create more LGBT+ inclusive working environments on site and in all work spaces.

Facilitating activities and initiatives to support objectives

- UK-wide pride events: National Student Pride and Sparkle Weekend: Transgender Pride. Other pride events* include Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, London, Leeds, Manchester, Northern Pride and Salford;
- External awareness events, webinars and podcasts: to bring the industry together to discuss key equality, diversity and inclusion and LGBT+ issues, to enable cross-industry collaboration to implement positive change, whilst providing platforms for unheard voices;
- Outreach days: providing information to the general public on the industry and specifically highlighting its accessibility to LGBT+ individuals;
- Cross-company network mentorship: a designated mentor to new or perspective members to assist in developing and establishing company LGBT+ networks;
- Reverse mentorship scheme: to enable senior staff to understand barriers to LGBT+ staff both inside and outside the industry;
- Supply chain engagement – work with bodies like the Supply Chain School to change construction industry suppliers and contractors to be LGBT+ inclusive; and
- Develop resources: create and develop free resources to enable our industry to become more equal, diverse and inclusive.

**Attendance at other Pride event is always open for discussion based on appetite within regional committees.*

Our Structure – Overview

Membership of the Alliance is voluntary and open to any company within construction, engineering or the built environment:

- Has an established LGBT+ network or is working towards creating and developing one; and
- Is willing to be actively involved and collaborate to the objectives of the wider Alliance.

It is the responsibility of each Regional Company Representative to obtain any internal approval which may be required to share and collaborate. The only prerequisite is that the company is willing to be actively involved and collaborate to achieve the objectives of the wider group and those companies involved (“greater good”).

At present each regional committee can determine whether there is a financial contribution to join the region, up to a maximum of £200 per organisation, per region. Or, they can decide to fund regional activity through a sponsorship model – e.g. One organisation being the main sponsor and funding said activity.

Regions / Chapters

1. Birmingham;
2. Central Scotland;
3. East Midlands;
4. Greater Manchester;
5. Leeds;
6. London;
7. North East;
8. Sheffield; and
9. South West and South Wales.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee comprises five members from Building Equality regional committees and will enable any decisions or actions to be taken more quickly whilst managing brand and key messaging. The Executive shall oversee the work of Building Equality as set out in the ‘Building Equality – Executive Charter’ which sets the basis of behaviours and duties for all Executive Members.

The functionality:

- 1) An uneven number of 3 or 5 (maximum) to be elected to the Executive Committee;
- 2) Members will stand for a 2-year period;
- 3) Members need to be from different companies (ensuring equal representation, where possible);
- 4) Meetings/calls will be held at least on a monthly basis and no less than once every two months;
- 5) Members will be nominated or self-nominate for election;
- 6) If more than the required number are nominated, then the Company Representatives, will vote for the 3 or 5 members. Each company has one vote UK-wide (not determined by the number of representatives or number of regions present); and
- 7) Members are to attend 75% of all meetings, whether face-to-face or other means, each year, extenuating circumstances taken into consideration.

Regional Committees – Chair / Co-Chairs

Each UK-wide regional committee will be governed and chaired by a chair / co-chairs. The chair / co-chairs should report into the Building Equality Steering Group and Executive Committee. This position shall last 2 years and is to be elected by regional committee company representatives only. Regional Committee Company Representatives can be nominated or self-nominate for election.

The Steering Committee is a monthly meeting between all regional chairs / co-chairs to enable collaborative working practices across regions, to share best practice and lesson learned. A yearly 75% (9 out of 12 meetings) attendance is required at these (this can be split between co-chairs), extenuating circumstances taken into consideration. At least one Executive Committee member will attend the steering committee.

The key responsibilities of chairs / co-chairs, include but not limited to:

- Steer and grow the regional committee of Building Equality organisations;
- Make key decisions in support of Building Equality objectives;
- Act as main point of contact for the regional group;
- Organise and chair committee meetings;
- Foster links with other key regional stakeholders and organisations;
- Take a lead role in organising initiatives and engagements;
- Commit and facilitate Building Equality's [actions](#) to ensure QTIPOC representation across the alliance; and
- To actively promote and improve awareness off Building Equality, including:
 - Target list of new member companies;
 - Seek profiling opportunities at events/conferences/prides;
 - Create target list of clients/institutions;
 - Seek opportunities to partner with other organisations;
 - Target list of awards to enter; and
 - Seek speaking opportunities.

Regional Committees – Company Representatives

Each Building Equality regional committee is run by Company Representatives and, the committee has the autonomy to devise, develop and implement initiatives to support and facilitate Building Equality's strategy, in their respective region.

Suggestions on the promotion and development of the Brand should be put forward to the Executive Committee for discussion and approval before any launch externally.

The key responsibilities of regional committee company representatives, include but not limited to:

- Take a lead role for represented organisation to work towards Building Equality objectives;
- Take an active role in the committee, attending at least one meeting per month minimum;
- Take ownership of tasks to assist in organising events and initiatives to facilitate strategy;
- Host and/or organise, on behalf of member organisation, a regional webinar, podcast or event in collaboration with Building Equality once every two years, as a minimum;
- Commit and assist in delivering to Building Equality's [actions](#) to ensure that QTIPOC representation across the alliance;
- Draw on contacts, resources and suppliers, as and when necessary, to support strategy, goals, objectives and aims; and
- Regional members must be represented by their regional reps at a minimum of 75% of all regional committee meetings, whether face-to-face or other means, each year, extenuating circumstances taken into consideration.

It is the responsibility of the Company to notify the regional Chair / co-chair should there be a change in the Company Representatives. In the event of a change in representative, the Company should ensure that the new representative is fully up to speed on activities etc.

Company Representatives commit to ensuring that at least one of their representatives attends each meeting to ensure representation and decision making.

Working with Networking Organisations

Building Equality regularly collaborates with other networking organisations and is open, and keen, to develop new and existing relations, which provide opportunities to progress inclusion in the built environment.

Any new collaborative partnership should be ratified by the Executive Committee, to ensure that the partnership aligns with our goals, objectives and ethos.

Leaving Building Equality

If a member company decides that it no longer wishes to contribute to Building Equality, the regional chair /co-chairs should be informed, who subsequently inform the Executive committee. If a company chooses to leave Building Equality, they agree not to call themselves “Building Equality” at any future events.

“Spirit and ethos of Building Equality”

- We are all volunteers and get back what we put in;
- We actively participate at meetings and events;
- We collaborate, share information and best practice;
- We drive initiatives to benefit all member organisations and to make an impact on our industry;
- We support other organisations to ensure more companies have LGBT networks; and
- We focus on initiatives that allow member companies to work together to change the industry.