

Dublin City Council Gender & Diversity in Local Government Programme Proposal

22nd October 2020

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

1. Project Background and Description

In response to the call for proposals to support women and diversity in local government, Dublin City Council has developed a series of individual projects which, taken together, form a programme that supports greater participation of women and people from diverse backgrounds through the journey from using their right to franchise to sustaining their involvement in political leadership.

The proposals have been developed through engagement with the Elected Members, the Women's Committee of Dublin City Council, the Protocol Committee and the Franchise and Equality Units within the organisation.

The proposal can be broken down into initiatives under the following three themes :

1. Increasing voter turnout/encouraging people to use their right to vote
2. Encouraging women and people from diverse communities to participate in local government
3. Supporting women and people from diverse communities when in local government

2. Project Scope

1. Increasing voter turnout/encouraging people to use their right to vote

A series of **targeted information campaigns** to engage with communities where voter turnout has been low, or where knowledge of the Irish voting system may be limited. These campaigns would include:

Young people:

- Working with local schools and Comhairle na nÓg to develop a voter education programme for secondary schools
- Voter registration campaign with Union of Students of Ireland and Spun Out, Ireland's Youth Information Website to encourage registration of students

Areas with low-turnout:

- Focused information campaigns and initiatives in areas with lower voter turnout e.g. North Inner City, these would include banners outside schools and crèches, leaflet drops / posters in international shops and cafes to highlight people's entitlement to vote

Diverse communities:

- Building on our recent initiative partnering with an NGO in the homeless sector to raise awareness and engagement with homeless voters, we propose to develop similar partnership approaches with NGO and voluntary sector to deliver voter education campaigns with specific groups
- Develop targeted campaigns using Instagram and social media (including for example translating videos / material into other languages (Polish / Moldovan), promoting existing Departmental material in different languages across social media platforms

2. Encouraging women and people from diverse communities to participate in local government

Kathleen Clarke Commemorative Series – an advocacy programme, commemorating the first female Lord Mayor of Dublin, that highlights female role models in elected politics including:

- A series of short videos of female Councillors for social media to highlight their role and contribution to the City Council (2020)
- Curate and host an exhibition of the work and achievements of women Councillors and women officials in the City Council over the centuries. The exhibition will demonstrate the difference the increase in women as elected members and promotion of women officials has made to the lives of women in Dublin (2021)
- A programme of talks, workshops (virtual) targeting a female audience, women's agencies, advocacy groups etc. The programme would be hosted by female Councillors discussing the leadership role of Dublin City Council, their motivation to enter politics, their route into politics, the hurdles encountered, and highlighting why women should pursue careers in politics (2022 – 50th anniversary of Kathleen Clarke's death)

The role of the Councillor

- Develop a 'Councillor for a week/month' project with Comhairle na nÓg, where a Comhairle Council member shadows an Elected Representative and reports on their experience

3. Supporting women and people from diverse communities when in local government

- Undertake a **qualitative research project** to work with women and people from diverse backgrounds to learn of their experience and any barriers encountered to becoming candidates or sustaining participation in local government, with a view to developing a practical programme in the run up to the 2024 Local Elections to increase the number of candidates from diverse backgrounds

- Support the **Women’s Committee of Dublin City Council**. Our Elected Members have recently established a formal cross party female Committee as a sub group of the Protocol Committee to strengthen women’s cross-party co-operation and to raise the collective capacity of female Councillors. Their aim is to work within the structures of the Council both on the chamber floor and within the various committees to maximize their overall impact on policies & decision making. This is the first of its kind in local government.

Their areas of work include :

- Economic- Lobbying aspect seeking improved maternity and carer benefits
- Safety- working within the Council to implement various mobility and safety measures to ensure Dublin is a safe city to travel around.
- Council - Submitting joint motions, questions, seeking funding, as well as, general support for each other.

4. Implementation Plan

The initiatives outlined above can commence before the year end and will run over the next 24 months. The programme is adaptable and scalable depending on the funding available and all actions can be carried out online with COVID public health guidelines.

5. High-Level Timeline/Schedule

The indicative timeline for each element of the proposal is set out below

Theme	Project	Indicative timeline
Voter information campaigns	Young people	September / October 2021
	Areas with low turnout	October – November 2021
	Targeting diverse communities (NGO partnerships)	July - November 2021
Kathleen Clarke Commemorative Series	Video series	November 2021
	Digital Exhibition	Jan 2021
	Workshop programme	2022
Role of the Councillor:	Comhairle na nOg programme	January 2021 – September 2021
Sustaining participation	Qualitative research project	January 2021

	Women's Committee support	Ongoing
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FUNDING REQUIREMENT

The indicative costs for each element of the proposal are set out below

Theme	Project	Indicative cost
Voter information campaigns	Young people	€20,000
	Areas with low turnout	€10,000
	Targeting diverse communities (NGO partnerships)	€10,000
Kathleen Clarke Commemorative Series	Video series	€10,000
	Digital Exhibition	€30,000 (includes cost of curator & exhibition)
	Workshop programme	€20,000
Role of the Councillor	Comhairle na nÓg programme	€5,000
Sustaining participation	Qualitative research project	€20,000
	Women's Committee support	€10,000