Interpreters of
COLOUR
NETWORK

INTERPRETERS OF COLOUR NETWORK

Policy Handbook

Manuel Politique

Welcome to *Interpreters of colour network* - IOCN policy Handbook. We would like to thank you for joining this new and enterprising network of talented and skilled interpreters of colour and for adding your voice to support our collective goals.

We are looking forward to working together and to building up this network to achieve amazing things.

The aim of this network is to: -

- **Address the under-presentation of 'people of colour' in the sign language and translation profession**
- **To offer a safe, nurturing and supportive environment for our colleagues of colour**

These guidelines have been put together to support all members as we interact on all the platforms that are linked to the Interpreters of colour network. This is to ensure that all members feel safe and supported whilst part of this incredible endeavour.

We ask that you take the time to read through these guides before using any of the platforms or joining any of the working groups that are part of Interpreters of colour network.

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ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is intended to cover those who have joined by any membership procedure that IOCN have in place and covers all platforms that are associated. This would include those that use the Whatsapp groups and those who are part of working groups.

The network would encourage everyone to read and adhere to its contents. Whilst the Steering Group are the ones that deal with the day to day running of this network, the network is the responsibility of each of the members to take part in setting its direction. This would include informing the moderators and/or the Steering Group of any advice, information ideas and concerns that they may have.

The moderators and Steering Group will use the policies from this handbook and the mandate that has been given to them to make any decisions and to set the agenda.

It is recommended that members read the content of this handbook, paying particular attention to the 'our conduct' and the grievance sections.

Governance

Interpreters of Colour network has been set up to allow us to be a member-led collective and to enable members to take a full and active part in developing new procedures, services and activities for their professional development, the development of the network and the profession.

The Steering Group meets members through All members meetings. These meetings are designed to keep members up-to-date with what the Steering Group has been doing on their behalf and to allow members to comment and give instructions to the Steering Group for them to carry out.

The Steering Group aims to be open and transparent in all their dealings, working in the best interest of the IOCN and its members and the profession as a whole.

The aim is to be responsive to the needs of the membership and where this is not immediately possible to inform and consult.

Members are free to contact any member of the Steering Group, moderators group or the working groups to add their voice to the work that IOCN is doing.

The contact email address for the Steering Group is admin@interpretersofcolour.net

The Steering Group members, at present, are Jacqui Beckford, Nikki Harris, Akbar Sikder, Azaria Francis and Elodia Mottot and Audrey Simmons.

The maximum number on the Steering Group is 7, but the Steering Group reserves the right to co-opt additional members who may have expertise in a specific area of interest, or to support a particular task or project. The terms and conditions for this co-opted member will be determined by the needs of IOCN.

Equality and Diversity Policy

IOCN is committed to providing equality, diversity, fairness and respect for all. IOCN embraces equality, diversity and inclusion within its membership as well as service users and providers. The network's intention is to eliminate inequality, discrimination and prejudice within its devours. The aim is for each member, service user and service provider to embrace this ethos, feel respected and able to give their best.

The membership, service users and providers in providing professional interpreting, translation or other services are expected to be committed to equality, diversity and against any unlawful discrimination.

**The jurisdiction is currently United Kingdom (UK) and European to reflect IOCN membership and applies regardless of location or nationality

The following are protected characteristics

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race; including colour, nationality, and ethnic origin or national origin
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation

This policy's purpose is to:

Not unlawfully discriminate against the protected characteristics as listed above and within the Equality Act 2010 United Kingdom.

In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

To avoid and oppose unlawful or social discrimination within its membership, service users, service providers when managing membership, training, developmental opportunities, complaints and grievances.

Members expectations are to commit to:

Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion as part of good practice and professional conduct.

Members responsibilities include conducting themselves in supporting IOCN provide equal opportunities, respect diversity, prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, unlawful discrimination and social injustices.

Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all where contributions of all members are recognised and valued.

