



Equality and diversity policy of the Victorian Bar

The Victorian Bar is committed to promoting equality and diversity in the legal profession. Such an approach is consistent with the principles of justice, integrity, equity and the pursuit of excellence upon which the Bar is founded.

Diversity is an inclusive concept and encompasses matters such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, colour, nationality, age, disability and marital and parental status.

The Bar recognises that a strong and vibrant Bar is a diverse and egalitarian one where a variety of views are encouraged, accommodated and respected. By fostering diversity we will ensure that the very best lawyers are drawn to the Bar and given the opportunity to participate in the Bar's decision-making processes. In this way, the Bar is enriched and, with a greater skill-set to draw upon, the Bar will be more effective in performing its institutional role in the practice of the law and the administration of justice. At an individual level, members will be encouraged to promote their abilities and make a real contribution to the legal profession, as well as broader society.

Objectives

As part of its commitment to promoting equality and diversity, the Bar adopts the following goals:

Membership

The Bar aims to:

- remove any impediments which may discourage competent and dedicated lawyers from joining or remaining at the Bar; and
- foster a strategy of inclusion and equality throughout all levels at the Bar that supports and enhances the diversity of the legal profession in Victoria.

Development

The Bar will co-operatively improve all of its members' opportunities for success. If particular areas of need are identified the Bar will move expeditiously to specifically address these.

Leadership

A vibrant Bar also encourages advancement for all its members. The Bar will promote a process of advancement for all its members with the requisite ability and experience. The Bar actively encourages members to seek to participate in decision-making structures within the Bar. The Bar also aims to have membership and leadership of committees and working groups of the Victorian Bar that reflects the diversity of the overall membership of the Bar.

Benchmark

In order to effectively benchmark against international best practice in this area, the Bar will set targets, measure, compare and engage. The Bar will give effect to this policy by adopting its own set of “Best Practices”.

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