

Loaded Ladle Anti-Oppression Policy

Preamble/Purpose:

The Loaded Ladle recognizes that although we are an organization dedicated to pursuing social and environmental justice, many of the dynamics of domination, power, and privilege existing within society at large also exist within our organization on both individual and systemic levels. We also recognize that food politics movements in particular may be racist and classist, and we seek to actively work against these currents in food politics movements. Under the auspices of this policy, the Loaded Ladle will develop hiring, safer space, conflict of interest, and complaint and conflict resolution policies.

Limitations:

We recognize that although an anti-oppression policy is useful to protect and support anti-oppression principles and to promote inclusivity, equity, and accessibility at the Loaded Ladle, no policy can abolish oppression within our organization. Fighting oppression is an ongoing process, and is not best achieved through a policy document. This policy is intended to encourage all those involved in the Loaded Ladle to reflect on and work to address their own oppressive behaviors and institutional oppression at the Loaded Ladle. It is also intended to help the organization set concrete goals to make our organizational culture, policies and practice more inclusive.

Definitions (taken from the Sierra Youth Coalition):

Privilege: A right, advantage, favor or immunity specially granted to one, especially a right held by a certain individual, group or class and withheld from certain others or all others. While many aspects of our lives we consider common basic rights, when others are denied them they become privileges. For example, as people of color are 3 times more likely to be pulled over by police, and yet white people are 4 times more likely to actually possess drugs in their car- it becomes a privilege- granted only to white people to safely pass by police.

Oppression: The power and the effects of domination. It refers to the injustices some groups experience as a consequence of institutionalized power and privilege assigned to others. It can also show up as unconscious assumptions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions which are supported by the media and cultural stereotypes as well as by institutions such as schools, governments, companies, organizations etc. Some define it simply as prejudice plus power.

For more definitions see: <http://www.syc-cjs.org/anti-oppression>

Policy Goals:

In accordance with the Loaded Ladle's commitment to working in an anti-oppressive framework, this policy aims to:

- Explicitly recognize and address systemic oppression (including but not limited to oppression based on race, gender, sex, class, sexuality, status, and ability) within Loaded Ladle environment as it manifests in the organizational culture, activities and structure, as well as in individual practice;
- To promote principles of anti-oppression and equity for all peoples and have this reflected in the organization's policies, procedures, and services.
- To outline the steps the Loaded Ladle will take to ensure that Loaded Ladle staff, volunteers, and board members are consistently working to address oppressive dynamics at individual and institutional levels.
- To identify and challenge barriers that currently exist for people getting involved with the Loaded Ladle, accessing the Loaded Ladle's resources, or being employed with the Loaded Ladle, and to work to address those through improving the organization's policies and practice;
- To ensure that the Loaded Ladle's resources are being used in the service of marginalized communities, even where they are not active members of the Loaded Ladle;
- To create an environment within the Loaded Ladle where all forms of discrimination are unacceptable;
- To promote greater involvement of people from marginalized communities in the implementation and evaluation of the Loaded Ladle policies, procedures, and services on an ongoing basis so their perspectives are constitutive of the organization.

Procedures:

Annual Anti-Oppression Review – The Loaded Ladle Board will be responsible for striking a committee composed of Board Members, staff, active members, and other interested individuals to develop and implement an annual review of how the Loaded Ladle is living up to its anti-oppression commitments. This committee will be struck at the beginning of Dalhousie's second semester. Ideally, the review process, including the identification of areas for improvement and proposed solutions, should include as many people from as diverse a segment of the Loaded Ladle's active membership and interested community members as possible, while avoiding a tokenistic understanding of inclusion.

The review should identify key areas for improvement within the Loaded Ladle policy and practice, outline clear and concrete goals within a specified timeframe, and identify the steps needed to meet these goals. Potential areas of inquiry for the review include:

- 1) For whom do we do solidarity servings? From whom do we get requests for Solidarity Servings?
- 2) With whom do we collaborate events?
- 3) Where do we advertise our job postings? What skills do we look for? What kind of language are we using in job call outs?
- 4) Where do we advertise our services? Our volunteer opportunities?
- 5) How accessible (physically and otherwise) are our work spaces?
- 6) What are barriers to participation in Ladle events/servings?
- 7) Who do we seek out to give workshops, trainings, etc? Do we pay people for sharing their knowledge (and make facilitating our trainings more generally accessible)?
- 8) What kind of language do we use in our materials generally? Is it specialist language?
- 9) Is our kitchen welcoming to new people? Does it have a 'clique-y' feel? Do we use inside jokes or terms?

