

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

1. CONTEXT

The Equality Act 2010 identifies a list of nine protected characteristics. It is illegal for an organisation to harass or discriminate against anyone because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership status
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Discrimination is when a person is prevented from taking part in something based on a particular characteristic they have. Harassment is when someone behaves in a way which makes someone else feel distressed, humiliated or threatened.

The Essentia Foundation in compliance with the legislation, to prevent discrimination and harassment and to promote equality and diversity, aims to create a safe environment for our members, our partnership work and those we support through our funding processes. Additionally, our policy gives instruction on how we will manage a situation in which someone reports concerns that they have been treated unfairly and /or disrespectfully.

2. AIMS

The Essentia Foundation values diversity and is committed to treating all people equally and with respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation i.e., the nine protected characteristics identified in the 2010 Equality Act.

We aim to develop our activities, services and decision-making processes specifically to encourage and support participation from people who face disadvantage in society.



3. WHAT WILL WE DO

- Develop and support a culture which welcomes diversity and treats everyone equally and respectfully.
- Actively support diversity when recruiting for new and/or replacement Trustees
- Develop our publicity to improve accessibility.
- Design our adverts for grant funding applications and our award decision processes (whilst meeting the Essentia Foundation's charitable objectives) to ensure that those who face disadvantage in society are prioritised for funding.
- Set our evaluation processes and reports of those projects which have been awarded funding to include outcomes in relation to the promotion of equality and diversity.
- Require that our partners demonstrate that they comply with the Equality Act 2010 as a minimum and that they actively promote diversity and equality.

4. DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT

The Board of Trustees will take complaints of discrimination and harassment very seriously.

The Board of Trustees will thoroughly investigate such complaints and will provide opportunities for the person making the complaint to speak and share in a safe environment their experience. The Board of Trustees will appoint an Investigating Officer who will either be a Trustee or an independent third party to investigate the complaint depending on the nature of the matter.

The Investigating Officer will present their findings and recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees will decide the action to take based on the principle of ensuring the continued inclusion and safety of anyone who has complained of discrimination or harassment.

Any decision to terminate someone's membership will be made in line with the rules set out in the Essentia Foundation SCIO constitution.

5. REVIEWING OUR POLICY

Our Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed every 3 years and/or when there is a change of law.

