

Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Fair Work and Equalities Group

Equality Mainstreaming Delivery Plan (2025-29)



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

Introduction

This report plan outlines Highlands and Islands Enterprise's (HIE) obligations under key legislation related to equality, inclusion and diversity as well as how these duties align strongly to the wider strategic context of developing a wellbeing economy. The report goes on to outline HIE's Equality Outcomes over the period 2025-29 and our mainstreaming equalities delivery plan for 2025-29, which builds on our work to date as outlined in HIE's [Equality Mainstreaming Report 2025](#).

About HIE

HIE is the Scottish Government's economic and community development agency for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland which covers more than half of the geography of Scotland and over 90 inhabited islands. Our HIE Strategy 2023-2028 sets out a new vision:

The Highlands and Islands is a leading net zero region with a dynamic wellbeing economy, which benefits its growing population and makes a valued contribution to Scotland

Our new strategic framework has prioritised equalities within the key cross-cutting theme of Fair and Inclusive Growth, and we have established key objectives and outcomes which will be monitored to track progress.

Our legal obligations

The [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#) set out how the public sector should consider equality in everything it does. The Act places on HIE a requirement, the "General Equality Duty", to consider the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation

We can do this by eliminating less favourable treatment or indirect discrimination.

2. Advance equality of opportunity

We can do this by removing or minimising disadvantage, meeting needs which are particular to some groups of people and encouraging participation of under-represented groups.

3. Foster good relations

We can do this by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding amongst our staff and client groups.

The Equality Act 2010 protects nine [protected characteristics](#): race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. They are central to the development of our equality outcomes, enabling HIE to mainstream equality across our work and continue contributing towards a fairer and more inclusive Highlands and Islands.

Scottish Specific Duties

These are set by the Scottish Government, and they tell us how to show that we are delivering the PSED by:

- reporting progress on mainstreaming Equality Duty
- publishing equality outcomes and report progress
- assessing and review policies and practices
- gathering and use employee information
- using information on members or board members gathered by the Scottish Ministers
- publishing gender pay gap information
- publishing statements on equal pay
- considering award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
- publishing in an accessible format

We are also required to comply with other related and complementary equalities related legislation including a range of other Scottish Government strategies and policies that impact and inform our work on equality. We are also mindful of the specific requests of public bodies in our annual Letter of Guidance, and of possible future obligations on HIE from recent or anticipated publications.

The Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD)

- Places a legal responsibility on named public bodies, in Scotland, such as HIE, to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by [socio-economic disadvantage](#), when making strategic decisions.
- While the duty is on strategic decision making, the aim of the duty is for consideration of the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage to be mainstreamed.
- Components of the Duty are incorporated into the People Impact Assessment process and our wider due diligence, especially when considering social impact.
- HIE's Fair Work and Equalities Group will be refining our FSD internal compliance processes following recent guidance from Scottish Government. FSD guidance is enclosed [here](#)

Human Rights

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are based on a framework of state responsibility to protect human rights; business responsibility to respect human rights; and the requirement for remedy for negative human rights impacts. Scottish Government guidance has informed procedures undertaken by HIE on appropriate due diligence on companies specifically in relation to their human rights record, before entering a business relationship with them.

Human Rights compliance is built into our governance and appraisal processes and is under constant review.

Islands Act and Island Communities Impact Assessments (ICIA)

The Islands Act was passed in 2018 with the [National Islands Plan](#) launched in December 2019 and includes the duty to have regard to island communities in carrying out functions and undertaking Island Community Impact Assessments. A new National Islands Plan is currently under development.

[ICIAs](#) will ensure that the Scottish Government and public bodies, consider the specific needs and interests of islands communities when developing and updating policies, strategies and services. These are undertaken where the impact of a policy, strategy or service is likely to be significantly different on an island community than on others and assessing the extent to which this can be mitigated or improved. [Guidance](#) has also been published to help colleagues and public bodies comply with their duties.

Strategic Context

National Strategy for Economic Transformation ([NSET](#))

NSET outlines a vision is for a low-carbon, wellbeing economy – a society thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions, and that delivers sustainable and inclusive economic prosperity for Scotland’s people and places. Fair work and the transition to net zero is at the heart of the vision for a wellbeing economy.

