



IHO File No. CBSC-1

**CIRCULAR LETTER 42/2024**

**07 November 2024**

**CALL FOR CANDIDATES  
TO JOIN THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) PROJECT TEAM**

Reference: 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IHO Council – List of Decisions and Actions – Decision C8/24.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. In the above reference, the IHO Council invited IRCC, assisted by the IHO Secretariat, to issue a Circular Letter for the establishment of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Project Team by the end of 2024, to draft an IHO Resolution on Gender Balance/ Inclusion.
2. Considering the reference, the IHO Secretariat invites Members States to nominate candidates for the DEI Project Team before the **6 December 2024** by email ([cl-lc@iho.int](mailto:cl-lc@iho.int)).
3. The first meeting of the DEI Project Team, during which the Chair and the Vice Chair will be elected, is planned for January 2025.
4. A Scoping Team established by IRCC-16 prepared the draft ToR in Annex for the IRCC DEI PT.

Yours sincerely,  
On behalf of the Secretary-General

Luigi SINAPI  
Director

Annex: Terms of Reference

**Terms of Reference**  
**IRCC Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Project Team**

**1. Objectives**

The future of hydrography depends on the ability of all constitutional elements forming the hydrographic community to inspire, recruit and maintain a competent workforce. By supporting greater diversity, equity and inclusion - something that is currently addressed too little in the hydrographic community - organizational bodies will be able to recruit from a larger talent pool, and be able to improve productivity and retention at all levels ranging from national Hydrographic Offices via Regional Hydrographic Commissions to IHO subordinate Committees, Working Groups and Project Teams to the IHO Secretariat.

The IHO Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Project Team (DEI PT) will help address this challenge by drafting an IHO Resolution to increase DEI as the formal foundational basis, identifying best practices and developing recommendations on how to anchor DEI specific activities in the upcoming IHO Three Year Work Programme 2027 - 2032. Of note, Gender Balance will be an important part but not the only focus of the work of the Project Team. Assisted by the IHO Secretariat, the Project Team will compile the draft Resolution and the referring recommendations based on a report to IRCC with the goal to submit to Council C-9 endorsement and final approval of the fourth Assembly in 2026 for inclusion into the IHO Work Programme 2027-2032 based on the revised IHO Strategic Plan 2027 - 2032.

Specifically, the objectives of the Project Team are to:

- a. Identify existing programs within similar national or international bodies that the hydrographic community could learn from (including the UN Gender Balance Goals and document as a potential fundamental base layer).
- b. Secure input from IHO Member States to guarantee an all-inclusive process.
- c. Draft an IHO Resolution to increase DEI in the hydrographic community with IHO Secretariat's assistance.
- d. Identify a list of prioritized activities with the biggest impact to meet the ambitions as laid out in the draft IHO Resolution to increase DEI in the hydrographic community.
- e. Investigate and identify organizational, functional and resource requirements and gaps for the prioritized activities.
- f. Investigate and identify organizational, reputational, financial, legal and other risks to the IHO and Member States.
- g. Finalize a draft IHO Resolution to increase DEI in the hydrographic community and a report of recommendations for inclusion into the IHO Three Years Work Programme 2027-2032 to IRCC17.

## **2. Authority**

The Project Team's authority is under the IRCC and will report accordingly.

## **3. Composition and Chair**

- a. The PT shall comprise of leadership of IHO Member States (MS) and a representative of the IHO Secretariat. It may include subject matter experts (SME) as determined by the PT Chair by invitation only. A membership list shall be maintained and posted on the IHO website.
- b. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be determined by vote of the PT representatives present and voting at the beginning of the first PT meeting.
- c. If a secretary is required, it should normally be drawn up by a member of the PT.
- d. If the Chair is unable to carry out the duties of the office, the Vice-Chair shall act as the Chair with the same powers and duties.
- e. SMEs membership should be by invitation from the Chair.
- f. SME membership may be withdrawn if a majority of the PT representatives represented in the PT agree that an SME's continued participation is no longer needed to the work of the PT.
- g. All members shall inform the Chair in advance of their intention or inability to attend meetings of the PT.

## **4. Procedures**

- a. The PT should work as a priority through a combination of correspondence and teleconferences. The PT should meet in person only if PT members collectively agree on the compelling need. Meetings should normally not occur later than nine weeks before a meeting of IRCC in order to allow the PT time to prepare reports for the IRCC.
- b. Decisions should generally be made by consensus. If votes are required on issues or to endorse proposals presented to the PT, only the PT representatives may cast a vote. Votes at meetings shall be based on one vote per member represented at the meeting. Votes by correspondence shall be based on one vote per member represented in the PT. Participation in meetings, either in-person or remotely, two-thirds (2/3) of the representatives of the PT, shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is required before the adoption of any decisions. Decisions shall be adopted by a majority of the PT members participating, with the minimum number of affirmative votes being at least one-third (1/3) of all members-of the PT.