



The Together Project CIO

Dignity & Diversity Policy

Policy last reviewed May 2023

Introduction

The Together Project is committed to encouraging fairness and equality in our working environment. We are committed to creating a work environment where colleagues are treated with dignity and respect and free from discrimination and harassment.

The aim is to be truly representative of all sections of society and our service users, and for each colleague to feel respected and able to give their best.

The purpose of this policy is to guide our practices, behaviours, and decision-making processes to ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are embedded throughout our organisation. We aim to foster a culture that embraces and celebrates individual differences, dismantles systemic barriers, and ensures fairness and equal access to resources, opportunities, and benefits.

Key Principles

Our Dignity & Diversity efforts are guided by the following key principles:

Diversity:

We recognize that diversity encompasses a range of dimensions, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and religious beliefs. We value and respect the uniqueness and contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

Equity:

We strive for equity by acknowledging that individuals may have different starting points and face systemic disadvantages. We are committed to identifying and addressing these barriers to create a level playing field, promote fairness, and provide equal opportunities for all.

Inclusion:

We foster an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to participate fully. We promote an environment that actively welcomes and seeks out diverse voices, ideas, and contributions. We aim to create spaces where individuals feel safe, supported, and encouraged to express their authentic selves.

Our commitment

Everyone is responsible for treating others with dignity, without unfair discrimination, and promoting equality and diversity in all matters.

We aim to provide equal opportunity for all colleagues and the same employment conditions in relation to pay, training and promotion opportunities, regardless of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. These are;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage & civil partnership
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex

Sexual orientation

The Together Project will not discriminate unlawfully against applicants or colleagues on the grounds of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

All colleagues are expected to report any breaches of this policy whether actual or perceived, to the person or to their manager.

Implementation

To uphold our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we commit to the following:

Leadership and Accountability:

The leadership team at The Together Project is responsible for championing diversity, equity, and inclusion. They will set the tone, lead by example, and integrate DEI considerations into strategic decision-making and resource allocation.

A designated DEI has been established to oversee the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of our DEI initiatives. They will collaborate with stakeholders and provide guidance and support to ensure the effectiveness of our efforts.

Recruitment and Hiring:

We will implement inclusive practices to attract diverse candidates for employment and volunteer positions. This includes ensuring job advertisements use inclusive language, using diverse recruitment channels, and proactively reaching out to underrepresented communities.

During the recruitment process, we will give all candidates the opportunity to request reasonable adjustments to reflect their individual needs and circumstances.

Our selection processes will be fair, transparent, and free from biases. We will provide equal opportunities for all candidates and consider diverse perspectives in decision-making. We welcome candidates with criminal convictions and will assess their suitability for employment on a case-by-case basis, ensuring fairness and respect for all.

Training and Development:

We will provide ongoing training and development opportunities for staff members and volunteers to foster awareness, understanding, and skills related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Training programmes will address unconscious bias, cultural competence, inclusive communication, and other relevant topics. These programs will be tailored to the specific needs of different roles within the charity.

Policies and Procedures:

We will review and update our policies and procedures to ensure they align with our DEI goals and principles. This includes promoting equal opportunities, preventing discrimination and harassment, and addressing any systemic barriers that hinder inclusion and equity.

Clear mechanisms for reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, harassment, or other violations of our DEI policy will be established. We will provide a safe and confidential process for individuals to raise concerns or seek support.

Engagement and Collaboration:

We will actively engage and collaborate with diverse communities, organisations and stakeholders to ensure that their voices are heard and their lived experiences are embedded into our ways of working.

Our Dignity & Diversity Charter

The Together Project will:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all colleagues are recognised and valued.
This commitment includes training managers and all other colleagues about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
All colleagues should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow colleagues or volunteers, service users, partners, suppliers and the public.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow colleagues or volunteers, service users, partners, suppliers, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's disciplinary procedures and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.
- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all colleagues, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Decisions concerning colleagues being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in Dignity and Diversity policy.
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the Dignity and Diversity policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Managing complaints

The Together Project takes any allegations or instances of breaches of this policy extremely seriously and is committed to investigating thoroughly and fully.

Complaints and concerns should be made following the procedures set out in The Together Project's Grievance policy. Use of the organisation's Grievance policy does not affect a colleague's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

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