All members should understand they will be responsible for any acts they display of bullying, harassment, victimisation, prejudice and unlawful discrimination in the course of their membership against fellow members, service users and service providers. Prejudice and discriminatory behaviour reported will be investigated and action taken where necessary.
Members to be aware of any individuals raising a complaint or grievance may be asked by the Steering Group to be involved in discussions by way of restorative dialogue with the accused to aid an understanding and empathy of the harm caused. A duty of care will be afforded to all involved by the Steering Group.

For service users and service providers they can request a copy of this Handbook from the Steering Group. This includes with whom a complaint may be raised, in the first instance this would be the Steering Group.

Policy actions:

IOCN takes seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, prejudice, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by members and any others involved in the course of the network's activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the network's complaints procedure following appropriate action to be taken.

Serious complaints amounting to gross misconduct (we need a definition/policy describing gross misconduct) will lead to dismissal without notice.

An investigative will be undertaken where complaints are reported providing clear evidence of discrimination. A time frame will be advised by the Steering Group pending action required.

When required reasonable time extensions will be permitted throughout the investigation (to allow for due diligence).

Any individual/s raising a complaint or grievance may be asked by the Steering Group to be involved in discussions by way of restorative dialogue with the accused/s to aid an understanding and empathy of the harm caused. This is encouraged in order to seek positive change and outcomes for the greater good.

Following an investigation if continuation of membership is applicable recommendations for improving conduct must be acted upon. Investigated members will be required to develop understanding of their prior adverse conduct. Recommendations will be advised which may include training and development although not exclusively.

Where understanding and change are achieved both the complainant and former accused are expected to acknowledge the positive outcome by working with the Steering Group to demonstrate this within a border context when required.

The Steering Group will acknowledge good outcomes and practises achieved. This includes any learning from previous incidents and action taken to address complaints or grievances which caused unforeseen adverse effects.

Equality and diversity practices and procedures to be reviewed when necessary to ensure fairness is afforded to all and duty of care.

To update the policy taking any changes in the law into account.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Membership is open to qualified and trainee sign language interpreters and translators (both deaf and hearing) who identify as a 'person of colour'.

Membership categories take into account differences in the registration system of each European country (e.g. not all countries have a regulatory body with registered and trainee categories).

These will be considered by the Steering Group

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

1 **Full member** = open to trainees and qualified interpreters and translators (deaf and hearing) from European countries who identify as a person of colour.

2. **Associate member** = any individual who supports the aims and

objectives of the organisation

3. **Corporate member** = any organisation or company that supports

the aims and objectives of the organisation

4 . **Student Member** = membership is open to people of colour who are working towards interpreter and/or translator training from European countries. Student members must be enrolled on an interpreting programme that leads to qualified status.

Membership process

Anyone wanting to Join IOCN should:

1. Complete the **New Member Application Form**
2. A member of the Board of Directors will call you to ask about your motivations for joining and to explain more about the group
3. You will be sent this Members Handbook and asked to agree to the terms and conditions of membership
4. You will then be able to access member benefits

Online etiquette for meeting Interpreters of Colour Network

We have come together as a much-needed space for interpreters who see the title and feel that this broad description fits who they are and how they seem themselves.

It is vital that IOCN is a safe space for everyone and that people can speak freely. With this in mind the Steering Group has put together these guidelines for conducting these meetings, so that everyone attending feels that they can contribute.

Below is a lists of meeting etiquette

- **Mute** - participants will be on mute until someone needs to speak, then the host will unmute

- **tackle the issue, not the person**. We may have a difference of opinions. All opinions are valid, but can be challenged. This must be done respectfully.

- **INTERPRETERS OF COLOUR NETWORK** will not tolerate - homophobia/gender-phobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia, bullying, intolerance of religious/non-religious beliefs or prejudice of any kind.

- **Contribution -** Please keep points short and to the point

- **Confidentiality** – what is said in these meetings should stay in the meetings and not be discussed outside.

