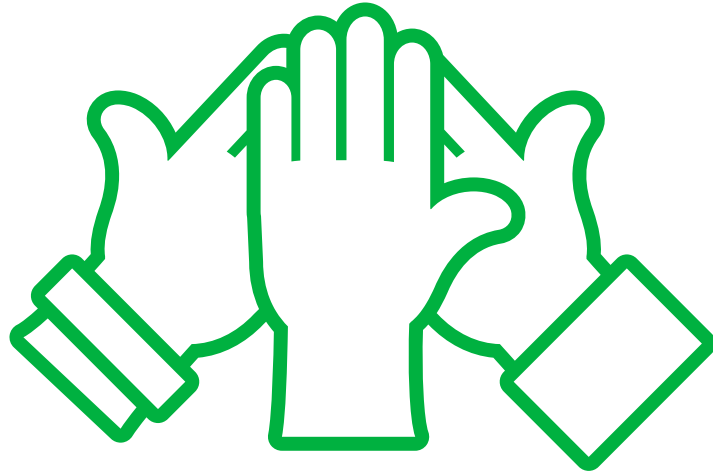


VOLUNTEERING MATTERS



Volunteering Matters Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Please note:

- This Policy covers Volunteering Matters and all associated brands including but not limited to ProjectScotland, #iwill and Get The Gen.

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1. Introduction

This policy supports our values of: Positive, Straightforward, Inclusive, Empowering & Compassionate.

Volunteering Matters is committed to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion and eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. We take a zero-tolerance approach to any breaches or infringements of this policy.

Our ambition is to create and sustain an inclusive environment for everyone who works or volunteers for us or accesses our projects or services. Furthermore, we promote equity as opposed to equality, as we recognise that each person has different circumstances, and therefore we aim to allocate the specific resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

We will create a workplace that opposes all forms of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation by removing unfair and discriminatory policies and practices and by supporting and encouraging our staff to reach their full potential.

The Equality Act 2010 is the key piece of UK legislation which protects and safeguards against all forms of unlawful discrimination. There are nine specific areas (protected characteristics) which are covered including: - age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Who this policy applies to:

All employees, volunteers, beneficiaries, stakeholders, contractors, trustees, and partners.

2. Our Commitment

This policy demonstrates our commitment to actively oppose all forms of discrimination, and to create and maintain an inclusive organisation where our staff can flourish. We recognise the importance of taking a proactive stance in creating equity of opportunity and promoting diversity.

This policy also underpins our recruitment process to ensure that our workforce is representative of the communities that we serve and protects and safeguards anyone who could face any form of discrimination or harassment. We will do this by reducing, challenging, preventing & stopping all forms of unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act.

This policy will also apply to every aspect of employment to ensure that recruitment, promotion, training, development, assessment, benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and service provision are determined based on capability, contribution, experience, and skills.

We will take an approach that supports equity rather than equality. Equality and equity refer to similar but slightly different concepts. Equality generally refers to equal opportunity and the same levels of support for all segments of society. Equity goes a step further and refers offering varying levels of support depending upon need to achieve greater fairness of outcomes. Equality has to do with giving everyone the exact same resources, whereas equity involves distributing resources based on the needs of the recipients.

3. Definitions used in this policy

Protected characteristics

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010: age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Discrimination

Discrimination is unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and includes discrimination by perception and association.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic, such as sex or race. For example, someone is not offered a promotion because they're a woman, and the job is given to a less qualified man.

Indirect discrimination

This occurs when an employer puts rules, policies or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.

Harassment

Harassment occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought, or intend to bring, a complaint or formal proceedings relating to a protected characteristic, or they have given or intend to give evidence or assist someone who has.

Microraggressions

Microaggressions are subtle but harmful actions & behaviour directed at marginalised groups. Microaggressions can be verbal, behavioural, or environmental. Those targeted may include people of colour, women, those with disabilities, religious minorities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people.

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour from a person or group that's unwanted and makes someone feel uncomfortable, including feeling: frightened, less respected or put down, made fun of, or upset.

Examples of bullying at work could include:

- Someone has spread a false rumour about you.
- Someone keeps putting you down in meetings.
- Your boss does not let you go on training courses, but they allow everyone else to.
- Your boss keeps giving you heavier workloads than everyone else.
- Your team never lets you join social events.
- Someone at the same or more junior level as you keep overruling your authority.

The bullying might:

- Be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident.
- Happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls.
- Happen at work or at work social events.
- Not always be obvious or noticed by others.

Reasonable adjustment

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the employment of a person with a disability. For example:

- Making adjustments to premises;
- Re-allocating some of the person with a disability's employee's duties as far as it is reasonably practicable;
- Transferring a colleague with a disability to a role better suited to their disability;
- Relocating a colleague with a disability to a more suitable office;
- Giving a colleague with a disability time off work for medical treatment or rehabilitation;
- Providing training or mentoring for a colleague with a disability;
- Supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for employees with a disability; or
- Any other adjustments that the Charity considers reasonable and necessary provided such adjustments are within the financial means of the Charity.

