

Equally Ours- About Our Membership



We currently have **over 80 members, associates and observers**, covering a wide range of equality, human rights and social justice issues.



Many of our members are themselves networks and provide services and policy advocacy at local, regional and national levels.



Most of our members are led by people from the communities they serve.



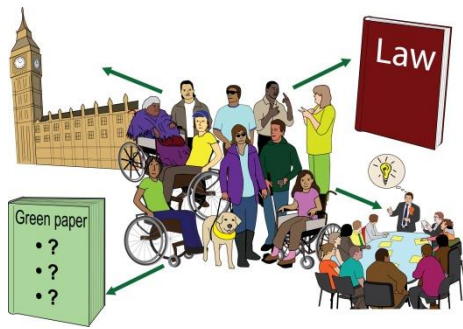
Our membership is at the centre of who we are and what we do; playing an active and important role in influencing and driving social change (this is when we groups of people work together to make changes in our society, for example our political systems).

This powerful collective and connected voice is our greatest strength.



We develop our policy priorities, positions, and recommendations together with our members and associates. In bringing together our experiences and everything we know we are able to see what our common causes are and plan joint action.

A key principle is equality of voice for members - no matter how large or small member organisations or their networks are.



Our approach to influencing policy is to have positive discussions with government and other policymakers. We aim to look forward and focus on solutions.

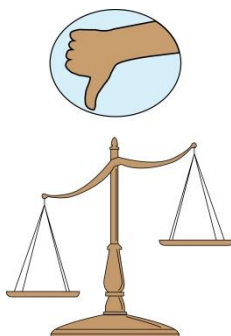


We are a critical friend where needed (this means we are honest about what works and what isn't working - we speak the truth).

This may be different from our members' approach and we value the different roles and approaches that create changes in our society.

How we develop policy positions with members:

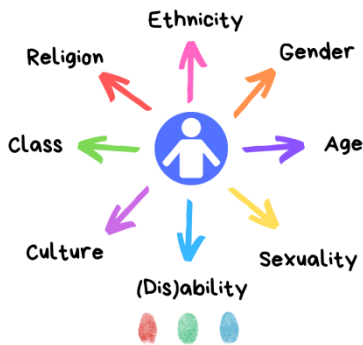
1. By identifying shared priorities, where a joint approach can make a difference



We work on public policy issues where the problems affect many communities or where there are issues, and where the causes of the problems are shared and include discrimination, structural inequality



(this is when a group of people have unequal status in relation to another group of people within systems such as education and healthcare) and are excluded from society.



We develop and recommend shared policy solutions that can benefit many communities, as well as taking into account intersectionality (this is when individuals or groups experience more than one form of discrimination such as racism, sexism, or ageism).



Using our joint voices, we raise these shared issues and solutions with policy makers, as well as highlighting issues that are specific to individual groups, so that policy makers can take a complete and holistic approach.

This helps prevent poor policymaking. And crucially it helps prevent divide and rule tactics by policy makers.

2. By providing a pan-equality and human rights voice to respond to government legislation, policy initiatives, consultations and input to research projects



We influence social change with a shared voice that reflects all the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 and the wide range of social issues experienced. This helps to show that the issues matter to a wide range of people and groups.

3. By providing a platform where members can provide their expertise to contribute to policy development



We encourage our members to get involved in developing policy, by drawing on their expertise and lived experience (their own or that of the people their organisation works with and for). This supports us to plan ahead and be clear about our policy positions.

Agreeing positions: consensus



We are almost always able to reach general agreements about policy positions.

We believe that all members have an equal voice in shaping policy. Associates can contribute to shaping policy.



As a big network, we know that our members and associates will have different views and opinions about some policy areas depending on the communities they represent and the different views within their communities.

We have a range of ways to handle differences of opinion and approach:

- Members can opt out of any policy position that they cannot support for whatever reason. Associates always have to actively opt-in to policy positions in any case.

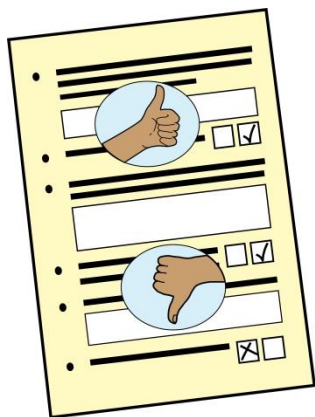




- If there isn't enough agreement between members, we can put across a range of views to policymakers.

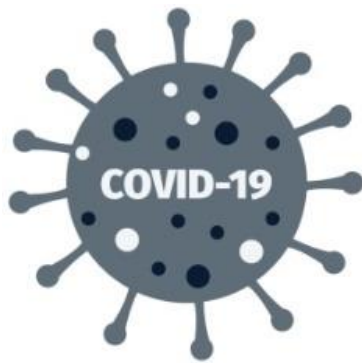


- We will use a human rights based approach where helpful as a guide to discuss and take into consideration everyone's rights. Where necessary we will use recognised standards and laws to help us balance and look for answers. We will record areas of agreement and areas of disagreement.

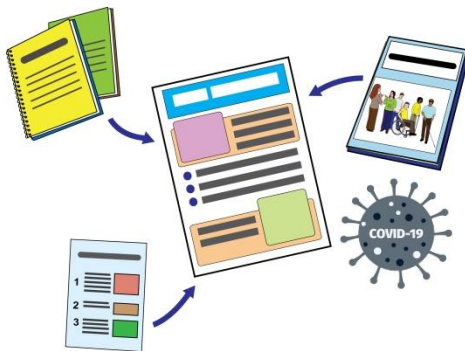


- If there isn't enough agreement and the issues are difficult or cannot be resolved within the available time and resources, Equally Ours may decide not to take a position and to spend time on issues where there is agreement and the opportunity to create positive social change instead.

What are Equally Ours doing in response to Covid-19?



Equally Ours is committed to working with our policy and research network members, Government, policy makers, funders and the voluntary sector to make sure that the response to and recovery from Covid-19 is considerate and meets the needs and rights of us all.



We provide important information about the issues and problems that people and communities are facing due to the virus, and help to find practical solutions.

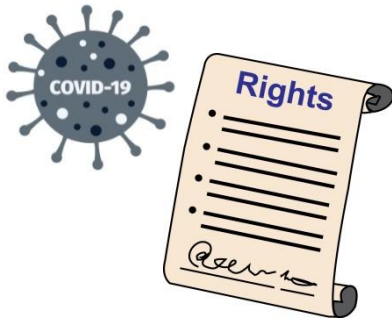
We at Equally Ours are focusing on:



Making recommendations to the government and policymakers about the issues the people and communities we work with want them to act on, and bring our members and wider networks together to organise joint responses.



Continuing our planned policy influencing and capacity-building work where possible, using digital instead of face-to-face working.



Helping our network, the voluntary sector and policymakers stay up to date with developments. We will be adding to this page regularly so that policymakers can access Covid-19 related equality and human rights information all in one place.