This vision is threaded throughout the strategy and the focus of one of its five programmes of action:

- [A Fairer and more equal society](#), which aims to significantly reduce poverty and boost the economy, through better wages and fair work. Providing a sustainable standard of living and a genuine route out of poverty.

HIE strategy 2023-2028

Equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our mission to develop a prosperous wellbeing economy across the Highlands and Islands. As we state in our [2023-28 strategy](#), which is aligned to NSET, we aspire to build and sustain a greener, fairer and more resilient region that benefits everyone. We are committed to tackling poverty, inequalities and inclusive growth through growing a wellbeing economy and accelerating community wealth building across all of four pillars of our new strategy: **People, Place, Planet and Prosperity**. The cross-cutting themes of net zero, fair and inclusive growth, and regional transformational opportunities run through our framework. These represent key strategic drivers for HIE and the region in terms of what is delivered and how.

We embed equalities in the actions we deliver, how we deliver these, and in how we operate as an organisation. In particular, we do this through:

- Our strategy, priorities and actions
- Appraisal and decision-making (including equalities and people impact assessment)
- Delivery approaches and procurement
- Collaboration and partnership
- Measurement, targets and evaluation
- Developing our evidence base

HIE People Impact Assessment

Our People Impact Assessment (PIA) is a structured and consistent way of assessing the effects of an existing or proposed policy or project on different groups of people (e.g. men/women, ethnic groups, disabled people). The assessment process links to our equality outcomes through the development of an action plan to maximise positive outcomes and mitigate negative impact for the people affected.

As part of our appraisal and decision-making process and to comply with legislation, Leadership, project managers and reviewers across HIE must ensure that all our interventions are scrutinised effectively by undertaking a PIA, ensuring that people with [protected characteristics](#) are not disadvantaged. HIE is required to publish our PIAs on our [website](#).

HIE procurement strategy 2024-2028

Our [procurement strategy 2024-28](#) supports the [Public Procurement Strategy for Scotland 2023 to 2028](#) and statements on how we will meet the Sustainable Procurement Duty requirements of the Procurement (Scotland) 2016 Regulation. This includes:

- Use of equality (people) impact assessments within our procurement documents to help reduce inequalities and meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set out by the Equality Act 2010
- Where relevant and proportionate address fair work practices of suppliers and/or mandate the payment of the real Living Wage
- Receive targeted, relevant and proportionate community benefits and community wealth building into the HIE region to support local priorities.

HIE's People Strategy

Our People Strategy is delivered through eight strategic themes and a priority action plan that has been developed around our ambitions with specific priority actions and indicators to measure progress.

Our ambition for the employee, equality, diversity and inclusion theme is to be 'Welcoming to all, supporting, encouraging and developing our people regardless of background – respecting diversity and promoting inclusion'.

HIE is proud to be an inclusive employer and prides itself on employing the right people in the right roles. Employees are valued for the different perspectives, skills and experience they bring to HIE. Promoting an inclusive workplace at HIE creates a happier, more productive working environment for everyone, regardless of role and seniority.

In line with the legislation, [HIE's gender pay gap report](#) (the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation) is published on our [website](#).

Our equality outcomes for 2025-2029

As an authority listed in the Schedule of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, HIE is required to publish equality outcomes every four years which outline how we will tackle inequalities experienced by people with [protected characteristics](#).

Development of our outcomes

We have undertaken extensive research and internal/external consultation which has informed our equality outcomes 2025-29.

We have aimed to target specific groups based on where the evidence shows there is the greatest need and potential for impact. These are not intended to be an exhaustive list and will not exclude others who could also benefit across all of the nine protected characteristics.

Equality Outcomes 2025 - 2029

- We will **increase the diversity of our client portfolio** with a focus on female led and/or founded organisations and young entrepreneurs.
- We will **work in partnership to increase the working age population** across HIE's Inclusive Growth Focus Areas.
- We **understand the Race demographics of applicants** and our recruitment processes do not unconsciously impact on any protected characteristic.
- Our **culture fosters collaboration across age groups** creating an environment where all employees feel valued and empowered to contribute.

Outcome 1

We will increase the diversity of our client portfolio with a focus on female led and founded organisations and young entrepreneurs.