If a colleague has a disability and feels that any such adjustments could be made by the Charity, they should speak with their Line Manager or contact the HR Team.

Positive action in recruitment

Under the Equality Act 2010, positive action in recruitment and promotion should apply. "Positive Action" means the steps that we can take to encourage people from underrepresented groups to apply to us.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Trustees, the Chief Executive, and ELT to enable the Charity to achieve the objectives of this Policy and to ensure compliance with the relevant Legislation and Codes of Practice.

It is the responsibility of the Trustees to support the ELT to ensure the policy is implemented.

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to coordinate and monitor the effectiveness of delivery of all elements of this procedure.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Inclusion & Communities to provide expertise and strategic guidance to facilitate inclusive practice across Volunteering Matters.

It is the responsibility of all leaders and managers to role model inclusive behaviour.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Human Resources to maintain the policy and provide colleagues with advice and support as needed.

It is the responsibility of Line Managers to ensure that they maintain a close understanding of all elements of this procedure and that this procedure is complied with fully within their department.

It is the responsibility of each employee to familiarise themselves with this procedure and to ensure their own compliance. Every colleague has the responsibility to report any discrimination or unfair treatment that they witness or experience, and to champion this policy in all they do.

It is the responsibility of all volunteers, subcontractors, and agents of the Charity to act in a way which complies with the policy.

It is the responsibility of the HR team and Trade Union representatives to support any colleagues who raise issues or concerns, or experience any form of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation.

5. Framework

Our progressive disciplinary policy applies to any acts of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Employees who are found to have engaged in harassment or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. An employee may appeal against a disciplinary decision in line with our disciplinary policy.

Employees who are found to have engaged in malicious claims, incitement, victimisation, or collusion will also be subject to disciplinary action.

Monitoring will be undertaken of any remedial action (e.g. coaching/counselling/transfer) to ensure that the harassment or bullying has stopped and ongoing support will be available.

The Company will take all necessary and reasonable steps to safeguard an employee who makes a complaint, and any witnesses, from victimisation.

All complaints (both formal and informal) of inappropriate behaviour, will be investigated impartially and dealt with as quickly, sensitively and discreetly as possible.

Our processes are intended to ensure that both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator are treated fairly and with respect. Furthermore, affected employees will receive support and guidance from their Managers, the Human Resources team or the Employee Assistance Programme helpline, as appropriate.

6. What to do if you experience or witness discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation

Any employee who feels they are subject to bullying or harassment should seek advice and support from an appropriate Manager or a member of Human Resources.

Employees should keep written notes of the incidents or behaviours they believe breach this policy. These records should include dates/times of any incident(s) and if possible, the details of any witness(es).

Ideally, if they feel comfortable doing so, the employee should approach the person they feel is displaying inappropriate behaviour bring it to their attention and ask them to stop.

If the behaviour continues the employee should make a written complaint either to their manager, or Human Resources.

Human Resources will then arrange for an investigation to be conducted, including taking necessary statements from all parties involved and any witnesses cited. Sufficient time will be allowed to ensure that the facts are established and properly considered.

Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will be formally advised of the investigation findings.

Depending on the situation the complainant may/ may not be advised if the investigation results in the Disciplinary process being instigated.

The outcome of any proceedings will remain strictly confidential.

Anyone who needs advice or support on this policy or related topics should contact their Line Manager, the HR Team or their trade union representative for additional guidance & support.

7. Training and promotion

All employees will complete annual online Equity, Diversity & Inclusion training.

All new employees will be advised of the organisations policy during induction as well as the various initiatives currently in place to embed it and further develop internal good practice.

If you require any additional training or information or wish to discuss matters contained within this policy further, please speak to your Line Manager, the HR team or the Head of Communities & Inclusion.

8. Monitoring and reporting

Regular management insight and data reporting will be provided and reviewed to ensure initiatives and actions taken are successfully underpinning the policy's ambition.

Appendix A - Protected Characteristics

Under the Equality Act 2010 the previously known 'Equality strands' have become the protected characteristics and include the following (definitions taken from the Equality and Human Rights Commission):

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds)..

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between same-sex couples.

Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples(except when permitted by the EqualityAct).

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A man or a woman

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is toward their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Appendix B - Additional advice and support

Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS)

FREEPOST
Equality Advisory Support Service
FPN 4431

Telephone: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084 - Monday to Friday, 9 - 7pm. Saturday, 10 - 2pm

Website: www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

ACAS

Telephone (London and Wales): 0300 123 1100

Telephone (Scotland): 0808 800 0084

Website: www.acas.org.uk

Employee Assistance Programme

Confidential Care Telephone: 0800 085 1376

Employee Network Groups

Established as peer support groups, and open to all employees to participate who identify with this protected characteristic:

- Pride (LGBTQIA+) Network
- Women's Network
- Disability and Mental Health Network
- People of Colour Network

Appendix C - Related Documentation

- Recruitment Framework
- Microaggressions Policy
- Disciplinary policy
- Grievance Policy
- Equality and Diversity monitoring form
- Recruitment and Monitoring form
- Family Friendly Leave Policy
- Menopause Guide