

## **Our Values Are Reflected in Daily Activities**

As a big city with a multitude of responsibilities, the City of Oulu is well aware of today's global trends and challenges, of which many are related to the human rights or equality, in one way or the other. The challenges are seen in the daily lives of our city employees and Oulu citizen in many ways.

The City of Oulu's values Courage, Fairness and Responsibility are shown in everyday functioning of the city. In the daily interaction, equality means that each Oulu-citizen is met with respect. "Equality in the Functioning of the City of Oulu in 2019-21" is an action plan, which aims to advance equality (*in a wider sense: including treating people in a fair and equal way, gender equality, etc.*) in the activities of the city across all the sectors. Members of the City Council, Oulu City employees, stakeholders, and Oulu citizens all take part in supporting, performing and evaluating this equality work. The daily interaction between people form the basis for the Attractive Oulu.

In Oulu, we need to build the city in a sustainable way so that everyone can feel safe. Cooperation across different sectors and together with non-profit organisations, networks, and citizens is extremely important. For the City of Oulu, responsibility as a value means that we all need to take responsibility of our own behaviour in our daily interactions with others: how with courage and fairness, we communicate our values to current and future Oulu-citizens that Oulu is for us all equally. Openness and transparency in all functioning create feelings of safety and trust towards the city's services and decision-making in Oulu – a city which is for all of us.

In 2019, when the plan was created, Oulu, jointly with national equality organisations, held the Gender Equality Days event. The Gender Equality Days is the main, yearly event on the gender equality field. From 2009 onwards, with the Oulu City Board signing the agreement, the City of Oulu has been committed to the European memorandum on gender equality between women and men. This memorandum has been composed by the European the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). Signing the European gender equality memorandum has been one of the most important actions the City of Oulu has taken towards advancing gender equality and preventing discrimination. Furthermore, the City of Oulu has participated in the Rainbow Rights project as one of the trial municipalities. The "Kaikkien kasvojen kunta" guide, a guide by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (Kuntaliitto), for advancing gender equality in functioning of a municipality (2019) states that "extensive participation has brought along diversity and new insights into the planning process" in the working group which prepares the equality and gender equality plan at the City of Oulu.

The aim for the Interaction Plan of the City of Oulu for 2019-2021 is to develop interaction both between the city and the citizens of Oulu and between the city and its stakeholders – both interaction and engagement strengthen equality amongst citizens, organisations, and other communities.

During the spring of 2019, the city's decision-making was supported by the arrival of the city's ethical guideline, which is used to enhance ethical behaviour on an organizational level, and in which equality aspects naturally play a key role.

Enhancing equality requires on-going work, and this work is there to create a basis, on which the city's values can be shown in our daily activities in Oulu.

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