

Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy

The Intercom Trust is deeply committed to Equal Opportunities. The Trust does not wish to be merely compliant with relevant legislation, but to be a best practice organisation, positioned at the forefront of equality for all. This Policy should be read in the light of the Trust's Human Rights Policy.

A. Statement of Commitment

The Intercom Trust actively opposes all discrimination, prejudice and any other form of injustice that are based on sexual orientation (being or not being lesbian, gay or bisexual), gender or gender identity (being or not being transgendered, transsexual, transvestite or intersexed), ethnic, racial or national background or origins, mental or physical disability or difference, age, skin colour, nomadic lifestyle, partnership or family status, lawful sexual behaviour, financial or employment status, or offending background provided that this does not create risk to children or vulnerable adults.

The Intercom Trust will also combat all forms of discrimination that are based on a person's political, personal or religious beliefs, so long as those beliefs are not in themselves incompatible with the aims and objectives of the Trust or with other parts of this Equal Opportunities policy.

B. Purpose

This policy has been written to:

1. Ensure equality for all in delivering services for all those who are in need, within the Trust's Objects and Aims;
2. ensure that no trustee, employee or volunteer is treated less favourably than another;
3. ensure the most effective use of any trustee, employee or volunteer;
4. demonstrate our commitment to being a best practice organisation in equality of opportunity;
5. ensure trustees, employees and volunteers are acquainted with current legislation on equal opportunity and to make aware their responsibilities under this legislation;
6. ensure the creation of an environment that is supported by fair practices where everyone can feel comfortable;
7. encourage all sections of the community to be involved with the charity's activities.

C. Definitions

In order for this policy to be effective, it is important to define some key terms:

Direct Discrimination

Where one person is treated less favourably than another person due to their sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, etc.

Indirect Discrimination

Where a condition or practice is imposed by someone and these have an adverse impact disproportionately on one group or other.

Victimisation

Where someone is singled out and treated oppressively, whatever the pretext for this, including for example, using complaints procedure and/or exercising their legal rights.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct of one person imposed on another, affecting the dignity of the aggrieved person.

All forms of harassment, discrimination & prejudice will be considered a breach of this Policy and considered under the Trust's disciplinary procedure.

D. Obligations

It is the obligation of every trustee, employee and volunteer to ensure they actively support this Policy, and to ensure that no action of theirs can be reasonably construed as either discrimination or harassment.

E. Implementation

1. By its nature The intercom Trust is run by and for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people, and it is therefore the responsibility of every LGB/T trustee, employee and volunteer of the Trust to ensure that no heterosexual trustee, employee, volunteer, service-user, or any other person who has dealings with the Trust shall be object of any discrimination, harassment or discourtesy.
2. This policy, including any future amendments, forms part of the terms and conditions of employment of any trustee, employee or volunteer. A serious breach of this policy may be considered and dealt with as gross misconduct.
3. Every trustee, employee and volunteer will implement this policy at all levels of the Trust's activities. This includes applicants for paid and voluntary positions with the Trust.
4. All trustees, employees and volunteers will receive a copy of this policy and advised to contact the relevant person (indicated at the end of this document) should they need explanation of any part of it. They will also be asked to sign and date a copy, showing their commitment to it.
5. Training will be available to all trustees, employees and volunteers on any of the issues covered in this policy, should it be deemed necessary.

Complaint Procedure

The intercom Trust will not tolerate any breach of this policy and will take very seriously any allegation of harassment, discrimination or victimisation.

In the event of experiencing discrimination, harassment, or victimisation, the aggrieved person should approach the other party, either directly or through a mediator, in an attempt to resolve the issue informally. A suitable mediator may be another trustee or employee.

In the event the above is either inappropriate or unresolved, the aggrieved person should contact the person responsible for the implementation of this policy (details at the end of the policy). Should this person be deemed inappropriate, a suitable trustee or senior employee should be informed.

Any upheld complaint will then be subject to the Trust's disciplinary procedure.

Monitoring & Review

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it is fully inclusive and offers equality of opportunity for all. Any person who has comments based on this policy should direct them to the person who has responsibility of implementation. No changes will be made to this Policy except after consultation with all Trustees, staff, and active volunteers.

EOP Contact

The persons responsible for this policy, whom you should contact if you have any questions or suggestions for improvement, are Paul Roberts and Michael Halls. Any information given to them will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Relevant Legislation

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (& Gender Reassignment Amendment 1999)

Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended 2000)

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended 2004)

Employment Equality Regulations 2003

Gender Recognition Act 2004

Civil Partnership Act 2005

Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Date of review

This Policy is due for review in July 2007.

I hereby agree to the contents of this policy and I will take responsibility for positively complying with it.

Signed: _____

Date: _____