Rationale for Outcome

- There is no official data for female entrepreneurs at a regional level, however national wider evidence has suggested that there has been a more recent decline ([Small Business Survey Scotland 2023-2024](#)) whilst rural areas tracked above national figures previously.
- There is substantial evidence that female entrepreneurs have additional barriers to developing and growing businesses, particularly in accessing investment. The [independent review](#) commissioned by Scottish Government highlights the under-participation of women in entrepreneurship and that this can be exacerbated by demographics with rural and migrant entrepreneurs cited. A number of issues were identified in this report and in evaluation evidence from previous support delivered by HIE through the [W-Power Programme](#), which HIE will use to inform how it approaches support to female entrepreneurs and young entrepreneurs, particularly in rural areas.

Female led and founded organisations

- Of the clients we regularly engage with, in 2024-25 29% have a female CEO. This compares to 25% of SME employers in rural Scotland are women-led (Scotland 22%). 26% have identified as having women in senior leadership positions.
- In 2024-25 of the client engagement portfolio 51% have a female CEO and/or female owned or partnership and/or women in senior leadership.

Young entrepreneurs

We will continue to stimulate and support start-ups and scale-ups led by young entrepreneurs across the region based on the success of our [IMPACT 30](#) and [Pathfinder Accelerator](#) Programmes.

The region has the highest rates of those thinking that starting a business was a good career choice.

This is reflected in the proportion of the 16-34 population that is self-employed, 6.5% in the Highlands and Islands compared with 4.8% in Scotland, with the highest in our remote and rural areas of Argyll and Bute, Orkney and Skye Lochaber and Badenoch (see table below).

Self-employed aged 16-34 as a proportion of the population aged 16-34

	Youth self-employment rate
Argyll and Bute	7.2
Outer Hebrides	7.0
Moray	5.2
Orkney	7.9
Shetland	6.4
Cunninghame North (Arran and Cumbrae)	4.9
Caithness, Sutherland and Ross	6.6
Inverness and Nairn	5.0
Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch	7.9
Highlands and Islands	6.5
Scotland	4.8

Source: [CENSUS 2022](#) and Business Starts

Actions

- Continue to develop and deliver programmes, advice, networking and collaboration opportunities that specifically target under-represented groups,
- Continue to influence policy and childcare initiatives to support women to participate fully in the labour market. e.g. women returners
- Continue to capture data and intelligence on female led and founded organisations on MyHIE and women and young entrepreneurs' participation in programmes.

Measurement

- The number of women led/founded in HIE's client portfolio
- Value of HIE investment in female led/founded organisations.
- Monitor and measure equalities data captured on HIE systems and through monitoring and evaluation forms.

Outcome 2

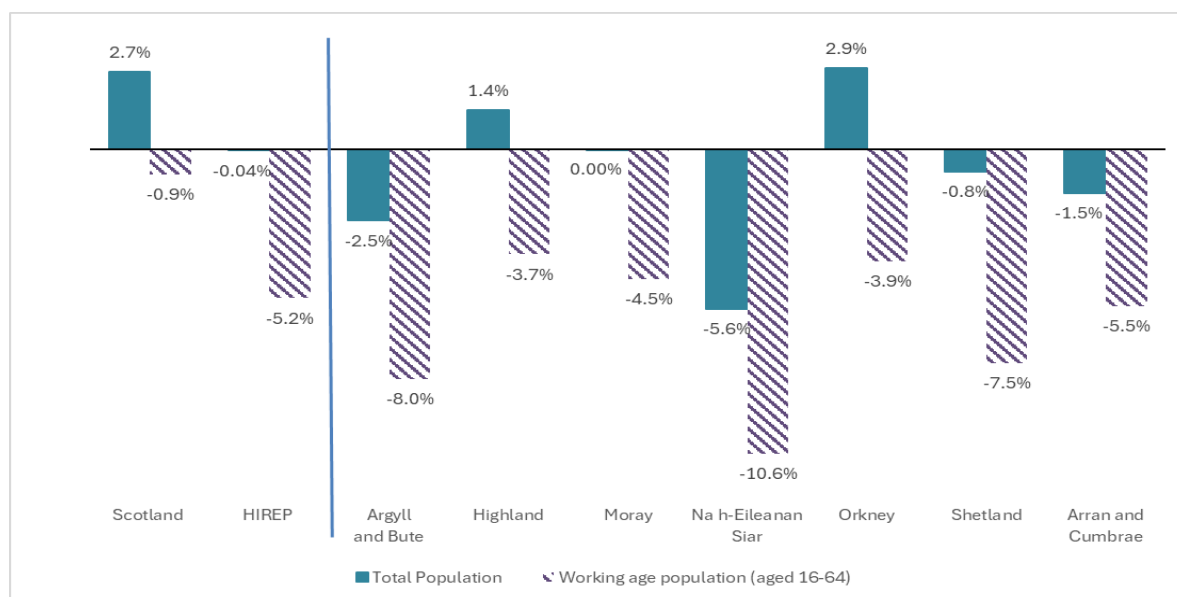
We will work in partnership to increase the working age population across the region's inclusive growth focus areas.

