

Affiliate Membership Assessment Policy

Policy no: 052

Version: 1

Approved on: 21 May 2026

Approved by: Health Equity Matters Board

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a consistent, transparent and values-based process for the Board of Health Equity Matters to assess applications from organisations seeking Affiliate Membership.

The policy ensures that affiliate organisations:

- Support and advance the mission, values, and strategic objectives of Health Equity Matters.
- Contribute constructively to the organisation's work in health equity and community health and wellbeing.
- Maintain governance and operational standards consistent with the reputation and integrity of Health Equity Matters.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All organisational applications for Affiliate Membership of Health Equity Matters Limited.
- Applications from incorporated organisations, including incorporated associations, companies limited by guarantee, charities, and similar legal entities.
- Applications from unincorporated organisations, networks, coalitions, or community groups.

3. Principles

In assessing affiliate membership applications, the Board will be guided by the following principles:

3.1 Alignment with mission and Values

Affiliate organisations should demonstrate clear alignment with the mission and values of Health Equity Matters, including commitment to:

- Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Australians and respect communities' traditions, views and ways of life.
- Promoting the human rights of all communities and the removal of social and cultural barriers that hold back justice and health.
- Respect for the dignity of all people and value diversity
- Trust in evidence-informed public health approaches

3.2 Contribution to Strategic Objectives

Affiliate organisations should demonstrate capacity, capability and willingness to contribute to one or more of the strategic priorities of Health Equity Matters, such as:

- Ending HIV transmission and improving the lives of people with HIV
- Improving the health of LGBTIQ+ communities
- Strengthening HIV responses in the Indo Pacific
- Delivering operational excellence and sustainability

3.3 Integrity and Reputation

Affiliate organisations must not engage in activities that harm the credibility, independence, or reputation of Health Equity Matters.

3.4 Collaboration

Affiliate membership should support collaboration, information sharing, and collective impact across organisations working in related areas.

- Ending HIV transmission and improving the lives of people with HIV
- Improving the health of LGBTIQ+ communities
- Strengthening HIV responses in the Indo Pacific
- Delivering operational excellence and sustainability

4. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for affiliate membership, an organisation should generally:

- Be a not-for-profit, community-based, research, advocacy, health, or service organisation; or otherwise demonstrate a primary purpose consistent with Health Equity Matters' values and objectives.
- Demonstrate a track record, or credible intent, to contribute to relevant public health or community outcomes.
- Maintain transparent and accountable governance arrangements.

The Board may exercise discretion in determining whether an applicant satisfies these criteria.

5. Application Requirements

Applicants must submit:

- A completed affiliate membership application form.
- A statement describing:
 - The organisation's purpose and activities
 - Alignment with Health Equity Matters' values and objectives
 - Potential contribution to the Health Equity Matters' network.
- Evidence of organisational structure and governance (e.g. constitution, terms of reference, governance policy).
- Details of leadership or authorised officers.

- Other information reasonably requested by Health Equity Matters.

6. Assessment Process

6.1 Preliminary Review

Applications will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer to ensure required information has been provided.

6.2 Due Diligence

The organisation may conduct reasonable due diligence, including consideration of:

- Governance arrangements
- Public reputation
- Funding sources where relevant
- Previous collaborations or partnerships

6.3 Board Consideration

The Board will consider the application and determine whether to:

- Approve affiliate membership
- Request further information
- Approve membership subject to conditions
- Decline the application

Decisions will be made by resolution of the Board in accordance with the Constitution.

7. Assessment of Unincorporated Organisations

The Board recognises that important community initiatives and networks may operate without formal incorporation. Where an applicant is not an incorporated association or legal entity, the Board may consider the application where the organisation demonstrates:

- Clear structure and leadership, including identified responsible individuals.
- Documented purpose or terms of reference outlining the group's mission and activities.
- Accountability mechanisms, such as reporting arrangements, governance processes.
- Community legitimacy, such as demonstrated representation of, or engagement with, relevant communities through trusted community consultation mechanisms.
- Risk management, including clarity regarding who may represent the organisation and enter commitments.

For the purposes of meeting membership requirements, the Board may:

- Require the nomination of a responsible representative for governance and communication purposes.
- Grant conditional or provisional affiliate membership.
- Encourage or require incorporation within a defined timeframe.

The Board retains discretion to decline applications where the absence of incorporation presents unacceptable legal, governance, or reputational risks.

8. Conditions of Affiliate Membership

Affiliate organisations must:

- Continue to operate in a manner consistent with the values and objectives of Health Equity Matters.
- Notify Health Equity Matters of significant organisational changes (e.g. governance, purpose, or legal status).
- Participate constructively in the affiliate network.

The Board may suspend or revoke affiliate membership if these expectations are not met.

9. Periodic Review

Affiliate membership may be reviewed periodically to ensure continued alignment with the mission and strategic objectives of Health Equity Matters.

10. Discretion of the Board

Nothing in this policy limits the discretion of the Board of Health Equity Matters to approve or decline affiliate membership applications where it considers such decisions to be in the best interests of the organisation and its mission

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Who	Responsibility
Board	• The Board of Directors are responsible for the governance of Health Equity Matters • Approve this policy and any updates
CEO	• Support the application of this policy • Lead periodic reviews of this policy

12. Related Policies and Documents

Policy	Title and Hyperlink
	Strategy Plan
006	Code of Conduct
001	Delegations of Authority Policy.pdf
041	Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.pdf

13. Policy History

Date of update	Version	Key changes	Endorsed by	Approved by	Next review
21 May 2026	1	Establishment of inaugural Affiliate Membership Assessment Policy	Audit and Risk Committee	Health Equity Matters Board	May 2028