



IFOMPT Release

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Edition 22 - October 2024

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity- How are we tracking?

From the President -
Paolo Sanzo



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) within an organisation refer to a commitment to fostering an environment where every individual, regardless of their background, has equal access to opportunities and resources. Following a very successful and enjoyable 50th Celebration and Conference a new Executive Committee (EC) was elected, and a group of qualified individuals was elected based on the current processes in place, but this group of individuals were all male. The concern is not one of sex/gender alone but for any other possibility of lack of variability in representation such as only having individuals from a specific part of the world (e.g., all from the northern hemisphere or from Europe), all being non-English speaking, or all from high income countries.

Equity involves recognizing that different people may need diverse levels of support to achieve fair outcomes. It means addressing systemic inequalities and ensuring that policies and practices do not disadvantage certain groups. Diversity focuses on the representation of varied identities, perspectives, and experiences within the organization, including aspects such as race,

gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomic background. An organisation rich in diversity is more likely to be innovative and adaptable, as it draws on a wide range of ideas and approaches.

Inclusion, on the other hand, is about creating a culture where all people feel valued, respected, and supported. It goes beyond just having diverse representation; it ensures that everyone has a voice and that their contributions are recognized and appreciated.

Inclusion involves actively engaging with and listening to all individuals, creating spaces where differences are not just tolerated but celebrated. It requires change and being brave. This can lead to a more cohesive and motivated group, where individuals feel a sense of belonging and are empowered to reach their full potential. Organisations that prioritise EDI are better positioned to attract top talent, foster satisfaction, and drive long-term success. The goal is to consult with the delegates to help us improve on our EDI at all levels within our organisation.

We have already had consultations with internal and external stakeholders to suggest some considerations for changes to the current EC. Online IFOMPT Team Talks and Town Hall Meetings, online forums, and a task force that is being led by an outside consultant that is an expert in this area are all in process as well.

These are just a few of the ideas being implemented to chart our path forward to ensure EDI across everything that we do because **We are better together**, and **We are IFOMPT!**

EDI Awareness and Training resources - Where to start



In the recent survey and discussions amongst the IFOMPT Team, several participants indicated that they have not previously included EDI considerations when electing office bearers, representatives, or individuals to perform tasks. In some cases, the parent bodies also do not give this any consideration. IFOMPT as an organisation is committed to fostering an environment that is fully inclusive and based on sound EDI principles

In order for our members to be more aware of EDI and what it entails, there are numerous free resources out there that can guide the way on how to become an inclusive organisation. The list below is not extensive and not intended to endorse any single training option - it is a list that can serve as a start to upskilling:

➤ NonprofitReady offers multiple courses on this topic.

<https://www.nonprofitready.org/free-diversity-equity-inclusion-courses>

➤ The Open University has free learning material on its open resources website.

<https://www5.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/free-learning-materials>

➤ SC training has a free diversity and inclusion course through a micro-learning format.

<https://training.safetyculture.com/course/diversity-and-inclusion/>

➤ University of Virginia course on Foundations of Diversity and Inclusion at Work.

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/foundations-of-diversity-and-inclusion-at-work-teachout#syllabus>

We are IFOMPT



The elected Executive Committee (EC) of IFOMPT is made up of 5 men and this is not acceptable. In the past 4 years, the EC has endeavoured to live the values of equity, diversity, and inclusivity (EDI) but we note that as an organisation we may fall short. This arises not intentionally but that is not material, what is important is what we commit to do to address issues such as the diversity of our membership.

In order to address this and the wider issues of EDI in IFOMPT, we have agreed to the following:

We will immediately establish an EDI working group to review IFOMPT's practices to ensure we are equitable, inclusive, and diverse appointing an independent chair. We will charge this committee with exploring all our activities to consider anything that we need to change. We will approach this with curiosity, respect, and compassion and a commitment to change, where required.

We will call an extraordinary/special general meeting to address our governance to ensure that we give ourselves the opportunity to address the lack of diversity in our current EC. This was addressed by World Physiotherapy in its changed constitution in 2019 so we have models and experiences that we can draw on. We will consult with the Member Organizations and other stakeholders to ensure we have consensus on the way forward.