Rationale

- A growing working age and highly skilled population across the region is one of the HIE Strategy key outcomes. It is fundamental to achieving socio-economic growth and a wellbeing economy in the region.
- Despite strong growth in the preceding decade, the population of the Highlands and Islands remained flat between 2011 and 2022, compared to growth of 2.7% in Scotland and share of population aged 15-64 was 60.9%, (Scotland 64.2%).
- The decline in the numbers of working age decreased more rapidly between 2011 and 2022 in the Highlands and Islands (-5.3%) than Scotland (-1.1%) and almost a quarter (24.2%) of the population in the region were of retirement age (65+), (20.1% in Scotland).
- There are clear disparities within the region with Argyll and Bute and Na h-Eileanan Siar had amongst the greatest levels of population and working age population decline as well as having amongst the oldest age structures of all Scottish Local Authorities. New Mid-Year Estimates showed improving picture for Argyll and Bute.

Percentage Change in Population 2011-2022

HIREP = Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership area



Actions

- Develop the evidence base to more fully understand issues affecting population retention and attraction: e.g. Business Panel, Census, bespoke research and evaluations.
- Work with partners to identify issues and develop new approaches to attract and retain working age population, particularly through the Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership (HIREP) and the Convention of the Highlands and Islands (COHI).
- Support projects and initiatives in partnership with the HIREP and COHI, focusing on growing the working age population in inclusive growth areas including housing initiatives and childcare.
- Deliver graduate recruitment programmes and other initiatives to retain young people in the region.

Measurement

- Number of HIE interventions associated with population growth in inclusive growth focus areas.
- Number of graduates (and other trainees) supported by HIE in inclusive growth focus areas.
- Value of HIE Investment and employment supported in inclusive growth focus areas.
- Track external population data.

Outcome 3

We understand the Race demographics of applicants and our recruitment processes do not unconsciously impact on any protected characteristic.

Rationale

As an employer, through mainstreaming equality into what we do, we will build on our work to date.

RACE

HIE's workforce is currently made up of 87% White British employees, 5% from other racial groups or preferring not to disclose, with 8% not making any selection. We will undertake a review of our recruitment processes to ensure they continue to be free from any unconscious bias and promote strategies that help us attract a more diverse mix of applicants.

Scotland's Census 2022 data indicates that 93% of the population in the Highlands and Islands identified as either 'White: Scottish' or 'White: Other British', with the remaining 7% identifying with other racial groups.

Actions

- Review our processes and procedures (recruitment in particular) to ensure they are free from any artificial barriers, such as prejudice or a failure to respond to the specific needs of people with different protected characteristics.
- Review our recruitment data to better understand the race demographic that we attract and analyse each stage of the recruitment process.
- Review the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Toolkit to explore if there are any actions that could be implemented, particularly within our recruitment practices, to attract employees from a broader range of racial groups and backgrounds.

Measurement

- Increase number of job applications from wider ethnic/racial groups
- Increase racial diversity across HIE's workforce

Outcome 4

Our culture fosters collaboration across age groups creating an environment where all employees feel valued and empowered to contribute.

Rationale

Multi-generational working

We are aware that in today's workplace up to five generations are working side by side, each bringing unique perspectives, values and expectations.

