

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy



Introduction

YTAS is committed to promoting and delivering equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in our workforce and work environment. We are also committed to ending unlawful discrimination.

We aim for our workforce to truly represent all of society. We want those who work for and with us to feel respected, valued and able to give their best.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Ensure equality, fairness and respect for everyone in our workforce. This includes employees, freelancer workers and volunteers.
2. Meet our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to guard against unlawful discrimination based on the following nine protected characteristics:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment*
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race/ethnicity
 - religion/belief and culture
 - sex/gender
 - sexual orientation.

* YTAS is inclusive of all forms of gender identity expression

Definitions in Context

Promoting **equality** means treating people fairly and without bias. It means creating conditions at work and in society which encourage and value diversity, and which promote dignity. It involves trying to redress past imbalances. We aim to make sure our interactions with our members, participants, partners and suppliers support inclusion and prevent unlawful discrimination.

Promoting **diversity** involves creating working practices and a work environment that benefit the organisation its people. It recognises and values how people are different from each other. Understanding, valuing and managing these differences is key. It can enhance participation and boost success at individual, team and organisational levels.

Promoting **inclusion** ensures that everyone can participate in the way that they want to. It means making sure that everyone feels welcome regardless of their background or identity. Inclusive arts practice focuses on openness, engagement and responding to community cultural needs. Inclusion often involves human rights. It means treating people with dignity and respect. It means removing barriers and ensuring positive outcomes.

When referring to equality, diversity, and inclusion, we focus on the nine listed protected characteristics. We also recognise **socio-economic deprivation**, as highlighted by our funder, Creative Scotland. This characteristic includes issues like poverty, crime, rural isolation, low economic activity. It also includes unemployment, and poor educational attainment.

Our Commitment

We commit to:

- Promoting and encouraging good EDI practices in our workplace. This aligns with YTAS's values of Helping Others, Community, Collaboration, Excellence, and Joy.
- Meeting our responsibilities as an employer under the Equality Act 2010.
- Incorporating EDI considerations into business decisions.
- Increasing employee awareness of EDI issues.
- Creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. It should promote dignity and respect for all. It should

also recognise and value individual differences and the contributions of all staff. This is in line with the Fair Work Framework.

<https://www.fairworkconvention.scot/the-fair-work-framework/>

This commitment involves training all employees about their rights and responsibilities under this EDI Policy. These include helping to provide equal opportunities and preventing bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand that both they and YTAS can be held liable for bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination. This includes acts against employees, service users, suppliers, and the public.

- Taking seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, partners, suppliers, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Furthermore, sexual harassment can be both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as sexual assault allegations. In addition, any harassment, not just that related to a protected characteristic, is a criminal offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

- Providing all staff with opportunities for training and development. We will encourage and help everyone realise their full potential. We will use their strengths and skills to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Regularly reviewing employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness. We will update them and this policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Annually monitoring the make-up of our workforce regarding information such as age, disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief, sex/gender, and sexual orientation. The aim of this is to encourage equality, diversity and inclusion, and meet the aims and commitments set out in this policy.

Through this monitoring we will analyse trends and use the information to identify and inform areas of development.

We will also monitor how well this policy and YTAS's EDI Action Plan are working. We will review them regularly. If we find issues, we will take action to address them.

- Work with our partners to improve their own EDI performance.

EDI in Recruitment and Training

- In applying this policy, YTAS board and staff must guard against discrimination based on any assumptions about people. These assumptions may relate to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion/belief and culture, sex/gender, sexual orientation or socio-economic deprivation. And these assumptions say that the above characteristics may make people unsuitable for working with us.
- Applicants for paid and volunteer roles will be given clear and accurate information about posts. This will be provided in advertisements, job descriptions and interviews. This information will let them assess if they are right for the role. Information about posts will be placed and prominently displayed where it may reach individuals of all groups previously referred to.
- All applicants and volunteers will be informed that YTAS is committed to promoting and delivering equality, diversity and inclusion in its workforce and work environment. This information will be included in advertisements, job descriptions and/or application forms.
- Person specifications for paid and volunteer roles will only include requirements that are necessary and justifiable for effective performance.
- All interviews will be thorough and objective. They will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job or voluntary work and their ability to meet the job requirements. Where it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect performance of the job, for example when it involves unsocial hours or extensive travel, this will be discussed objectively. We will not ask detailed questions based on assumptions about marital status, children, or domestic obligations.
- YTAS will not discriminate based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or unrelated criminal record. This applies to staff at any level with similar job descriptions and to training courses.

- YTAS will increase awareness and understanding of EDI issues among our workforce by providing employees with relevant EDI training (including LGBT+ Awareness).

Grievance and Victimisation

Any employee or volunteer who may feel discriminated against on the grounds of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion/belief and culture, sex/gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or unrelated criminal record has recourse to have their complaint fully investigated. All parties involved in such a complaint and any subsequent investigation will be made fully aware of the findings.

Related Policies and Procedures

- Trans Inclusion Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Menstruation and Menopause Policy
- Family Friendly Policies
- Grievance Procedure
- Bullying, Harrassment and Vivimisation Policy
- Disciplinary Rules and Procedures