

Human Rights and Responsibilities Policy

Current version approved: June 2009
Next refresh due 2010

*A copy of this policy must be made available to all employees
and permanently displayed in the workplace*

1. Statement

- 1.1 The Intercom Trust is committed to:
 - a. protecting and enhancing individual human rights; and
 - b. actively promoting and contributing to a human-rights-based culture across the Trust's area of benefit and elsewhere; and
 - c. positively and actively developing its internal and external operations so as to mainstream in all respects the spirit of human rights legislation and ideals; and
 - d. contributing to the regional, national and international development of a more inclusive and effective human-rights-based culture.
- 1.2 This policy applies above all (but not exclusively) to the Trust's work as it relates to:
 - a. people who are lesbian gay or bisexual and/or who are transgendered, and
 - b. other people who may also be vulnerable to crime, discrimination, prejudice, social exclusion, or other unfairness based on their membership of a social or cultural or other minority group.

2. Responsible officers

- 2.1 The officers who have active responsibility on behalf of the Trustees for all issues of human rights and responsibilities, including the implementation and monitoring of the working of this Policy, are the Executive Director and the Chair of the Trustees.
- 2.2 Their shared responsibilities under this Policy are:
 - a. to ensure that this Policy is implemented across all levels of the Trust's operations;
 - b. to assess the learning and skills development needs of staff and volunteers in respect of human rights ideals, legislation and good practice, and to arrange appropriate training;
 - c. to ensure that the issues covered by this Policy are appropriately covered during the induction process for all new staff and volunteers;
 - d. to be active as the Trust's human rights champions internally and externally;
 - e. to be aware of significant developments in legislative and jurisprudential and other aspects of the human rights culture in the UK and internationally;
 - f. to assess and monitor the working of this Policy;
 - g. regularly to review the working and the contents of this Policy in consultation with staff, volunteers, and the Trust's partner agencies, and to report to the Trustees as and when appropriate.

3. A Human-Rights-Based Culture

- 3.1 The Trust recognises that a true and effective human-rights-based culture must include as a foundation the principle that lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people, and our family members, friends and supporters, should be able to live our lives fully and, if we choose, openly, on a basis of inclusive and universal equality, without being disadvantaged by prejudice, hatred, or any unfair discrimination whatever grounds this may claim to be based on.
- 3.2 With that proviso, the Trust nevertheless supports both the spirit and the provisions of the following:
- a. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
 - b. The Council of Europe's Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1950
 - c. The United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1969
 - d. The United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1976
 - e. The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979
 - f. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990
 - g. The United Kingdom Human Rights Act 1998
 - h. The European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights, 2000, and
 - i. European Union Directives relating to: equal pay for women and men; equal access to employment, vocational training, promotion and retention; the promoting of good race relations, racial equality and inter-racial social harmony; and the outlawing of discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation and religion and belief or unbelief.

4. Human Rights and Responsibilities

- 4.1 All employees and volunteers have personal responsibility for ensuring that the Trust's commitments on human rights issues as expressed in the Constitution and in this and other Policies are observed and made central to the Trust's activities at all times.
- 4.2 In particular, all staff and volunteers will ensure that they actively implement the Trust's Equality and Anti-Discrimination Policy in the full spirit of human rights legislation and ideals.
- 4.3 Staff and volunteers will give the highest priority to promoting and observing the spirit of all legislation that positively enhances people's ability to enjoy, maintain and defend their human rights.
- 4.4 In particular, staff and volunteers will actively observe not only the letter but the spirit of legislation and good-practice guidelines that are intended to promote:
- a. racial harmony; or

- b. equality of pay and opportunity between women and men; or
 - c. equal access to employment, goods and services for people living with any form of physical or sensory or mental or health-related disability.
- 4.5 The Trust will carefully and positively extend the principles of a human-rights-based culture to all aspects of its work, including (but not limited to):
- a. recruitment, employment, training and retention in respect of both staff and volunteers;
 - b. our service delivery to lesbian gay bisexual and trans people and to others affected by issues of sexual orientation or gender identity or by issues of homophobic or transphobic prejudice;
 - c. our delivery of services to our partner agencies in the voluntary, community, statutory and commercial sectors
 - d. our partnership working with our funders and with other agencies or groups or initiatives in the voluntary, community, statutory and commercial sectors.
- 4.6 The Trust will work with all our partners and supporters and service-users to extend and promote the ideals of a human-rights-based culture.

5. Basis of this Policy

This Policy reflects and is founded on Clause 3.2 of Intercom's Deed of Trust and Constitution (revised 2007), where the second of the Objects of the Trust is defined as being:

"to promote human rights (as set out in the European Convention of Human Rights and subsequent legislation, case determinations, conventions and declarations) by raising awareness of human rights issues, promoting public support for human rights, obtaining redress for the victims of human rights abuse, and contributing to the sound administration of human rights law".

6. Responsible Officer

The officer responsible for the implementation and mainstreaming of this Policy shall be the Executive Director, who shall also provide for it to be reconsidered and updated as necessary.