

# SUPPORTING INTERCULTURALISM IN YOUTH WORK



## **Practical Guidelines for doing Intercultural Youth Work**

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## Introduction

As the national umbrella body for youth work in Ireland NYCI has implemented a series of measures to enhance interculturalism in youth work. Through its newly appointed Intercultural Project staff NYCI offers guidelines, facilitates networking and gives training that will empower youth organisations to embed interculturalism in their own youth work practices and policies. NYCI promotes interculturalism as the responsibility and commitment of all in the youth work sector in working towards achieving a society based on equality and inclusion for all. Interculturalism should be seen like other inclusion and equality issues - such as gender and disability - embedded in our thinking, planning, implementation and evaluations with a concerted emphasis on equality of outcome.

This document responds to Frequently Asked Questions that NYCI receives on the inclusion of cultural and minority ethnic young people and leaders in youth work.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### I have no idea how to start including young people from diverse cultures.

Many people are wary of including youth from minority ethnic backgrounds into their youth organisations because of fears around language, culture and racism.

- Don't be afraid of making mistakes; embarrassing "*faux pas*" are seldom irretrievable and it's a valuable learning opportunity for all
- It is impossible to know enough about other cultures – the best way to learn about other cultures is directly from the people themselves – don't be afraid to ask
- Don't worry if you don't feel you have the right 'PC' or politically correct language – any language at all is better than not taking action for fear of offending – communication and dialogue is the key. Common terms are outlined below.

- Treat racist issues initially as you would treat a bullying incident – serious racist issues will need a specific training and coordinated response
- Pick up the phone or send an email to an NYCI Intercultural Project Officer over any issue of concern and we will guide you through it
- The guidelines below should answer many practical 'how to' questions you might have.

The most important thing is just to do it. The added value that comes from working with people from diverse cultures is worth any extra effort.

### What terms should I use when talking about young people from diverse cultures?

There are lots of terms that you can use when talking about people from diverse cultural backgrounds. All the following terms are frequently used. Some people will find some of these terms inappropriate but our advice is that you initially use what you are comfortable with:

- Foreign-national
- Non-Irish national
- Immigrant
- Migrant
- People from overseas
- New communities
- New Irish
- Minority Ethnic
- Minority Ethnic background – this is the favoured term
- Ethnic Minority
- Cultural minority
- Minority language people – people whose first language/mother tongue is not English
- Black
- Brown – sometimes used by people speaking of themselves but not generally appropriate for others to use
- Black and Minority Ethnicities (BMEs) – an official term used by NCCRI and also in UK
- Cultural and Ethnic Minorities – a term that consciously includes Travellers who are recognised officially as a cultural minority group in Ireland but not an ethnic minority group

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The following terms *should be avoided* when referring to people from diverse cultural backgrounds

- Non-national – this implies that the person has no nationality. Most people have a nationality and this term negates their personal identity. Negative words are also exclusionary.
- Coloured – this is a term that has links to the apartheid era and causes considerable offence.

REMEMBER – in intercultural work we are talking about engaging with people from minority ethnic and cultural backgrounds. However, the ethnicity in question refers to their *background* and not necessarily their own definition of themselves. Identity - and ethnic identity in particular - is self-defined. It is acquired rather than given. Do not assume someone else's ethnicity and try not to describe someone by your own definition of their ethnicity. If in doubt ask them how they like to be described. More and more people would prefer to describe themselves by their more complex and often mixed ethnicities. Also African-Irish, Polish-Irish, Nigerian-Irish, Indian-Irish, etc. will be used more frequently into the future and these choices should be encouraged as it denotes a sense of belonging in a community as much as a personal identity. For this reason we use the term 'minority ethnic background' to acknowledge a person's past, current or future ethnicity.

### How can we plan for the inclusion of young people from minority ethnic groups in our youth projects/groups/clubs?

Organisations we have consulted with have advised that there are several steps that need to be taken to successfully integrate young people from minority ethnic backgrounds into youth clubs/services.