Our high employee retention rates and long service (36% of employees have 20 or more years' service) and our aging workforce along with our more recent recruitment (47% of employees have 10 or less years' service) means that we have to consider multi-

generational working, changing expectations, succession planning and the implications these have on our workplace.

We recognise that different generations in today's workplace have diverse needs, values and perspectives. We will develop training on multi-generational working to explore different work styles and expectations and promote the benefits of employing workers from multi-generations. This will aim to bridge our age diversity along with the work we are doing on inclusive communications, flexible working and mentoring.

Further evidence is available on page Pages 12-13 and 32-33 of [HIE's Equality Mainstreaming Report 2025](#)

Actions

- Continue to build managers' capacity to embed inclusive work culture
- Develop training for employees on multi-generational working to value difference and promote the benefits of employing workers from multi-generations

Measurement

- Bridging generations training course delivered

Equality Mainstreaming Reporting

HIE is required to report on progress with these equality outcomes every four years. The next reporting period for HIE is **1st April 2025 – 31st March 2027.**

Currently we report on:

- progress on mainstreaming Equality Duty (every two years)
- publish and report progress on equality outcomes (every four years)
- Annual procurement report (including Scottish Government Annex A), which include elements relating to Fair Work First (FWF).

Our mainstreaming equalities delivery plan

The Equality Mainstreaming Delivery Plan 2025-2029 sets out specific practical steps that HIE will take to meet our PSED and Fairer Scotland Duties. The delivery plan is not meant as an exhaustive list or record of all activities we will undertake during this period.

In addition, we will encourage equality considerations to be taken into account in all our activities.

We are required to report and publish a HIE Equality Mainstreaming Report every two years. The next HIE Equality Mainstreaming Report is due to be published on the HIE website in April 2027. (2025 report [here](#))

HIE's Fair Work and Equalities Group (Terms of Reference available in Appendix II) is responsible for developing and delivering our equality mainstreaming delivery plan as well as ensuring the equality outcomes are developed every four years. The group meets at least three times per year and is Chaired by the Director of Enterprise and Community Support. Key reports such as equality mainstreaming delivery plan, reporting on equality outcomes and the development of new outcomes are presented to HIE's Leadership team for sign off.

The Fair Work and Equality Group priorities for 2025-29 are to:

- Deliver our Equalities Mainstreaming delivery plan 2025-29
- Progress Equality Outcomes (2025-2029)
- Production and publication of Equality Mainstreaming report in April 2027 and April 2029

1. Strategic

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Strategy and Regional Economy	Head of Planning and Partnerships	Build in HIE's equality actions and outcomes into HIE's annual Operating Plans and monitor progress through corporate reporting.	End of year review HIE Annual report	Ongoing	
Director of Enterprise and Community Support/ Director of Human Resources	Equalities Project Manager, Head of Planning and Partnership/ Senior HR Managers		Review of 2025-29 outcomes	Quarterly	

1. Equality Outcomes:

(i) **We will increase the diversity of our client portfolio** with a focus on female led and founded organisations and young entrepreneurs.

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Enterprise and Community Support	Head of Client Products and Services	Continue to develop and deliver programmes, advice, networking and collaboration opportunities that specifically target under-represented groups.	The number of women led/founded in HIE's client portfolio	Quarterly	
	Senior Development Manager, Housing, Skills and Population	Continue to influence policy and childcare initiatives to support women to fully participate in the labour market. e.g. women returners	Value of HIE investment in female led/founded organisations	Quarterly	
		Continue to capture data on female led and founded organisations on MyHIE and women and young entrepreneurs' participation in programmes.	Monitor and measure equalities data captured on HIE systems and through monitoring and evaluation forms	Ongoing	

(ii) We will work in partnership to increase the working age population across the region's inclusive growth focus

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Strategy and Regional Economy	Head of Housing, Skills and Population/ Regional Population and Talent Attraction Manager/ Senior Development Manager, Housing, Skills and Population	Work with partners to identify issues and develop new approaches to attract and retain working age population, particularly through the Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership (HIREP) and the Convention of the Highlands and Islands (COHI). Support projects and initiatives in partnership with the (COHI) and (HIREP), focusing on growing the working age population in inclusive growth/Repopulation Zones focus areas including housing initiatives, and childcare.	Measure number of HIE interventions associated with population growth in inclusive growth focus areas. Track external population data	Ongoing annually Ongoing annually	
Director of Enterprise and Community Support	Head of Client Products and Services	Deliver graduate recruitment programmes and other initiatives to retain young people in the region.	Measure number of graduates (and other trainees) supported by HIE in inclusive growth focus areas	Ongoing annually	