The results of the Review should be presented on the Loaded Ladle's website and at the Loaded Ladle's Annual General Meeting. Feedback should be collected and used for the following year's review.

Anti-Oppression Trainings – Anti-oppression trainings will be provided to Loaded Ladle staff, board membership, active members, and others interested to ensure that there is a basic understanding of the principles of anti-oppression. All Loaded Ladle staff and board members must take part in an anti-oppression training.

Addressing Complaints/Concerns about Anti-Oppression within the Loaded Ladle:

All concerns raised about oppressive or discriminatory practices within the Loaded Ladle will be taken seriously and evaluated to determine whether or not they have a legitimate basis. We will take a good faith approach to dealing with people raising concerns. In general, we will assume that all concerns raised are legitimate, although there may be instances where a complaint is deemed not legitimate. If complaints have a legitimate basis but are considered too vague to be adequately addressed, the individual raising the concern will be encouraged to think about concrete ways to address the concern, and will be dealt with appropriately.

Where the complaint/concern is about the behaviour of an individual active within the Loaded Ladle: Individuals within the Loaded Ladle are encouraged to confront one another about oppressive behaviour and to hold each other accountable to the principles of anti-oppression in a respectful and compassionate way. An informal complaint may be brought to a staff person or board member. The approached staff or board member should make clear to the complainant that they may begin a formal or informal complaint process, and should direct them to the Complaint and Conflict Resolution Committee. The approached staff or board member will not share the name or any other identifying information about the complainant with anyone outside of the CCRC. The individual raising the concern is considered the central decision making body in determining how the complaint be addressed.

For further procedures of a complaint process, see the Loaded Ladle's Complaint and Conflict Resolution Policy.

Where the concern/complaint is about an event, campaign, policy or other initiative of Loaded Ladle at the organizational level: Complaints shall be directed to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will strike a committee comprised of members who are not on the Board and were not involved in the initiative in question. The committee will meet with the complainant(s) and make clear to the complainant (s) that they may begin a formal or informal complaint process. The board of directors will not share the name or any other identifying information about the complainant with anyone outside of the newly formed committee. The individual raising the concern is considered the central decision making body in determining how the complaint be addressed..

For further procedures of a complaint process, see the Loaded Ladle's Complaint and Conflict Resolution Policy.

Responsibilities within the Loaded Ladle:

Active Members/Volunteers – All active members will be responsible for acting in accordance with the principles of the Loaded Ladle's Anti-Oppression policy. Moreover, active members will be responsible for holding other members accountable to these principles. Active members will be considered responsible for modeling anti-oppression principles when doing work or speaking on behalf of the Loaded Ladle.

Board of Directors – The Board will be responsible for ensuring that the Loaded

Ladle's policies and practice adequately reflect and communicate an anti-oppression framework. The Board will coordinate an annual anti-oppression audit of the organization's policy and practice in conjunction with staff, active members, and other interested individuals/groups which is to be presented annually at the AGM. The Board will be responsible to ensure that appropriate tools, training, and resources are made available to staff to facilitate the dissemination of this policy and anti-oppression principles in general to the membership. The Loaded Ladle Board will be responsible for ensuring that the Loaded Ladle policies are in accordance with the guidelines of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission while maintaining and upholding the organizational objectives of the Loaded Ladle. The Loaded Ladle Board will be responsible for ensuring that an adequate and comprehensive process and policy is in place for handling complaints and concern regarding the actions of Loaded Ladle staff and Board.

Staff – Staff will be responsible for educating themselves on anti-oppression principles and practice. Staff will be responsible for working in collaboration with the Board to ensure that all Loaded Ladle operations and events are carried out in accordance with this policy.

Communication of Policy:

The Loaded Ladle Anti-Oppression Policy will be made publicly available on our website, and, where appropriate, be communicated on relevant documents and outreach materials.