#### **Step 1**

Most youth workers advise that it is preferable to introduce youth from a minority ethnic background straight into existing services. Some groups have chosen to work with a minority ethnic group separately to Irish majority groups in order to build trust, confidence and capacity. Others work with groups from minority ethnic backgrounds in a parallel process with their existing services. However all advise that **integration must be the end**

**and stated goal** from the outset and there must be effective engagement with the majority ethnic group as soon as possible and in a sustainable format.

#### **Step 2**

**Prepare** both youth from minority ethnic backgrounds - and their parents - and Irish youth, in advance of meeting each other. Training and activity packs for Irish youth and youth workers are available from NYCI on global justice issues and equality and inclusion issues. If the groups aren't fully ready to engage have taster sessions such as open days, etc.

Parents of youth from minority ethnic backgrounds must be consulted with; clear explanations of youth work given and fears must be allayed.

Develop a proactive strategy to recruit volunteers and professional staff from different ethnic groups to become leaders and supporters.

*"Each group participated in an anti-racism workshop which consisted of exercises that challenged young people's thinking regarding difference. This was critical to the success of the event"*  
Youth worker

#### **Step 3**

**Plan** your programme in accordance with needs. Art, Drama, Music, Sports and computer-based programmes work best.

#### **Step 4**

**Be ready** for conflict and respond proactively. Take a no-tolerance approach to racism.

#### **Step 5**

Develop an interagency approach with local services to **respond** to issues that arise

### How should we prepare and organize intercultural events?

Remember that intercultural events are at best introductory as a mechanism towards real inclusion. Involve everyone in the event – remember everyone has culture but we seldom are conscious of our own. Any event should ideally be an interagency endeavour. For example your local ethnic liaison police officer will often get involved in this type of activity. Consult with people who have done it

before e.g. Integration of African Children in Ireland (IACI). The following are guidelines:

- Food is mandatory
- Music/entertainment is mandatory
- Funding should be provided to contributors – for food, travel and child care - but be careful or clear about offering something that cannot be sustained in the long term. People from minority ethnic backgrounds often work on a different economy scale – in relation to child care - to what you might be familiar with so ask what their costs are. It is usual to ask for receipts for your funding bodies
- Volunteerism is an accepted norm in many cultures so it is usually easy to find volunteers
- Invite a variety of service providers to be at the event
- Where possible engage an outreach worker for the duration of the event organisation
- Integrating Ireland, your local VEC or your local Council should have contacts for groups in your area
- Funding support for intercultural events are usually readily available from local businesses. RIA (Reception and Integration Agency) also offers small grants for intercultural events.

### **What is the best way to start working with/recruiting young people from minority ethnic backgrounds?**

As with all good youth work practice it is important to plan any intercultural work well. Youth workers should become aware of some of the needs of the young people they will be engaging with and develop contacts with a support person or organisation who will help to smooth the process. If you are bringing two existing groups together you will have to do preparation work with both these groups so that the integration is positive and sustainable. That said, engaging with young people from a minority ethnic background should never be avoided for fear of doing the wrong thing. If you apply good youth work practice to any situation you will do good intercultural work. Remember that what you do not know – about a young persons needs, cultural considerations etc. - can usually be discovered by asking the young people themselves. Website resources and training opportunities are also available (see below) but these are never a substitute for talking directly with the young people and their parents. The following guidelines outline

some key considerations in creating a service that young people from minority ethnic backgrounds will want to engage with:

- Create a welcoming environment – food is an integral part of most cultural groups interactions. Try to find a way to include food provision at meetings however small. If you can't provide food, try to explain why
- Have visual imagery in your centres that shows you are open to diversity – show images of people from different parts of the world, pictures of flags from around the world, welcome signs in several languages
- Create a safe environment where a trusted person is present
- Specialised psychosocial support may be needed depending on young persons personal history – develop relationships with other agencies that can offer the appropriate support where necessary
- Peer Mentor Programmes work very well – involve the young people you are currently working with in any changes
- Be flexible in your programming – your organisation's customary ways of doing things may not work with different cultural groups. Explore what activities are the most relevant to your group members. Art, sport, music, drama and computer-based projects are good options for mixed cultural groups
- Skills development is often hugely important to many people from minority ethnic backgrounds
- Culture proof your programming (ask yourself if what you are planning will work cross-culturally). For example witchcraft is a very powerful idea in many cultures – replace any mention of witches/devils/fairies/spirits in your planned activities with something more neutral