IFOMPT Committees, Task Forces and Advisory Groups



The Executive Committee will shortly be calling for nominations for the following Committees, Task Forces and Advisory Groups - note that as with all IFOMPT appointments, special attention will be given to ensure our EDI commitments are met with all the appointments:

Committees: Standards Committee (Nomination process completed) and Business and Finance Committee

Task Forces: Constitutional Review Task Force, Standards Document Review Task Force, IFOMPT Learning and Professional Development Task Force, and EDI Task Force.

Advisory Groups: Advisory Group on Membership Development (Appointment process completed) and Advisory Group on Marketing and Communication.

Please consult with your organisations and nominate candidates to serve in the various groups - note that any member of an MO, AMO or RIG can serve in these groups.

Latest IFOMPT Developments

“Strength lies in differences, not in similarities”

Stephen R. Covey

Our name has changed

At the 2024 General Meeting, the members overwhelmingly voted in favour of changing our name to the International Federation of Manual and Musculoskeletal Physical Therapy (IFOMPT) Incorporated. We have made a small change to the logo to reflect this change.



Strategic Planning - 2025

The current strategic plan of IFOMPT covers the period until mid-2025. Considerable progress has been made in reaching all the objectives set and we will continue on this pathway.



We have started the process of compiling the new plan that will set the course for the next five to ten years.

As a part of this process, all Member Organisations and Registered Interest Group Delegates or their alternates are invited to an in-person strategic planning day on 28 May 2025 in Tokyo, Japan. This will be on the day before the World Physiotherapy Congress commences and more information on the venue and details around preparation work for the strategic planning day will follow in due course.



IFOMPT 2024 Bursary Scheme

The IFOMPT Conference in 2024 extended a number of bursaries to attendees from LDC countries to attend the conference. One of the recipients, Nureesah Hendricks has submitted her reflections on attending the conference:

Born during South Africa's apartheid era, I faced immense challenges and systemic barriers from the very beginning of my young life. My parents' courage in defying unjust laws to build a family and provide opportunities for us as their children, laid the foundation for my own resilience and determination. The experience of being initially accepted to study medicine, only to have that opportunity revoked based on my race, was quite devastating. However, I found a new path and ultimately discovered my true calling in physiotherapy.

My decision to study physiotherapy at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) proved to be transformative. UWC's commitment to providing quality education to students from all backgrounds during a pivotal time in South Africa's history equipped me with the skills and perspective needed to thrive in the evolving healthcare landscape of the "new South Africa."

My journey from a student facing systemic barriers to conference attendee and presenting a poster at the IFOMPT conference in Basel, Switzerland was undoubtedly a significant milestone in my career. Attending the IFOMPT conference as a sponsored attendee and poster presenter was an enriching experience that validated my expertise and contributions to the field. My research on Thoracic Outlet Syndrome garnered attention and sparked engaging discussions with fellow professionals from all around the world.

The warm welcome I received from SVOMP (Swiss Association for Orthopaedic Manipulative Physical Therapy) and IFOMPT made me feel valued and respected within the international physiotherapy community. This sense of belonging and recognition was particularly meaningful given my background and the obstacles I have overcome. Throughout the conference, I had the opportunity to engage with leading researchers, educators, and clinicians in physiotherapy. These interactions exposed me to cutting-edge research, innovative treatment approaches, and diverse perspectives on patient care.

The knowledge gained from attending presentations, workshops, and informal discussions with colleagues has undoubtedly enhanced my clinical practice and research endeavours.

The conference also provided a platform for me to share my unique insights and experiences as a physiotherapist from South Africa. My background and journey resonated with many attendees, fostering meaningful connections and potential collaborations for future projects.

The exposure to global trends and best practices in physiotherapy at the IFOMPT conference has further fueled my passion for continuous learning and improvement. I have returned home with renewed enthusiasm, fresh ideas, and a broader network of professional contacts, all of which will contribute to my ongoing growth as a physiotherapist and researcher.

My experience at the IFOMPT conference in Basel has served as a powerful reminder of not just how far I have come regardless of adversity but also how inspirational it is to exchange ideas and knowledge through "building bridges".

Thank you once again to SVOMP and IFOMPT for an invaluable experience which I will never forget!

