

## **Diversity and Inclusion Report 2023-2024**

At CIROS, we believe that diversity and inclusion are key to creating an equitable and thriving community. As such, we have identified four main goals to ensure that CIROS policies, initiatives, and events are inclusive, accessible, and diverse. These goals were subsequently addressed during the academic year 2023/2024.

### **Inclusion in CIROS policies and guidelines**

In order to ensure inclusion within our policies and guidelines, we made sure all our policy proposals and guidelines (e.g. the committee head guidelines and PR guidelines) were inclusive and not directed towards any specific group. The language of the text did not exclude any specific gender. Additionally, our recruitment and application procedures are open to applicants of all backgrounds.

### **Encourage D&I at all levels**

To encourage diversity and inclusion at all levels, CIROS held numerous events to promote different cultures and backgrounds. There were many cultural workshops, celebrations of various holidays, lectures on socio-political developments worldwide, and more. As their name suggests, the Regional Committee has taken the lead with these initiatives, but we are glad to see multiple committees contribute to this effort. This includes but is not limited to, the Academic and Goodwill Committee. Additionally, all committees have tried to make new students feel included at the start of the year, via information sessions, city tours, and more. D&I is not only embedded in our internal operations but also our external collaborations as well. We have truly expanded the scope of our partnerships to work with organizations from many different areas and backgrounds, and it has been a valuable learning experience for us. Inclusion of participation for minority and marginalized groups should not only be sought after, but affirmatively encouraged by External Officers in the future during external collaborations.

The Board also took part in a short D&I workshop to better understand how we should adhere to and promote these principles. This year, we did not organize open forums but created a form that people can use to provide feedback to CIROS instead, including our approach to D&I. It ensures that people can easily contribute their ideas and opinions at all times.

### **Accessibility of Events, Initiatives and Platforms**

To ensure the accessibility of events, initiatives, and platforms, we checked for inclusive language in all our promotions and general communication. There is close communication between the PR Secretariat and the Board to uphold this standard. We also do a careful evaluation of every external initiative or information that we promote, to make sure that none of them enables feelings of exclusivity or unnecessary discomfort. Additionally, we have expanded our communication methods by creating a WhatsApp Community which allows our information and activities to be accessed by a wider audience. While organizing events, committees have accounted for participants' personal preferences and circumstances. Food-related events have always checked participants' dietary restrictions and choices, and as a result, committees have excluded certain allergens and served vegan options, for example. Moreover, participation costs of events and membership are relatively low compared to other associations, which helps lower economic barriers to participation.

After taking part in a D&I workshop, the Board has realized that we need to put in more effort in the area of physical accessibility. Facilitating the participation of people with physical disabilities should be prioritized in the future, such as in the venue selection and setting up process; many of our current venues are not easily accessible. Some committees have already made efforts in this regard, such as the Trips Committee which always asks about participants' accessibility needs. We believe the next step is to make this procedure more standardized throughout all of CIROS' events and initiatives. This can be accomplished by offering an option to disclose personal details (e.g. disabilities, personal background, etc.) at the time of buying membership so that the board can tailor its events to all members of the community and is cognizant of offering accessible events throughout the academic year.

### **Cooperation with Diversity Network at Leiden University: D&I Training**

Within Block 4, we reached out to Leonor Amaral- an LU Masters student who specializes in giving training on D&I to student associations, and a contact of former CIROS President Jorden Kent. The training was more insightful than the previous year as Leonor was able to offer specific experiences of past LU students that had problems with accessibility at student events. This training exposed the board to its own shortcomings when it came to accessibility for disabled and neurodivergent students due to the non-accommodative construction of the Beehive (e.g. Fluorescent Lighting; Only one disabled restroom in an inaccessible area, etc.).

This training is also recommended for future Committee Heads, and should preferably be conducted at the beginning of the Board year,

### **Triennial review and Looking forward**

Looking back at our operations these past three years, we are proud to say that we have made significant progress in achieving all our D&I goals. These are admirable targets to achieve, which we are still aiming towards, and hence, we would like to keep them in our D&I policy. One aspect we would like to add to this is the provision of Diversity Training for Committee Heads; since they are at the forefront of CIROS' events, we believe this will help create a more inclusive environment for our community.

Aside from this, we will continue to work towards a more diverse and inclusive CIROS with these goals guiding our way.