



Statement and Policy Equal Opportunities

Introduction

Newmarket Inter-Faith Forum ('NIFF'), is a charitable organisation which seeks to 'encourage mutual respect and harmony' and 'support the community and develop good citizenship' (constitution §5c,e). As such we are committed to upholding high standards in all our dealings with those who use the services we may at any time provide and with those with whom we collaborate in our work. We therefore wholeheartedly support a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of our work and responsibilities.

Statement

NIFF is an equal opportunities employer and promotes equality of opportunity through all of its activities. It aims to ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer, trustee, member or service user receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, gender, marital and civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, physical, sensory or learning disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, nor is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. The principle of equal opportunities will apply to recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, benefits, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions of employment.

NIFF is committed to reviewing this statement and policy on an annual basis from the time of its adoption, and will ensure that its personnel are regularly reminded of these statements and policy.

Policy

Aims

- To ensure equal access to jobs, volunteering and services;
- To ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality, including the Equality Act (2010) and any other legislation which becomes law;
- To create environments free from harassment and discrimination;
- To maximise the use of resources in the best interests of staff, volunteers and service users.

Objectives

- Trustees, staff, volunteers, members and service users will be encouraged, by example and guidance, to challenge discrimination, as defined by the Equality Act (2010) and summarised in the above statement, where and whenever it arises, whether it be between colleagues, or in any other area relating to NIFF's work.
- Trustees, committees, staff and volunteers of NIFF will be made aware of this policy. A necessary qualification for any position in NIFF will be a willingness to accept and implement this policy. Because NIFF is a collaborative organisation, any individual or organisation with whom NIFF works will be expected to have or adopt an equal opportunities policy with similar aims and objectives.
- Positive action will be taken to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that any premises and services used or offered by NIFF are accessible to all people.
- The trustees will monitor and review annually equality of opportunity relating to NIFF's services. Should there be a significant change in the way that NIFF operates, especially in regards to recruitment or employment, there will be an associated review of this policy.
- In order to address discrimination and disadvantage within the workplace, NIFF will ensure that employment and advancement within NIFF is determined by objective criteria and personal merit. Recruitment and employment practices will reflect a commitment to equal opportunities.

Implementation

- Responsibility for implementing and developing the policy rests with the trustees. They may delegate this responsibility at any time for the effective carrying out of a particular task or project.
- Anyone who feels they have been unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this policy should make a complaint through one of the trustees, who must report any such complaint to the rest of the trustee board.
- Anyone found to be in breach of this policy will be counselled on their actions and may, where necessary, be asked to cease any association with NIFF or its activities. Any member of the trustee board, any committee or working party of NIFF found to be in breach of this policy will be counselled and may, where necessary, be asked to leave their role within the organisation.
- Any job applicant who believes that they have been treated unfairly and contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the issue with a member of the trustee board.

Regarding recruitment and promotion:

- NIFF will strive to ensure that trustees, staff and volunteers reflect the wider communities.
- Clear and accurate information regarding vacant posts should be available through advertisement, job or role descriptions, person profiles and the interview. Vacancies should be advertised sufficiently widely in order to reach, within reason, the widest possible range of candidates, either internal and/or external.
- Unless a genuine occupational qualification exists which limits a post to a particular group, advertisements and recruitment literature should not imply any preferred group.
- Applicants will be informed, through advertisements, job or role descriptions and application forms, of NIFF's commitment to equal opportunities and the existence of an Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Person specifications should only include requirements, which are necessary and justifiable. Requirements, which are convenient rather than necessary, may be discriminatory.
- Care should be taken with any interview and shortlisting processes to ensure that there is no hidden bias or discrimination at any stage of the process.

Monitoring and Review

- A review of the policy will be undertaken annually within a meeting of the trustee board. This will include an audit to ensure that NIFF is operating according to the stated aims and objectives of the policy. Trustees, staff, volunteers, committee members, members and service users will be encouraged to submit comments for consideration at the time of the review, and are invited to do so at any other time.
- All aspects of personnel policies and procedures shall be kept under review to ensure that they do not operate against the equal opportunities policy. If it is found that the policy is excluding or discouraging trustees, staff, volunteers' development or restricting service users, the trustee board, should take positive action to re-adjust the policy.

This policy along with the equal opportunities statement was approved and adopted by the trustees at their meeting on Monday 16th September 2019.