*I used Theatre of the oppressed: very simple game, used idea of chase game; one person nominated as devil; game called 'Devils Advocate' and did with mixed group; some young ME participants froze in fear; quizzed them on why? (to them) devil is powerful., Culturally I found this disempowered me as I didn't expect the reaction; I found I wasn't culturally aware; I learned more information about cultural issues/beliefs and parameters I can work with; Language can also be misconstrued/ miscommunication; I feel youth workers need to be more aware; it made me stop and think; never thought for a second that a word would frighten them  
--Youth Worker*

- Gender issues can often arise. Deal with them as sensitively as possible taking equality guidelines into consideration
- Consider that members from minority ethnic backgrounds may not have adequate financial resources to take part in activities

### **How should we inform ethnic groups of the availability of the youth service?**

Involving youth from minority ethnic backgrounds usually takes more recruitment time – advertising using leaflets or posters is not adequate – going out and meeting the young people and their parents is essential.

- Advertising on radio, websites and in newspapers can be effective as members of minority ethnic communities see this coverage as a symbol of their acceptance in society.
- Open days and taster events can also be effective
- Develop interagency networks and take part in information forums to reach the target group and to promote the work of your organisation. This gives an opportunity to engage in dialogue particularly regarding concerns that parents might have.
- Visit services that young people already access and trust such as schools or churches

*Parents were sometimes reluctant for their children to join youth groups particularly if they do not know what the group would be doing. Some have the fear or concern that their young people will get involved in bad behaviour or “with the wrong crowd”. They would be concerned that their children could be bullied or abused for being different. Their children may be mixing with peers who have different norms of sexual behaviour and this caused concern.*

*Many times it was a lack of information and understanding about the projects/groups/clubs – its aims, benefits, structure, activities etc. For example: in some cases parents thought they had to pay for everything. There is a need to be far more proactive in communicating this information to the groups and to give much more specific detail. There was also a greater need for personal contact, dialogue and discussion with parents and ethnic groups and with the agencies that supported the groups.*

*Youth officer*

- Reassure parents about your programme. Explain the ethos of your organisation and the safety guidelines you follow. Explain your organisation's role in detail as youth organisations in other countries may differ dramatically. Many parents are wary of letting their children get involved as they often observe Irish children as having more freedom and less respect for their parents. Reassurance is crucial. Where possible, translate material for parents.

*Parents should be involved; I'm very protective about my child; when no information is given this is one of our problems. We believe in respect, we believe children should be respectful. We want it written out and not have our children telling us*  
*Minority Ethnic parent*

### **Are there things we should know about working with young people for whom English is not their first language?**

Language barriers can exist but they are often not as difficult to cope with as you might imagine:

- Don't assume everyone has strong literacy skills
- It is always good to give information on meeting times, places and dates in written form as well as verbally
- Repeat instructions if it is not clear that someone has understood
- Don't be afraid to ask people to repeat what they have said if you have not understood what they are trying to communicate
- Don't expect to understand everything someone says to you – give your conversations time, ask questions to clarify things and make sure you know just enough to move forward. Some detail will often remain unclear
- Telephone conversations can be more difficult so people from minority ethnic backgrounds can be reluctant to ring up for information, registration etc. Clear information on how the young person can drop-in personally to get information needs to be provided
- Where possible provide information in translated form – especially for parents who may not have the English language skills of their children



- Plan programmes that do not rely heavily on language proficiency such as art, music, sport, drama, computer skills etc.

*People lack information; it might be on radio but not many understand it; many parents can't read English so they don't understand newsletters, leaflets, /brochures helps if you come and speak or provide information in a persons own language*  
*Minority Ethnic community member*

### **How do we respond to issues and difficulties that are likely to arise?**

- Trust building cannot be over estimated – youth from minority ethnic backgrounds will often have had bad experiences in the past and their trust may have been eroded. If you offer a trusting relationship to someone from a minority ethnic background, be prepared to maintain that relationship. Do not offer what cannot be maintained
- When you develop a relationship with someone from a minority ethnic background it can be interpreted as a friendship rather than a relationship based on service provision. When you enter into a relationship you should be careful about the commitment you are making, enter into it in a manner that you can maintain, be mindful of the trust you need to build and make sure your role is very clear. Having a trusting relationship allows you to deal with most issues that can arise.

