

REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST - Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

1.0 Introduction

1.1 REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST has a strong value base and one of our key values is the equality of humanity. REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and promoting diversity in all of its activities. Within this context, this policy affirms REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST's commitment to establishing and developing equal opportunities and diversity in its employment practice, as an expression of its values as well as of good practice.

1.2 This policy applies to:

- Recruitment, Selection and employment of permanent, temporary, volunteer staff, contractors and consultants.
- Learning & Development
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Provision of services i.e. identification, development, implementation and monitoring of projects and selection of beneficiaries.
- Board and Committee Members.

2.0 Statement of Intent

2.1 REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will not, and requires that its staff do not, discriminate directly or indirectly, on any of the following grounds:

- Race
- Ethnic origin
- Nationality
- Culture
- Gender
- Marital status
- Religion
- Disability (covering sensory & physical disabilities, learning disabilities & mental health)
- Sexual orientation
- HIV status
- Age
- Social class background
- Political opinion

This list is intended to be illustrative and is not exhaustive.

REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will take action to positively promote equality of opportunity and diversity. Any discriminatory behaviour, including harassment or bullying by individuals or groups will be regarded extremely seriously and could be regarded as grounds for disciplinary action, which may include expulsion or dismissal.

2.2 Definition of Direct and Indirect Discrimination

2.2.1 It is important that the term "discrimination" is properly understood. It falls in two parts:-

(a) Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of sex, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin etc.

(b) Indirect Discrimination consists of applying a condition or requirement which, although applied equally to all individuals, is such that a considerably smaller proportion of persons can comply with it and cannot be justified on the grounds other than sex, marital status or racial factors, e.g. a requirement for a higher language ability than is needed for the safe and effective performance of the job.

All staff has a responsibility to practice equal opportunity and in particular:

- must not themselves discriminate in any employment activities;
- must co-operate with measures introduced by management to ensure equal opportunity;
- must not victimise individuals who have given information to management on these matters or who have made complaints;
- should inform management if there are reasonable grounds for believing discrimination is taking place;
- Must not encourage others to yield to pressure from others to discriminate unlawfully.

2.3 To ensure the effective implementation of this policy, REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will meet all statutory obligations under relevant legislation as listed below, and where necessary the implementation of this policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that they are in keeping with the principles of equal opportunity and diversity.

REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST recognises its responsibilities under the following equalities legislation and related codes of practise:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Employment Act 2002
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- Religion or Belief Regulations 2003
- Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003
- Age Discrimination Regulations introduced on 1st October 2006.

Equality and diversity are majority issues, which concern the whole community:

- Young people
- Older people
- Women
- People from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds
- Faith groups
- Disabled people

2.4 REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will provide training to enable all staff to understand and implement their responsibilities under the policy. The training will include information on equal opportunity, the race relation's act, awareness and appreciation of cultural differences and diversity and will seek to dispel any myths and misconceptions individuals may have.

3.0 Application of the Policy

3.1. Recruitment and Selection

REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will strive to:

- Ensure that all employees are recruited and promoted on the basis of ability and other objective relevant criteria.
- Work towards ensuring that through recruitment that its workforce better represents the community it serves.
- Be committed to equality of opportunity for all people and protect against all forms of discrimination.
- Ensure that it communicates job opportunities to all sections of the community. We will scrutinise the recruitment process to ensure that we do not discriminate or discourage applications from any section of the community.
- Ensure that all its employees who are part of the recruitment selection panel are trained on equalities issues.
- Work with disadvantaged sections of the community in support of recruitment
- Use appropriate legislation as a framework for action to support the recruitment process in a positive way.
- Collect and use recruitment information to support a fair and effective recruitment process.
- The selection process will be carried out according to objective job-related criteria. REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will endeavour to ensure that all employees making selection decisions will not discriminate and that decisions are taken in an unbiased way. All applicants (internal and external) shall be assessed on the basis of their suitability, capability and qualifications.

3.2. Training and Organisational Development

REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will:

- Seek to ensure that all employees are developed by the provision of appropriate and accessible learning opportunities in line with organisational need
- Include diversity training as part of its induction programme.
- Include diversity training as part of its management development programme.
- Provide diversity awareness training as part of its corporate training and organisational development programme

- It will ensure that all staff members have equal access to training in terms of needs of the specific post.

3.3. Monitoring and Evaluation

REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will:

- Continually monitor its workforce profile against the community profile to work towards a workforce that is reflective of the community it serves.
- Specifically monitor recruitment, promotion, and training opportunities, pay, grievance, disciplinary and exit from employment.
- Continue to review its monitoring processes to comply with changes in legislation.
- Ensure mechanisms are in place for responding to complaints of discrimination and harassment from employees.
- Keep records of the gender, ethnic origin, nationality and disability of each staff member and interviewee for monitoring purposes. (Information relating to any individual shall not be kept without the consent of that individual or be disclosed to any other person other than persons designated to keep such records.
- Keep data to establish whether discriminated groups are under or over-represented in any area of work. This will allow for the identification of areas which should be examined more closely in order to assess whether equal opportunities and diversity is being achieved or whether unlawful discrimination may be occurring. Over- or under-representation will not automatically imply discrimination, but it may be a factor, and it is important that REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST is aware of the reasons why any particular distribution is found.
- Give a copy of this policy to every member of staff and to any person invited to be interviewed for a REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST post. Particular responsibilities will relate to those involved in the selection and recruitment of staff and the operation of disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST will also monitor the profile of its partners and beneficiaries from an Equal Opportunities and Diversity perspective

This policy has been approved for issue by the board of trustees of REG COMMUNITY SUPPORT TRUST and is subject to change as and when the trustees see fit.