(iii) We understand the Race demographics of applicants and our recruitment processes do not unconsciously impact on any protected characteristic

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Human Resources	Senior HR Managers	<p>Review our processes and procedures (recruitment in particular) to ensure they are free from any artificial barriers, such as prejudice or a failure to respond to the specific needs of people with different protected characteristics.</p> <p>Review our recruitment data to better understand the race demographic that we attract and analyse each stage of the recruitment process.</p> <p>Review the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Toolkit to explore if there are any actions that could be implemented, particularly within our recruitment practices, to attract employees from a broader range of racial groups and backgrounds.</p> <p>Continue to build managers' capacity to embed inclusive work cultures.</p>	<p>Increase number of job applications from wider ethnic/racial groups</p> <p>AMRIS recruitment data</p> <p>Increase racial diversity across HIE's workforce</p> <p>AMRIS recruitment data</p>	<p>2025/2026</p> <p>2026</p> <p>2025</p> <p>2025/2026</p>	

(iv) - Our culture fosters collaboration across age groups creating an environment where all employees feel valued and empowered to contribute.

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Human Resources	Senior HR Managers	<p>Create and deliver “bridging generations” training to increase awareness raising around opportunities and challenges of multi-generational working.</p> <p>Evaluate training feedback</p> <p>Seek employee feedback via survey</p>	<p>Bridging generations training course delivered</p> <p>OpenHR data</p> <p>Training evaluations</p> <p>Feedback data</p>	<p>2025/2026</p> <p>2027</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	

Assessing and reviewing policies and practices

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Enterprise and Community Support/Director of Corporate Services	Equalities Project Manager/ Business Improvement Manager	Ensure People Impact Assessments are undertaken and initial assessments are included as part of the pre-screening ISA due diligence process.	Test revised PIA process, forms and guidance and implement new process across HIE. Approved PIAs published on HIE's website	2025 Ongoing	
Director of Strategy and Regional Economy	Head of Planning and Partnerships	Undertake Island Community Impact Assessments (ICIA) where appropriate.	Complete annual report on ICIA's for Scottish Government.	Annually	

1. Gather and use of employee data (including board member data)

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Human Resources	Senior HR Managers	Deliver HIE HR Strategy and Plan	HR Annual Plan	Annually	

Executive Office	Head of Executive Office	Encourage Highlands and Islands board diversity	HIE Board data	Annually	
------------------	--------------------------	---	----------------	----------	--

2. Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Corporate Services	Head of Procurement	<p>Maximise using an evaluated Fair Work First (FWF) question in quotes and tenders.</p> <p>Promote and where relevant and proportionate mandate the payment of the real Living Wage in regulated procurements.</p>	<p>SG Annual procurement reporting process:</p> <p>Number of regulated contracts awarded that include a FWF criterion</p> <p>Number of unique suppliers who are accredited Living Wage employers and awarded a regulated contract</p> <p>Number of unique suppliers who have committed to pay the real Living Wage in the delivery of a regulated contract</p>	Ongoing annually	

3. Publish in a manner that is accessible

Owner	Lead	Action(s)	Measure(s)/evidence	Timeline	RAG
Director of Strategy and Regional Economy	Head of Marketing and Communications	Review accessibility options	Report on HIE website	<p>30 April 2027</p> <p>30 April 2029</p>	

Appendix 1

HIE Programmes and Equality Outcome 1

Equality Outcome 1	Action 3	Action 3
We will increase the diversity of our client portfolio with a focus on female led and founded organisations and young entrepreneurs.	Continue to capture data on women entrepreneurs' participation in programmes.	Continue to capture data on young entrepreneurs' participation in programmes.
Products/Services		
Digital Tourism Advice Service	x	
Export Advisory Service	x	
Food and Drink Tech Hub Business Support Service	x	
Graduate Placement Programme	x	x
Go Global Programme	x	
Innovation Programme	x	x
New Product Development Programme	x	
Pathways to Start	x	x
Scottish Pavilion at Aqua Nor 2025	x	
Support for Scottish Edge – application and pitching	x	
Technology Placement Programme (graduate/student)	x	x
Other	x	x

Appendix II

Fair Work and Equalities Group Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Group

HIE is bound by duties arising from the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty; the Fairer Scotland Duty; Sustainable Procurement Duty and Scottish Government key policies around Inclusive Growth and Fair Work.

