

About the GM Equality Alliance (GM=EqAl)

GM=EqAl is a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) alliance which aims to influence policy making in Greater Manchester (GM). We bring together the voices and experiences of people and communities who face disadvantage, prejudice and marginalisation to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are at the forefront of decision making at the highest levels in all governance structures across GM.

Context

VCSE organisations have long been aware of the entrenched inequalities in our society, which have been suddenly spot lit by Covid-19, and in many cases sadly made worse.

Covid-19 has also prompted a renewed commitment at the GM Combined Authority (GMCA) and the GM Health and Social Care Partnership (GMHSCP) to build an effective equalities infrastructure for the sub-region – one that learns from and is rooted in the lived experience of those groups who have traditionally been sidelined in policy work.

GM=EqAl has a pivotal role to play in this ecosystem. We aim to be a focal point for equalities, connecting strategic work down to the grassroots level and ensuring that the views and expertise of marginalised communities and their allies are routinely tapped into, that better data is collected and that leadership across sectors becomes rapidly more diverse.

GM=EqAl is unique in taking a pan-equalities approach, focusing on the intersections between different forms of inequality, channeling multiple perspectives and building trust through dialogue.

Previously the GM Inclusion and Wellbeing Partnership (IWP), the GM Equality Alliance strengthened links with GM policy makers and produced a [VCSE statement](#) to inform GM Covid-19 recovery planning. However, to be an effective 'home' for strategic VCSE equalities work and to maximise our impact, influence and reach, we now need to swiftly expand in two different ways: by growing the wider membership network and by recruiting new active members to the GM=EqAl Working Group.

How to get involved

Join the wider network

No group is too small to be part of the GM=EqAI network. There are just a few questions to answer when you register so we can filter communications appropriately.

Who should sign up?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">representatives of equalities organisations or grassroots groups covering any community of experience, minoritised identity or culturerepresentatives of local or regional equality, diversity or inclusion (EDI) networks, including VCSE and public sector EDI leadsindependent equalities experts
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a broad network of individuals who can be drawn on to advise the group, share information, take part in consultations, act as communication channels to and from particular communities of interest, take part when able in specific pieces of work and to be supported to engage and influence policy on behalf of GM=EqAI
Skills/knowledge/motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">strong connections and trusted relationships with a particular community / communities of identity or experiencea desire to raise awareness, understanding, visibility and influence of marginalised groupsORprofessional involvement in furthering equality, inclusion and diversity
Minimum expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">to read GM-EqAI communicationsto respond to occasional direct questions and surveys
Deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">None – this is a permanent open call

To sign up to join the GM=EqAI Network, please complete the registration form [here](#).

Join the GM=EqAI Working Group

We are looking for up to 20 new people whose skills and knowledge will complement those of our existing VCSE members and who will increase our coverage geographically and in terms of connections to different structures and networks. Places are reserved for a key member of each of the GM Mayoral equality panels we are not yet formally connected to, including the three new advisory panels on Race Equality; Faith; and Women and Girls.

You may already be involved in strategic work, or this may be something that you are interested in but have not had an opportunity to be part of before. New members will receive a full induction and the opportunity to participate in the training being offered to the new [VCSE Collaborative](#), which also currently recruiting new members (there is no conflict of interest if you would like to apply to both).

Around five Working Group members will be elected to a Steering Group to oversee GM=EqAI alongside GMCVO staff. Among other things, the Steering Group will draft agendas and proposals for the Working Group (the decision making body) to consider.

GM=EqAI aims to connect with and support programmes of work within a wide range of GM policy structures, such as:

- GM Population Health Board
- The new GM Independent Inequalities Commission
- The seven Equality advisory panels connected to the GMCA
- The VCSE Leadership Group and Collaborative

- GM Economic Resilience Forum
- GM Community Coordination Cell and its subgroups
- GM Population Health Board
- GM Social Value Network
- GM Humanitarian Assistance Group
- GMHSCP Reform Board
- GM Health and Care Board
- GM Strategic Coordination Group

Role eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • works for a VCSE organisation or consultancy operating in GM • able to contribute time – this will vary but applicants should anticipate approximately ½ - 1 day per month
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • members will share their expertise on specific communities, link GM=EqAI to other forums/networks/panels and collaborate to bring an intersectional perspective to a broad range of strategic structures and work streams
Skills/knowledge /motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • detailed knowledge and experience of equality, inclusion and diversity issues • in-depth understanding of particular disadvantaged communities • enthusiasm for policy and influencing work • ability or potential to contribute to high level meetings
Minimum expectations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to attend a monthly 1- 2 hour meetings • to feedback to and from other GM level strategic meetings • to spend at least 4 hours a month on GM=EqAI tasks • to gather data and intelligence from networks to feed in at a GM level
Benefits and support provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual bursary of £750 per year (£500 for first half-year) available to those who would otherwise face financial barriers to getting involved in work outside of their organisation • access to induction and training in skills needed for the role, including contributing to meetings and leading beyond your organisation
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for expressions of interest: 19th August

To apply to join the GM=EqAI Working Group, please complete our expression of interest form [here](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Hannah Berry at GMCVO (hannah.berry@gmcvo.org.uk)