



# Scouts ACT Policy

**Policy Title:** Equitable Access Policy

**Policy Number:** 12.1

**Policy Owner:** Executive Officer and Chief Commissioner

**Effective Date:** 12/09/2024

**Review Date:** 12/09/2026

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to minimise gender inequality, ableism, cultural bias, ageism, and socio-economic barriers in the design and delivery of scouting programs. This policy sets-out the principles to help ensure that individuals, regardless of gender, ability, cultural background, age, or socio-economic status, have equitable access to all activities and opportunities within Scouts ACT.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all levels of Scouts ACT, including youth members, adult leaders, volunteers, and staff. It covers all scouting activities, programs, events, and interactions, both within and outside of the organisation.

## 3. Policy Statement

Scouts ACT recognises the diversity of our community. We are committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment where all individuals, regardless of gender, ability, socio-economic status, cultural background, age, feel welcome and valued throughout the organisation.

Scouts ACT recognises the importance of equitable access and is committed to eliminating barriers that prevent full participation in scouting activities, ensuring every individual can participate, lead, and benefit from our Scouting programs.

Our commitment includes:

- **Providing Equal Opportunities:** Creating an environment where everyone can fully participate, lead, and benefit from scouting activities.
- **Designing Inclusive Programs:** Ensuring that the design and delivery of programs considers the needs and perspectives of all individuals. Scouts ACT is to strive to create programs and activities that are accessible, affordable, and reflective of the diversity of our community, supporting full participation for everyone.
- **Actively Addressing Inequities:** Eliminating gender inequality, ableism, cultural bias, ageism, and socio-economic barriers. To achieve this, Scouts ACT provides ongoing training and resources to volunteers, leaders, and staff on gender equity, inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, age inclusivity, and social-economic accessibility. Our goal is to

develop and implement strategies that actively encourage the participation and leadership of women and girls<sup>1</sup>, individuals with disabilities, people from diverse cultural backgrounds, those facing socio-economic challenges, and individuals of all ages.

- **Upholding a Commitment to Women and Girls:** Ensuring equal representation, support, and opportunities for women and girls in all scouting programs, leadership roles, and activities.

#### 4. Responsibilities

- **Chief Commissioner and Executive Officer:** Oversee the implementation of this policy.
- **Branch Executive Committee (BEC):** Provide the necessary support and resources to enable effective implementation of the policy.
- **Leaders, Staff, and Volunteers:** Uphold the principles of and comply with this policy in their daily activities and interactions.

#### 5. Procedures

- **Inclusive Program Development:** Ensure all scouting programs are designed inclusively, addressing the diverse needs of participants based on gender, ability, cultural background, age, and socio-economic status, with a focus on promoting the participation and leadership of women and girls.
- **Promotion of Diverse Leadership:** Support and encourage diversity in leadership roles, ensuring representation and visibility of women and girls, individuals from varied backgrounds, and individuals of all ages to reflect the community Scouts ACT serves.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Provide ongoing training and resources to leaders, staff, and volunteers to enhance inclusivity, covering areas such as gender equity, cultural competence, disability inclusion, age inclusivity, and economic accessibility.
- **Resource Allocation:** Allocate resources to support equitable access initiatives, including funding for inclusive programs, accessible facilities, adaptive equipment, and culturally relevant materials.
- **Socio-Economic Accessibility:** Ensure that socio-economic barriers do not prevent participation in scouting activities. Utilise the Scout Fund or other appropriate funding to provide financial assistance to individuals and families in need, ensuring that all members can participate fully in scouting programs and activities.
- **Monitoring and Feedback:** Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of equitable access initiatives, incorporating feedback from members, including targeted efforts to engage women and girls, individuals with disabilities, those from diverse cultural backgrounds, and individuals of all ages, to drive continuous improvement.

#### 6. Compliance and Monitoring

The Governance and Risk Committee will oversee compliance with this policy, ensuring adherence to its requirements and procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> This policy defines "women and girls" as inclusive of all individuals who identify as women or girls, including those whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth, those outside the male-female binary, and those with diverse sexualities, intersex variations, or transgender experiences.

### Monitoring Procedures:

- **Regular Audits:** Bi-annual reviews of activities, programs, and events to assess inclusivity and resource allocation.
- **Reporting Requirements:** Immediate reporting of policy breaches to the Chief Commissioner and Executive Officer, with annual updates on gender equity and inclusivity progress.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Anonymous channels for member concerns, reviewed regularly.
- **Data Collection and Evaluation:** Collect and analyse data on participation rates, leadership representation, and member feedback to identify trends. Conduct surveys every two years to assess experiences with inclusivity and equity. Regularly review findings through relevant committees to recommend and implement policy improvements.

### Enforcement

- **Corrective Actions:** Implement necessary training or policy changes in response to non-compliance.
- **Accountability:** Apply disciplinary actions for policy breaches.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Use monitoring findings to refine and enhance programs and resources.

## 7. Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually by the BEC. The BEC is responsible for making necessary amendments based on changes in legislation, organisational needs, or feedback from members and stakeholders.

## 8. References

The following support or inform this policy:

- [2.9 Gender Equity](#)
- [2.9.1 Supporting Young People with Gender Identity Differences](#)
- [4.4 Scout Fund](#)
- [Scouts Australia's Diversity and Inclusion Standards](#)
- [Discrimination Act 1991](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2004 \(ACT\)](#)

### Document Control

Version	Date	Description	Approved by
1	12/09/2024	New policy	Branch Executive Committee