- **Complaints** - If you have an issue with something that is said or how the meeting is being run, please bring it to the attention of the Steering Group.

Terms and Conditions; WhatsApp Group

This group is for qualified and trainee sign language interpreters and translators who identify as a 'person of colour'. This WhatsApp group has the following aims and ethos:

- Discussions relating to the sign language interpreting and translation profession

- Sharing ideas and resources relating to our profession and our experiences as 'interpreters of colour'

- Offering a safe, nurturing and supportive environment for our colleagues of colour

We are a large group from many backgrounds, which is what makes us unique and strong. As this group grows in numbers, we feel that we need to have some ground rules in order to enable members to contribute within a clear and safe framework, where we can honour each other's experiences, diversities and opinions. The following terms and conditions have been established and will be reviewed as the group develops (around every 3-6 months).

1. We encourage discussions and debates centred around the ethos, aims and objectives of the group. However, when stating your point, please do not abuse, bully, use offensive language or digress from the group's ethos.

2. We agree not to make or encourage comments, inside or outside of this group, which are defamatory, false or misleading, insulting, threatening, abusive, obscene, of a sexual nature, offensive, racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic. We agree not to discriminate against anyone, inside or outside of this group, based on religious or non-religious beliefs, ideologies, disability, ableism, audism, body shaming, age, gender, sexual preferences, political views or any other protected characteristic, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

3. We encourage the sharing of information, but please do not submit confidential or private information without the prior agreement from the original source. What is discussed within the group should remain within the group, unless it is already within the public domain or the poster has agreed for it to be shared.

4. We respect each other's privacy by not sharing their names and contact details with outside sources unless prior permission has been given.

5. We agree not to incite hate attacks or speech, or to encourage the breach of any legal duties, including those set out by other associations that members are affiliated to, i.e. respecting the NRCPD code of conduct etc.

6. Representation on behalf of the group to outside organisations, people or establishments should not be made without the prior agreement of the group. Members may respond to issues as individuals.

7. Please note: it is your responsibility to bring your concerns to one of the moderators.

If you have any concerns about anything to do with this group, please contact one of the following moderators:

Jacqui Beckford, Ali Gordon, Azaria Francis, Suzy Evans, Loquessa Smart or Grace Buckle:

As moderators of the group, we will adhere to the guidelines below:

1. To aid the group's compliance and understanding of the group's aims and objectives in order to foster good working relationships and support for each other.

2. To encourage the group's discussions and debates, intervening as moderators only when the discussion becomes disruptive to the group's ethos, aims and objectives.

3. To allow the group to police itself e.g. fostering healthy debates, discussions and welcoming difference of opinions within a safe environment.

4. To manage complaints and, if necessary, cease a discussion (take it offline or outside of the group)

5. If a participant or discussion becomes disruptive to the group's ethos and/or a complaint is made, the moderators will examine and look at the issue through the eyes of the group's ethos, aims and objectives.

6. A minimum of 3 moderators to agree to an action. Moderators will aim to agree to actions as soon as reasonably possible.

7. Moderators will directly approach individuals if a complaint is made, with a view to understand, listen and support all concerned.

8. To listen to and support members in voicing their views in a healthy and helpful way. To also support those who have felt aggrieved, hurt or disturbed by a member's comments or actions under the name of the group.

9. To remind and inform current and new members of the group's Terms and Conditions.

10. If necessary, to delay a membership, to cease either permanently or temporarily a membership, or to verify that a member meets the membership criteria for this group.