### **What about cross-cultural misunderstandings?**

- Values will often differ cross-culturally – attitudes to drink, sex, religion, social behaviours etc will diverge. Some cultural differences present what may seem like insurmountable barriers. Inevitably, change and compromise is needed from both sides to be able to work well together. It is also important to remember that people from a particular culture will not share all of the same values. Many issues can be discussed and resolved at an interpersonal level
- In Ireland it is common for people to want to find a measure of connectedness with new members of a group. This may involve a series

of questions as to the person's background, family, relationships, places they live or have attended school etc. This way of connecting is not possible with many people from minority ethnic backgrounds so there can often be a sense of discomfort for some Irish people based entirely on this need to connect. With time and familiarity this unease usually abates.

- Advice on cultural misunderstandings is available from a number of sources. Ask questions from other members of a cultural group so that you understand what is happening. Send an email to [anne@nyci.ie](mailto:anne@nyci.ie) on any concern small or large. Consider doing cultural competency training.

### **Can you give us information on different ethnic cultures?**

There is no doubt that cultural differences do have to be considered in culturally diverse youth groups. For example some cultures may not be as expressive and outspoken as western culture; mannerisms and codes of behaviour can be different and these can give rise to misinterpretation and misunderstandings. However, a concise guide on cultural differences based on ethnicity is not easy to provide as the scale of the information is too vast. There are usually several distinctly different ethnic groups living in one country - for example there are over 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria alone - so even providing information based on one nationality may not be particularly helpful. Neither is it possible to be definitive about any one cultural group as people are individuals as well as cultural individuals. Furthermore cultural traits vary considerably within ethnic groups – there is no one definitive culture that is evident for each ethnic group. There are currently approximately 200 different languages spoken in Ireland today so it is difficult to determine which information would be most relevant as groups may engage with people from many different minority ethnic backgrounds. However, information is available on the web and these resources can be very useful, especially if you are meeting someone for the first time. They include information about religion, feast days, festivals, languages and other important facts. We do advise that the best source for learning about someone's culture should be directly from the young people or their parents themselves but do remember that individuals may not necessarily be able to describe their own culture very well. For most of us our culture is largely invisible to ourselves but we will be

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able to talk about common practices and traditions. For a more detailed understanding of cultural differences we recommend intercultural training.

#### **Web based resources –**

<http://cultural.profiles.spirasi.ie/>

This is an easy to navigate portal site that allows you to view several different cultural profiles based on nationality, religion or ethnic group. The site was developed primarily for health care workers so specialist health sites are featured including Cross-Cultural Health Care, Baylor School of Medicine, Ethnomed, and American Public Health Association. Other sites included are UNICEF, Wikipedia, BBC, CIA, Library of Congress, and a Canadian cultural profiles project.

**Pavee Point** offers excellent information on Irish Traveller culture. See [www.pavee.ie](http://www.pavee.ie). They also have regular information evenings in their centre in Dublin.

#### **Scouting UK have developed these fact sheets on different religions.**

- [www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185019.pdf](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185019.pdf)
- [www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185024.pdf](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185024.pdf)
- [www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185094.pdf](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185094.pdf)
- [www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185089.pdf](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185089.pdf)
- [www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185095.pdf](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/library/hqdocs/facts/pdfs/fs185095.pdf)

**Irish Girl Guides** have produced an intercultural activity resource pack which includes helpful fact sheets on various religions. See [www.irishgirlguides.ie](http://www.irishgirlguides.ie)

#### **Understanding the political situation in a young person's country of origin:**

- European Country of Origin Information Network [www.ecoi.net](http://www.ecoi.net)
- Human Rights Watch [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)
- The International Crisis Group (ICG) [www.crisisweb.org](http://www.crisisweb.org)

#### **Practical advice**

NYCI Intercultural project staff are available to give you direct information or guidance on cultural issues that might arise in your youth organisation.

