

Policy Name	:	CICRA Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
Policy Number	:	
Issue Number	:	3
Issue Date	:	April 2025
Review Date	:	April 2027

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Policy statement

CICRA is committed to achieving a working environment which provides equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful, subjective or unjustifiable discrimination, where every employee is treated with dignity and respect. All employees have a responsibility to respect the feelings and sensibilities of others, and not to engage in any activities that may be interpreted as discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation.

We aim to ensure that all decisions relating to recruitment, promotion, development, assessment, benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals, are based upon the capabilities, qualifications, experience, skills and productivity of our employees. We also aim to provide a fair and equal service to all our clients and customers and to treat them all with equal respect and dignity.

We will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment (see definitions below) and aim to encourage full participation and contribution to corporate life from our diverse employees, workers, volunteers and trustees.

Responsibility for the Implementation of this Policy

All employees, workers, volunteers and trustees of the Charity are required to act in a way that does not subject any colleagues or clients to direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on any of the protected grounds. Anybody witnessing any discriminatory behaviour should report it to their line manager or to the Chair of Trustees. The co-operation of all employees is essential for the success of this Policy.

Employees and others working for or with the Charity may be held independently and individually liable for their discriminatory acts, and an Employment Tribunal may order them to pay compensation to the person who has suffered as a result of discriminatory acts.

Definitions

- **Direct discrimination** occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic (sex, age, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership status, maternity or gender reassignment) in relation to his or her employment. Direct discrimination may be intentional or unintentional.
- **Indirect discrimination** occurs where a provision, criterion or practice applied to everyone puts individuals with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage and this cannot be justified – e.g. insisting that applicants for a position must be at least six feet tall (which would disadvantage females and some racial groups) unless the job really needed somebody to be that tall.

- **Victimisation** occurs where an individual is treated less favourably than colleagues because they have taken action to assert their statutory rights or assisted a colleague in that regard.
- **Harassment** occurs where an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating that person's dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the individual. It can include harassment which is related to a protected characteristic of the victim or of another person (e.g. a colleague or a family member). This means that even comments or actions which relate to another person can constitute harassment of an employee, and therefore be unlawful.

We expect our employees, workers, volunteers and trustees to treat their colleagues, business contacts and members of the public in line with this policy. Any individual who behaves in a discriminatory manner towards another employee, business contact or member of the public will be guilty of gross misconduct and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Unlawful Reasons for Discrimination

In line with the Equality Act 2010, we recognise the following protected characteristics, and we are committed to ensuring that no employee is treated less favourably because of:

1. **Age:** Discrimination based on age, whether against younger or older individuals, is prohibited.
2. **Disability:** We are committed to providing reasonable adjustments to ensure that employees with disabilities can fully participate in the workplace. Examples of reasonable adjustments may include;
 - Making adjustments to premises (e.g. installing disabled toilet facilities)
 - Re-allocating some of a disabled employee's duties (e.g. lifting or carrying)
 - Transferring a disabled employee to a role better suited to their disability
 - Relocating a disabled employee to a more suitable office
 - Giving a disabled employee time off work for medical treatment or rehabilitation
 - Providing training or mentoring for a disabled employee
 - Supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for disabled employees.
3. **Gender Reassignment:** Employees undergoing gender reassignment or those who are gender non-conforming should be treated with dignity and respect. We will support employees in their gender identity, ensuring an inclusive environment.
4. **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Discrimination against employees who are married or in a civil partnership is prohibited, and we ensure equal treatment regardless of marital status.
5. **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Employees who are pregnant or on maternity leave are entitled to the same protections and opportunities as all other employees, and we support them in balancing work and family responsibilities.
6. **Race:** We are committed to promoting equality and respect for all employees, regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality.
7. **Religion or Belief:** We respect and celebrate religious diversity and support employees' rights to practice their religion or belief without fear of discrimination.
8. **Sex:** We are committed to ensuring gender equality and combating discrimination based on sex or gender identity.
9. **Sexual Orientation:** Employees should feel comfortable and safe regardless of their sexual orientation. Discrimination based on sexual orientation will not be tolerated.

Recruitment and Selection practices

We aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the characteristics mentioned above. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate.

Job advertisements will avoid wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

Applicants will not be asked about their health or disability before a job offer is made, with the following exceptions:

- Questions necessary to establish whether an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments)
- Questions necessary to establish whether an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons
- Equal opportunities monitoring where this is carried out (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy, or about marital or civil partnership status or plans. They will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.

We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. However, assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, will be asked produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the UK Border Agency.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be under-represented or disadvantaged in our organisation, we reserve the right to monitor applicants' ethnic group, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information will be removed from applications before short-listing, and kept in an anonymised format, solely to help us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

Positive Action in Recruitment

Under the Equality Act 2010, positive action in recruitment and promotion is permissible. 'Positive action' means the steps that the Charity can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past record of disadvantage or low participation, to apply for positions within the Charity. It does not mean the same as positive discrimination.

If the Charity chooses to utilise positive action in recruitment, this will not be used to treat people with a protected characteristic more favourably, it will be used only in tie-break situations, when there are two candidates of equal merit applying for the same position.

Other management practices

In all our other management practices, we shall make concerted efforts to ensure that our decisions are fair, reasonable, and free from discrimination or bias of any kind. When considering employees for promotion, learning and development opportunities, or lateral moves within the Charity, we shall be careful to avoid stereotypical attitudes or assumptions, e.g. that a person is too young for a managerial role, or too old to benefit from skills development, or that a person of a particular gender is more likely to succeed in a particular kind of role. We shall make efforts to promote and maintain a diverse workforce in all aspects of our management practice.

Sanctions

If you believe that you may have been unfairly discriminated against or harassed, we encourage you to pursue your complaint through our grievance procedure. Allegations will be investigated thoroughly and in confidence, and we reserve the right to suspend alleged perpetrators on full pay, or to move them to another position if possible, to facilitate our investigations.