

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Version Number	V2
Issue Date	October 2023
Review Date	October 2025
Authorised by	Junaid Bobat
Position	QA Manager

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The Flowhession Foundation recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the charity its employees, volunteers, sessional workers and trustees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the Foundation to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
2. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give their best.
3. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment.
4. All individuals, volunteers, sessional staff, associates whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All individuals will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Our staff will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass clients because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the Foundation's goods and services.
6. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies such as The Equality Act (2010)

OUR COMMITMENT

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every individual is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions and/or employee representatives.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with Directors who will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each manager will ensure that:

- all their staff are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- Proper records are maintained.

Trustees in consultation with the Executive Director will be responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy in respect of employees and job applicants, including periodic departmental audits.

The government has published its long awaited response to the consultation on sexual harassment in the workplace. Although employers have been bound by non-discrimination and harassment obligations under equality legislation for many years, these changes will require businesses to put the active prevention of sexual harassment much higher on the corporate risk register.

The new legislation will impose a duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. In addition, the law will be changed to re-introduce liability on employers for third party harassment. Finally, it seems that there will be an extension in the time limits to bring a claim under the Equality Act 2010 (EqA 2010) from three months to six months.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all sessional workers, volunteers and those who interact regularly with the charity. The attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- Ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- Inform the Executive Director if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

THIRD PARTIES

Third-party harassment occurs where a an individual is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic as defined by The particulars enshrined within The Equality Act (2010), by third parties such as clients or customers. We will will not tolerate such actions against our staff, and the employee concerned should inform their manager / supervisor at once that this has occurred. We will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

RELATED POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The Company policies will be reviewed regularly and any discriminatory elements removed.

RIGHTS OF DISABLED PEOPLE

The Flowhession Foundation attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, Trustees in consultation with the Executive Director are required to:

make reasonable adjustments to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
include disabled people in training/development programmes;
give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

EQUALITY TRAINING

A series of regular briefing sessions will be held for staff on equality issues. These will be repeated as necessary. Equality information is also included in induction programmes.

Training will be provided for managers on this policy and the associated arrangements. All managers who have an involvement in the recruitment and selection process will receive specialist training.

MONITORING

The Foundation deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. Accordingly, a monitoring system will be introduced to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.

The system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on employees by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, grade and length of service in current grade. Information regarding the number of staff who declare themselves as disabled will also be maintained.

There will also be regular assessments to measure the extent to which recruitment to first appointment, internal promotion and access to training/development opportunities affect equal opportunities for all groups.

We will maintain information on staff who have been involved in certain key policies: Disciplinary, Grievance and Bullying & Harassment.

Where appropriate **equality impact assessments** will be carried out on the results of monitoring to ascertain the effect of the Company policies and our services / products may have on those who experience them.

The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.

If monitoring shows that the Charity, or areas within it, are not representative, or that sections of our workforce are not progressing properly within the Charity then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, policies and practices as well as consideration of taking legal Positive Action.

GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINE

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Charity Grievance or Harassment Procedures.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Current Disciplinary Procedure.

REVIEW

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Trustees in consultation with the Executive Director.

Signature_____ Chair

The Flowhesion Foundation

01/10/2024

Review date:

01/10/2025