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### **What training is available from NYCI on working with young people from a minority ethnic background?**

NYCI has five training modules on working with ethnically diverse youth groups. These will be available from January 2009 and will each be run twice during the year. NYCI can advise on other Intercultural training opportunities. Trainings can also be given on request to organisations in response to their own requirements.

#### **NYCI Intercultural training programme 2009**

- 1 Designing an intercultural programme
- 2 Intercultural awareness and cultural competency
- 3 Practical supports for doing intercultural youth work
- 4 Tackling racism and managing conflict in relation to racism
- 5 Developing intercultural policies and implementation plans (2 day course)

For more information, see:  
[www.youth.ie/youth\\_work/training\\_calendar](http://www.youth.ie/youth_work/training_calendar)

### **What can we do about tackling racism at our youth service?**

Racism has a major impact on the mental health and well-being of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Take active steps to prevent and address racism at your service including the development of clear rules and policies.

Actively promote the value of interculturalism and increase the knowledge about different cultural groups at your service.

#### **Ideas for preventing racism**

- Take part in special events such as intercultural festivals
- Acknowledge and celebrate special cultural days (Eid, Divali, Chinese New Year etc)

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- Promote positive images of people from a range of different cultural backgrounds, for example in the graphics you use in promoting your service, and the posters you display
- Talk to young people about their culture and background as part of your normal conversation. However, do not ask questions that might provoke bad memories. Refugees and asylum seekers will have gone through traumatic experiences; these should not be brought up in a youth work setting
- Organise activities for young people that increase their awareness of other cultures. For example, services in areas with a low number of minority ethnic young people could organise combined activities with services in other areas which have a high number of minority ethnic young people. These activities provide an opportunity for young people to learn about other cultures and experiences through fun and social programmes

### Responding to racism

- Treat racist issues initially as you would treat a bullying incident – with a no-tolerance approach and in the context of a group charter that highlights respect. Serious racist issues will need a training element and a coordinated response. Interagency work has been shown to be crucial in tackling community-based racism and bullying.
- If someone experiences racism it should be reported to the appropriate body. See [www.nccri.ie](http://www.nccri.ie) for its publication which will tell you when its appropriate to bring it to the attention of the Gardaí. Youth workers can report racism on behalf of or in assistance with someone from their group.

NYCI offers anti-racism training and resources for anti-racist activities

NCCRI has a number of web based anti-racism training resources on [www.nccri.ie](http://www.nccri.ie)

NYCI has an excellent anti-bullying resource that could be used to tackle racist bullying [www.youthhealth.ie/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Bullying/bully.pdf-complete\\_and\\_final\\_copy](http://www.youthhealth.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Bullying/bully.pdf-complete_and_final_copy)

### Can you offer information on young people who are asylum seekers, refugees, or unattached young people?

Many youth organisations work with vulnerable minority ethnic groups such as asylum seekers, refugees, separated children, aged-out minors, and children of undocumented migrants. The young people you are working with may have specific legal, health or educational needs that may be unfamiliar to you. None of these needs should preclude your engagement with the young people.

#### Definitions:

- **Asylum seeker:** someone who has sought asylum in Ireland due to fear of persecution in their home country. They live in direct provision centres, are entitled to attend school up to the age of 18, and receive €19.10 a week. They cannot work. They enter a legal system once they apply for asylum which is currently up to three stages in length. The process can take several years and is extremely traumatic
- **Refugee:** someone who has been granted asylum. They are entitled to everything an Irish person is entitled to except that they must be in Ireland three years before accessing free 3<sup>rd</sup> level education or applying for a passport.
- **Separated Child** (sometimes referred to as unaccompanied minor): a person under the age of 18 who has arrived in Ireland without a guardian and who applies for asylum. They will be under the care of the HSE and will live in specialist hostels or in foster care.
- **Aged out minors:** a young person who came to Ireland as a separated child who has reached the age of 18. They lose the care of the HSE and must move into the adult direct provision hostels. Most have reached an age when they can no longer access full time education and therefore are very vulnerable.
- **Undocumented migrants** (sometimes referred to as illegal immigrants): a number of young people become illegal due to either their or their parent's visa expiring. Often this is through no fault of their own. For young people it often becomes an issue when they reach university age as they can only access university as a foreign student which is usually too expensive for them. They also cannot work legally so they have to rely on illegal work to survive. Sometimes they have lived in Ireland so long



that they do not have the language skills to return to their parent's country of origin.