The role of this group is to support the development (including periodic review) of relevant policies for HIE that will be presented to HIE LT for consideration and ultimate endorsement, and from this to support the development and delivery of key corporate messages; to support and guide relevant corporate activities across and for HIE that make the relevant optimum contribution to HIE's duties and its role in achieving the Scottish Government's key relevant policies.

The group will take a leadership role across HIE, ensuring understanding of HIE's role, internally and externally, and empowering staff to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and ambitious in contributing to Equalities and Fair Work.

Terms of Reference: Working Group

- To develop and refresh as appropriate HIE's role, policies, goals and objectives in pursuit of Equalities and Inclusive Growth, including Just Transition principles.
- To ensure that HIE is compliant in implementing various statutory duties associated with relevant legislation e.g. Public Sector Equality Duty; Fairer Scotland Duty, Sustainable Procurement Duty, Human Rights Act etc.
- To raise awareness and good practice in the areas of equalities and fair work to staff and, where appropriate, clients.
- To maintain oversight via monitoring and reporting of HIE's full relevant range of Equalities and Fair Work plans, activities, processes and outcomes. Where a change in process is required, recommendations will be made to the Business Process Change group for final decision.

- To recommend annual priorities across all areas of HIE's operations and policies to HIE Leadership Team (LT), where they are relevant to equalities and fair work.
- To act as a topic reference and consideration forum, to advise colleagues, SG, and others on relevant Equalities and Fair Work issues that might arise.
- To act as a sounding board for HIE's evidence base on equalities.
- Standing items for the working group will be established and refreshed at least annually.
- This group does **not** take responsibility for formally considering ISAs nor AIPs, which remains subject to HIE's delegated authority policy.

Terms of Reference: Members

- To provide visible leadership across HIE, but notably to their teams and colleagues to plan, and deliver priority actions around HIE's Equalities and Fair Work ambitions and policies.
- To develop and support internal and external communications around HIE's role, policies, priorities, and contribution towards Equalities and Fair Work.
- To be proactive in identifying opportunities and threats for HIE to consider in relation to its priorities and activities around Equalities and Fair Work.
- To support appropriate alignment of organisational resources to deliver this activity proportionately and with regard to wider HIE objectives.
- To encourage and promote coordination and alignment of plans with key stakeholders.

Membership

The Group will meet at least three times per year. The Chair may convene additional meetings as necessary to discuss specific issues. An action note will be distributed after each meeting by the Enterprise and Community Support secretariat. Approved action notes will be circulated to LT for information.

Membership of the Group is as follows:

- Chair: Director of Enterprise and Community Support and member of LT
- Head of Planning and Partnerships, Strategy and Regional Economy
- Head of Client Products and Services, Enterprise and Community Support
- Senior HR Managers, Human Resources
- Development Manager, Innse Gall (representing area offices)
- Area Manager, Moray (representing area managers)
- Head of Growth Deals, Strategic Projects
- Head of Marketing and Communications, Marketing and Communications - to attend meetings for relevant agenda item/s and receive meeting agenda/note
- Head of Procurement, Corporate Services
- Head of Property and Infrastructure

- Business Improvement Manager, Business Improvement and Internal audit
- Development Manager, Enterprise and Community Support
- Equalities Project Manager, Enterprise and Community Support
- Staff Forum Representative
- Head of Information Governance, Executive Office - to attend meetings for relevant agenda item/s and receive meeting agenda/note
- Senior Development Manager, Strategy and Regional Economy
- Representatives of aspects of fulfilling HIE's public body duties, as appropriate to the agenda.

Any member can bring members of their team as appropriate to the agenda in order to facilitate understanding of activities agreed at the meetings.

The group is non-decision making, so there is no minimum quorum.

Monitoring and Review

- The group will report to LT once a year.
- The arrangements will be reviewed every two years.