GUIDE FOR WORKING GROUPS

The working groups are a vital part of working out how IOCN will proceed. This document is a guide to the behaviours and expectations of those that have volunteered their time to be a part of these groups

The Steering Group will appoint one member to be the contact for the group. Alternatively, Steering Group can be contacted on admin@interpretersofcolour.net

- **Meeting agreed deadlines** - If you are part of a group there is an expectation that datelines will be followed, if they cannot then the lead is to let the Steering Group know.
- **Equality** - homophobia/gender-phobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia, bullying, intolerance of religious/non-religious beliefs or prejudice of any kind should not be tolerated at any time.
- **Summaries of decision made-** These should be emailed to the Steering Group for the record.
- **Withdrawal from the group** -If you are unable to continue in the groups please let the lead know.
- **Confidentiality** – what is said in these meetings should stay in the meetings and not be discussed outside. All notes and documentation are under the same rules of confidentiality and not to be shared.
- **Complaints** - If you have an issue with something that is said or how the meeting is being run, please bring it to the attention of the Steering Group.

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Our Conduct policy

We are passionate about providing a supported and safe environment for all those who have taken the time to be a part of this group, whether as active members in the working groups, attending meetings or just by commenting on the Whatsapp group. Your contribution is vital, valid and important to us all at Interpreters of colour network.

We do recognise that whilst we share so much, there will be times when views and opinions express my cause points of disagreement and contention. To minimise this, we have in place guidelines for Whatsapp and our meetings and our working groups. This is to ensure that everyone understands and is clear on the behaviour and etiquette that is expected of everyone that has chosen to participate in Interpreters of colour network'.

Even with these in place there may be times when you will need to bring behaviours that fall short of the guidelines to the Steering Groups attention. If this happens please follow the procedure laid out below.

Please contact the Steering Group on admin@interpretersofcolour.net.uk. We have 7 days to consider what you have raised and respond.

The first action would be to discuss the issue with those involved to try to reach an amicable resolution. If this fails or there is a repeated breach.

A letter of caution would be issued outlining the behaviour or event that has led to this response.

As this is the only group of its kind. We would be at pains to remove anyone from the group unless there was serious misconduct. This would include, but not exclusive to;

- Repeated Racists, Islamophobic, antisemitic, anti-LGBTQ related remarks made

- Repeated bullying

- A serious breach of confidentiality

- Behaviour that reflects badly or damages the reputation of the IOCN, even if that behaviour did not take place at an event that IOCN was involved in or organised. This would include online behaviour that expresses any of the above.

- If a member is removed from the register (NRCPD/RBSLI), because of contrary behaviour

What will happen next?

1. Steering Group will investigate, this could include talking to other members of the group and or looking at posts and emails.

2. Steering Group would discuss the matter and let you know the decision in writing.

3. There is no ombudsman for this group, it is just us trying to support each other, there would be no other course of action.

Re-entry after suspension or removal.

The ethos of Interpreters of Colour Network is to support all interpreters of colour. Members who join the network come when they are going through different stages of their journey as an interpreter and through life. Whilst we cannot take responsibility for everyone's behaviour and will have to impose sanctions on those members that do not adhere to IOCN behavioural policies, suspension and even removal should not be the end of your connection to IOCN.

IOCN recognises that people grow and change and as a network we should be able to support that growth. There should be a space to be able to look at what has gone on in the past and draw a metaphorical line underneath it that will allow interpreters of colour to not be left isolated and without any means of support at all. That goes against why the network was set up in the first place.

Re-entry is not an automatic right and the member would have to have shown some kind of tangible change or shown that the issue has been resolved in a satisfactory way. This decision will of course have to be looked at individually. The means of re-entry could include but is not be exclusive to: -

- Offensive materials being removed from any media platforms
- A training course has been attended where possible
- A letter of apology/clarification has been sent
- Mediation sought between parties involved
- Other intervention has taken place e.g. counselling, anger management
- A mentor may be allocated to support re-entry

  Re-entry may have conditions set against e.g., not eligible to be part of a work group, banned from the Whatsapp group or email only contact. These should be time limited.

  If there is another serious violation of the policies put in place then removal should be considered and this could be permanent if the steering/or group decide to make it so.

IOCN aim is to support all the interpreters of colour out there that wish to be part of this network. The aim should not be to abandon interpreters of colour, but to work with them so that this network can support everyone involved. This has to be a safe space for all.