### **Can you give brief guidelines on legal issues, needs, and supports for asylum seekers, refugees and other vulnerable migrants?**

- Develop contact with a local support body. Although it is a good idea to know something about the specific pressures facing young asylum seekers – re. education and living conditions - it is not necessary to know the legal process in great detail. You will come to know it in time and where necessary you will become aware of the young people's particular needs
- Asylum seekers cannot leave the state (26 counties or 6 counties respectively ) except in very extreme circumstances and only with advance permission from RIA (Reception and Integration Agency)
- Asylum seekers are not *entitled* to attend 3<sup>rd</sup> level courses but they are *allowed* to do so if they have sponsorship or support. Consider sponsoring asylum seekers that you are working with to do a course or to develop work related skills
- Asylum seekers are not allowed to work but they can do voluntary work and expenses can be paid to them to cover their costs.
- Asylum seekers and refugees should not be asked about their experiences in their own home countries as they may be too traumatic to recall. The other young people in the group should also be discouraged from asking prying questions.
- Young asylum seekers will want to engage with your youth service to get away from their situation for a while, to be recognised for themselves and not their status and they will want to forget about their situation for some time so it is best to not ask about it.
- Sometimes tensions can appear between young people from different minority ethnic groups. The strain of living together in hostels and shared dormitories can exacerbate previously held prejudices or ethnic conflicts from their countries of origin. Maintain your ethos of respect at all times. Write and maintain group contracts. Never take sides. Consider anti-racism training for the whole group.

- Young asylum seekers and other minority ethnic young people will have very little money to take part in activities. Provide transport and food where possible. Extra supports will usually be needed for activities that involve wearing specific clothing. Avoid asking the group to wear specific clothes for events or activities as this may not be possible
- Some integration-based funding programmes do not allow you to work with asylum seekers. These funding programmes are designed for refugees or migrants. Some integration-based funding schemes do not allow you to work with EU citizens.

### **Key specialist support bodies**

For specific up-to-date information it is best to stay in touch with a local support network as immigration advice is constantly changing. Advice and contact details of local support groups is available from the Intercultural Project staff at NYCI and also from the following organisations:

- **Integrating Ireland** has regional networks throughout Ireland. They work principally with minority ethnic groups throughout Ireland and they may be able to help young people to access your services whilst also offering advice and support to both you and the young people [www.integratingireland.ie](http://www.integratingireland.ie)
- **VEC Youth officers** will have contact details of local groups in your area that work with minority ethnic young people. The VECs also offers language support in various centres around the country [www.cdysb.ie/publications/Document/Youth%20Officers%20Contact%20List.doc](http://www.cdysb.ie/publications/Document/Youth%20Officers%20Contact%20List.doc)
- **Immigrant Council of Ireland** is an advocacy body on immigration related issues [www.immigrantcouncil.ie/](http://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/)
- **Migrants Rights Centre** works with workers from minority ethnic backgrounds including undocumented migrants [www.mrci.ie](http://www.mrci.ie)
- **Irish Refugee Council** amongst its other work areas the IRC offers specific advice on Separated Children, Aged-out minors and other young asylum seekers [www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/](http://www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/)
- **SPIRASI** is a service provider working with asylum seekers and refugees. They have specific expertise on working with survivors of torture. [www.spirasi.ie](http://www.spirasi.ie)
- **Refugee Information Service** offers advice to asylum seekers and refugees especially in relation to family reunification [www.ris.ie/](http://www.ris.ie/)

