

# TRANSITION CHICHESTER



## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

### **1. GENERAL STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Transition Chichester believes in equality of opportunity, and values all individuals regardless of any collective identity. We recognise that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions.

Transition Chichester believes that all people should be able to participate in the group's activities and projects regardless of direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of race, colour, caste, ethnic or national origin, religion, political affiliation, social class, employment or financial status, sex, disability (sensory impairment and learning disability), marital status, HIV/AIDS status, language (including the language of deaf people), gender identity, sexual orientation, age or non-relevant criminal conviction. Employment opportunities should be similarly free from discrimination of all kinds.

Transition Chichester is committed to providing an environment free of stereotyped and oppressive beliefs, attitudes and practices. We seek to promote diversity and to respond to the needs of all individuals in a fair and equitable manner.

A copy of this statement will be made available to trustees and to members of the Core Group.

### **2. RESPONSIBILITIES & ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY**

#### **The Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees has overall and final responsibilities in relation to the Race Relations Act (1976), Sex Discrimination Act (1975-85), Equal Pay Act (1970), Disability Discrimination Act (1995), Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) and all other relevant or subsequent legislation.

The Board of Trustees will also ensure the development of a strategic commitment to diversity, which goes beyond adherence to any legal responsibilities.

Trustees will ensure that a commitment to the objectives of this policy is reflected at all levels through the organisation. They will also ensure that there is effective monitoring of the policy in relation to existing volunteers and paid employees, and also in relation to the recruitment of new staff and volunteers.

All trustees, paid employees and volunteers will be expected to make this policy work and contribute to its on-going development.

### **3. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

#### **Recruitment and selection of volunteers**

As opportunities for voluntary work arise, all persons responsible for recruiting must review all role specifications to ensure that they meet the requirements of this Policy.

No arbitrary restrictions will be imposed for voluntary roles. Where restrictions are applied they must be reasonably justifiable. All applicants should be made aware that general life experience and voluntary as well as paid work are valued.

### **Recruitment of paid staff**

All paid positions will be advertised externally. An application process and timetable will be determined and a person specification prepared. Applicants will be measured against the skills criteria on the person specification. Those meeting the baseline criteria will be interviewed using the normal process described below.

On occasion vacant posts may be filled temporarily using existing personnel. The process will be open to all qualifying existing personnel and the terms and conditions will be set down in writing to the successful candidate.

### **Advertising**

Advertisements for job vacancies should be widely accessible and distributed through appropriate external media. Specifically advertisements should ensure:

- that there are no requirements or criteria which are unnecessary to the post and which might exclude applicants from any particular section of the community.
- that emphasis is placed on the availability of flexible working arrangements and/or job share opportunities where appropriate.
- No artificial age barriers are introduced.
- All advertisements state that Transition Chichester is working towards equal opportunities and values diversity.
- All advertisements state accessibility in relation to working environments where relevant.

### **Short-listing and Interviewing**

All applicants will be given equal consideration for appointments. Criteria for short listing must be clearly established by the preparation of Person Specifications and equally applied to all candidates. Each individual should be assessed according to his/her personal capability to carry out a given job. General assumptions must not be made about individual applicants.

Overseas qualifications, degrees and diplomas, which are comparable with UK qualifications, will be accepted as equivalents where these are required.

When a job involves irregular or unsocial hours or travel, the full facts should be referred to in the Job Description or other recruitment literature.

More than one person will carry out short listing and interviewing. Interview questions must not be of a discriminatory nature.

At both the short listing and appointment stage, brief notes shall be made on each application indicating clearly why the applicant has not been short listed or appointed.

In all recruitment and employment matters, age limits must not be applied in a way that is artificial or arbitrary.

Any recruitment records, which monitor the appropriate information to enable analysis of equal opportunity must be kept for 12 months.

#### **4. GENERAL BEHAVIOUR / CODE OF CONDUCT**

Volunteers and employees should respect all others working for the organisation, and realise that behaviour that they may find acceptable may not be so regarded by others. Harassment in any form is entirely unacceptable and all those involved in Transition Chichester activities carry responsibility for their own behaviour under the policy.

Harassment can take many forms and may be directed in particular against minority groups or individuals (e.g. because of a person's physical appearance or other characteristic). It may involve action, behaviour, comment or physical contact, which is found objectionable or which causes offence. It can result in the recipient feeling threatened, humiliated or patronised.

Project leaders and line managers shall act and react with dignity and respect towards volunteers and employees. They are responsible for ensuring that all those involved work in a similar way in their relationships with each other.

The policy aims to prevent all forms of offensive behaviour, but where there is a breach of this policy, project leaders and line managers should inform the Board of Trustees, who will decide what disciplinary action should be taken.

#### **5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY IN PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Transition Chichester will aim to ensure that its membership and activities are accessible to all with particular reference to the needs of under-represented groups. We will make every effort to involve people and groups on low income and enable them to benefit from our activities and projects. We will aim to make its meeting venues accessible to people with disabilities (including sensory impairment and learning difficulties).

In order to improve delivery of our projects, we aim to encourage actively the participation of groups which experience discrimination. This should cover all aspects of our service including: management practice, recruitment, employment, volunteer involvement, training and development, publicity and access to resources.

Transition Chichester aims to ensure that all people will receive a positive and sustained welcome from their first point of contact with the organisation, and will monitor feedback to develop a better service in relation to diversification.

Transition Chichester will ensure that an accessible complaints procedure is available to ensure against discrimination in the accessibility and delivery of our activities.

#### **Marketing, Publicity and Public Relations**

In order to promote equality of access to our service, Transition Chichester will ensure that the organisation's services are well publicised. Publicity will include statements about our commitment to diversity and equal opportunities.

The marketing of Transition Chichester will strive to provide information and resource materials which are written free from jargon, as well as from racist, ageist, disabling, homophobic, sexist images, language or attitudes and any other discriminatory practices.

**MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Board of Trustees has overall and final responsibilities in relation to equal opportunities. The Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy is, however, the direct concern of all those involved in Transition Chichester activities.

The effectiveness of this general policy statement will be reviewed annually and revised when necessary.

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