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- **Reception and Integration Agency (RIA)** is the government body with responsibility for asylum seekers living in direct provision centres [www.ria.gov.ie/](http://www.ria.gov.ie/)
- **Refugee Legal Service (RLS)** is a free legal aid service for asylum seekers. Asylum seekers may also choose to go to private solicitor rather than use the services of the RLS [www.legalaidboard.ie/lab/publishing.nsf/Content/Refugee\\_Legal\\_Service](http://www.legalaidboard.ie/lab/publishing.nsf/Content/Refugee_Legal_Service)
- **NCCRI (National Consultative Committee on racism and Interculturalism)** The website continues to offers advice on [www.nccri.ie](http://www.nccri.ie)
- Include a commitment to interculturalism in any equality work or strategic planning you are already doing to maximise your own resources
- Network and work in an interagency way so that work is not duplicated
- Access small grants such as Community Foundation or RIA (Reception and Integration Agency) to assist young minority ethnic people to:
  - travel to events, courses, meetings
  - meet other groups
  - access programmes and training courses
  - experience different aspects of Irish culture

### **Are there intercultural policy templates available?**

We encourage organisations to develop their own policies and practices so that there is ownership of the process. We also advise that policies are both in keeping with current thinking and standards and are adapted to the unique strengths, methodologies and values of each organisation. However, the NYCI Intercultural Project staff will assist you in developing policies and will provide sample templates.

### **Where can we access funding to enable youth organisations to embrace interculturalism?**

Funding support can enhance the scope of intercultural projects but lack of specifically allocated funds should not be a barrier to doing good intercultural work – there are resources available that can and should be used:

- Employ volunteers, particularly from minority ethnic backgrounds - the culture of volunteerism is very strong amongst many cultural groups in Ireland. Volunteer Centres Ireland ([www.volunteer.ie](http://www.volunteer.ie)) has many more volunteers on its books than it has placements for them.
- Use the resources that other services have available to offer you – for example training support from NYCI, activity packs developed by other organisations (NYCI, IGG etc), policy development from similar organisations to your own, utilise web-based resources that already exist, and networking forums such as that of Integrating Ireland.

Inevitably, good intercultural work will demand more resources especially the employment of key staff, in particular outreach staff. Increasingly, funding is being targeted at groups who can demonstrably show that they are working with young people from diverse backgrounds including people from minority ethnicities. The following are excellent resources for sourcing funding opportunities:

**1. The Irish Fundraising Handbook - 6<sup>th</sup> edition**, published by CREATE, the national development agency for collaborative arts, has just been published in association with Clann Credo (Social Investment Fund), The Wheel, and with financial support from the Citizens Information Board. ISBN 978-1-869895-07-5

This excellent Handbook presents:

- Grants, awards and other supports for voluntary non-profit and social organisations
- Key information on 700 sources of funding and support – public and private
- Guidance on fundraising practice, charity regulation, tax exemptions and much more
- It is available from CREATE for €20, plus €3 p+p. For information, contact [fh6@create-ireland.ie](mailto:fh6@create-ireland.ie) or Tel: 01-4736600

**2. Meath 4 Community** is an excellent website developed by Meath County Council with hundreds of funding opportunities listed and an easily accessible search facility [www.open4community.ie/meath2008/](http://www.open4community.ie/meath2008/)

**3. Community Exchange** sends a weekly e-mail bulletin to subscribers which includes upcoming funding opportunities. To become a subscriber go to [www.activelink.ie/ce](http://www.activelink.ie/ce)

## Can you give us examples of good practice?

There are numerous examples of good intercultural practice in youth work that NYCI has been collecting. We are keen to know about more projects. Examples of a range of good practice initiatives and learnings will be put on our website so that they can be shared by everyone. If you have examples please send details to [anne@nyci.ie](mailto:anne@nyci.ie)

### **Good Practice Projects include:**

- Youth clubs have been set up with asylum seekers living in accommodation hostels (KDYS)
- Research projects have looked at the experiences of minority ethnic young people (NYCI)
- Community action projects engage with minority ethnic groups in volunteer work projects (Peacecorps Localise)
- Mentoring programmes to individually support young people from minority ethnic backgrounds (Foroige)
- Various art and integration programmes – see IN2, the new NYCI publication [www.youtharts.ie/node/32](http://www.youtharts.ie/node/32)
- Developing intercultural policies (Scouting Ireland)
- Developing activity packs (IGG, Eco Unesco)
- Encouraging young people from minority ethnic backgrounds to get involved in Dail na nÓg
- Proactive engagement and inclusion in many clubs and groups' normal activities with no great fuss but with genuine openness and accommodation of needs

Details of the above projects will be available at [www.intercultural.ie](http://www.intercultural.ie) during the Summer 2009

### **Learnings include:**

The following advice was given by youth workers:

“Spend time getting to know the young people”

“Building up trust and a sense of safety and stability is crucial”

“Youth leaders turning up every week to where the young people are (e.g. hostels) and actively looking for the young people in order to get them involved really helped”

“Security, reliability and stability are very important. It is important to know that the group/club will always be run at a certain time or place. It is important to get the young people in a group together so that they get time to know each other and norms of positive codes of behaviour are developed. In the structured youth group they learned to get on together and listen to each other”

*“The personal touch in recruiting volunteers from minority ethnic backgrounds was a critical factor. Word of mouth is also a good method where volunteers from ethnic groups can recruit others. In one case they designed their own recruitment materials and handouts for this purpose. Advertising the clubs in local papers was viewed as very important and exciting as it gave the volunteers and young people recognition. Just signing forms was not a good idea as potential volunteers were suspicious of divulging information without personal contact.”*

Youth worker

## What activity resources are available online?

**NCCRI** anti-racism activities for schools  
[www.nccri.ie/sch-pack.html](http://www.nccri.ie/sch-pack.html)

**Show Racism the Red Card** sports based anti-racism activity pack [www.theredcard.ie/index.html](http://www.theredcard.ie/index.html)

### **NYCI**

[www.youthdeved.ie](http://www.youthdeved.ie) has a large number of publications including:

#### **Life stories:**

[http://www.youthdeved.ie/resources/publications/life\\_stories\\_2004](http://www.youthdeved.ie/resources/publications/life_stories_2004)

#### **All Different All Equal:**

[www.youthdeved.ie/resources/publications/all\\_different\\_all\\_equal\\_ireland\\_2006](http://www.youthdeved.ie/resources/publications/all_different_all_equal_ireland_2006)

#### **Give Stereotyping the Boot**

[www.youth.ie/issues/equality/stereotyping\\_of\\_young\\_people\\_resource\\_pack](http://www.youth.ie/issues/equality/stereotyping_of_young_people_resource_pack)

**Irish Girl Guides** new excellent intercultural activity pack covers a wide age range  
[www.irishgirlguides.ie/](http://www.irishgirlguides.ie/) or contact NYCI

**Anne Walsh** (Intercultural Project Officer)  
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**Elaine Mahon** (Intercultural Outreach Worker)  
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**SALTO-YOUTH** a European web-based guide with an extensive number of resources on cultural diversity [www.salto-youth.net](http://www.salto-youth.net)

For activities based on themes go to

[www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/?SALTO=jke70c8ocgojvarbillgus71e6](http://www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/?SALTO=jke70c8ocgojvarbillgus71e6)

If you know of other good resources please let us know and we will share them on our website.

### **What other useful resources are available?**

North West Inner City Network has developed an excellent Intercultural Toolkit – entitled Opening Doors. Contact 01 6774025 or [info@nwicn.ie](mailto:info@nwicn.ie)  
[www.nwicn.ie](http://www.nwicn.ie)

**CDYSB** have recently published a Toolkit of Essential Guidelines for Good Youth Work Practice [www.cdysb.ie/publications/publications\\_details.cfm/pckey/27](http://www.cdysb.ie/publications/publications_details.cfm/pckey/27)

For those working with or thinking of working with young asylum seekers and separated children:

[www.youthdeved.ie/resources/publications/steps\\_to\\_wards\\_inclusion\\_2003](http://www.youthdeved.ie/resources/publications/steps_to_wards_inclusion_2003)

**Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI)** have recently produced an excellent resource guide for community workers who are working with migrants [www.mrci.ie](http://www.mrci.ie)

*Many thanks to all the many people who have contributed to this document.*

*If you would like to contribute your experiences or questions to this document we would like to hear from you.*

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