

Volunteer Cornwall Equal Opportunities Policy - 2022

1. Commitment

- 1.1 This policy makes clear Volunteer Cornwall's commitment to equal opportunities in employment of staff, deployment of volunteers and trainees, and in its service delivery. It aims to promote an environment in which equality of opportunity can be planned, developed, monitored and evaluated.
- 1.2 Volunteer Cornwall is committed to providing equality of opportunity in employment, volunteer involvement, its services and access to opportunities for volunteering. Volunteer Cornwall is committed to providing an environment free of stereotype so that service delivery, employment practices and volunteer involvement are responsive to the needs of individuals in a fair and equitable manner. Volunteer Cornwall aims to ensure that all people receive positive and sustained support from their first point of contact, onwards.
- 1.3 Volunteer Cornwall believes that all people have a right to employment, services and volunteering opportunities that are free from discrimination on the grounds of age, culture, any disability, employment status, financial status, gender, HIV and AIDS status, language (including the language of deaf people), marital status, race, caste, religion, sexuality, social class, political affiliation, trade union status and non-relevant criminal records.

2. Purposes

- 2.1 The publishing of a policy document and accompanying guidelines enables Volunteer Cornwall to:
 - ◆ meet its legal obligations in terms of complying with both the spirit and letter of Equal Opportunities legislation;
 - ◆ act as a model of good practice in the employment of paid staff, deployment of volunteers and trainees, and involvement of Board members; as well as working to ensure that all personnel are provided with the facilities/equipment to do an effective job and to take advantage of opportunities for personal and professional development.
 - ◆ ensure that Volunteer Cornwall offers equal opportunities to all paid staff, trainees and volunteers and senior managers are to ensure that they are informed of and involved in the implementation of this policy;
 - ◆ meet the expectations and requirements of all stakeholders, and so attract support from the widest possible community of people to use Volunteer Cornwall's services.

3. Outcomes and expectations

3.1 People using Volunteer Cornwall's services can expect Directors, paid staff, volunteers, temporary staff and trainees on work experience to implement this policy and to be anti-discriminatory in their practice. Therefore all Directors, paid staff, volunteers, temporary staff and trainees on work experience should behave in a manner consistent with the spirit of this policy.

4. Recruitment and selection of paid staff, volunteers and trainees on work experience.

Safer recruitment is the method by which we have designed our recruitment process to deter unsuitable applicants from applying for roles with vulnerable groups, and to identify and reject them if they do. One of our most important responsibilities is to ensure that unsuitable individuals **are not** allowed to work with vulnerable groups. This is the role of safer recruitment.

4.1 Paid Staff

The Board of Directors aim to ensure that all job applicants have equal access to a consistent recruitment process and terms and conditions of employment. To realise this aim, the following objectives have been set:

- ◆ recruitment to all paid posts within Volunteer Cornwall will be carried out in a manner which accords with equal opportunities practice;
- ◆ all recruitment panels will be offered training in recruitment and selection practice by the Chief Executive;
- ◆ recruitment procedures and outcomes will be monitored for bias by the HR Manager and escalation to CE or Board Member, if appropriate;
- ◆ flexible working is the responsibility of the Senior Management team;
- ◆ The Board of Directors and all staff will have due regard to the legal rights and obligations under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, the Employment Relations Act (2004) and any other relevant legislation, national and/or European.

4.2 Volunteers

4.2.1 Volunteers placed with other organisations

All volunteers approaching Volunteer Cornwall for advice on voluntary work will receive impartial advice on the opportunities available to them. Where applicable, such advice will consider any barriers to volunteering, e.g. lack of transport or rural isolation, accessibility of buildings for people with a physical disability. Where such barriers are identified, Volunteer Cornwall staff will work with the volunteer and host organisation(s) to identify a solution which is acceptable and effective for all parties.

4.2.2 Volunteers deployed within Volunteer Cornwall

All volunteers that assist Volunteer Cornwall's activity will, for the purpose of this policy, be treated in the same manner as paid staff.

5. Trainees on work experience - deployed within Volunteer Cornwall

Trainees on work experience may be offered the opportunity to work at Volunteer Cornwall for a fixed period of time. Trainees will be selected on the basis of their career aspirations, their present skills mix and whether Volunteer Cornwall can provide the appropriate training, supervision and personal developmental opportunities to maximise mutual benefit.

5.1 Trainees on work experience - deployed in external organisations

5.1.1 From time to time Volunteer Cornwall may enter into a contractual relationship with another Agency to identify and action appropriate work experience in the not for profit sector.

5.1.2 All trainees will be given impartial advice on the range of placement opportunities available to them and an appropriate match identified with the individual's aspirations. Any barriers to the provision of suitable placement opportunities will be treated in the same way as for volunteers in paragraph 5.1 above.

In all of the above, Volunteer Cornwall will ensure that its management practices and internal policies and procedures are free from discrimination.

6. Services

6.1 In addition to Volunteer Cornwall's core work of recruiting, placing and supporting volunteers, it may from time to time enter into direct service provision. Volunteer Cornwall will plan, provide, develop and evaluate such service provision in the light of the known and projected needs of the target audience.

6.2 In order to ensure that such service provision is implemented within the spirit of equal opportunities, the following actions will be taken:

- ◆ Directors and staff will take appropriate steps to identify unmet need within the community and strive to plan services to meet those needs;
- ◆ in order to promote equality of access to such services, Volunteer Cornwall staff will ensure that they are well publicised. Publicity will be targeted appropriately in terms of content, language and distribution;
- ◆ all Volunteer Cornwall personnel should deal sensitively and effectively with any tensions that may arise from the integration of different groups of paid staff, volunteers, trainees and people using its services. Senior Managers in particular will be expected to create a safe environment for the expression of concerns by Volunteer Cornwall personnel;

- ◆ Senior Managers will seek feedback regarding existing service provision from service users; this information will be used to enable the service provision to be more effective.

7. Marketing, publicity and public relations

- 7.1 Volunteer Cornwall recognises that the development of its public image is a key area for the implementation of its Equal Opportunities policy. Marketing of this public image should take into account the many facets of Volunteer Cornwall, including the diversity of its Directors, staff and volunteers, and should avoid the positive promotion of one area of its work at the expense of another.
- 7.2 Volunteer Cornwall will strive to provide information and resource materials which are written free from jargon, as well as racist, ageist, disabling, homophobic, sexist language or attitudes and any other discriminatory practices.
- 7.3 All external communications will reflect a commitment to equal opportunities and will promote access to volunteering, and to Volunteer Cornwall's services, to anyone who may wish to take advantage of these services.

8. Training and development

- 8.1 All Volunteer Cornwall personnel, including Directors, paid staff, volunteers and trainees on work experience will be made aware of their responsibility for implementing Volunteer Cornwall's Equal Opportunities policy during their induction.
- 8.2 Training, and opportunities for personal development, will be made available to all Volunteer Cornwall personnel without discrimination and in accordance with the its objectives, as detailed in the current Business Plan.

9. Monitoring and evaluation

- 9.1 Discussion of Volunteer Cornwall's Equal Opportunities policy, progress in its implementation and any barriers perceived will be a regular item at all Staff and Board meetings.
- 9.2 The monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy will be incorporated into Volunteer Cornwall's annual planning cycle. Any identified, and agreed, action points will be included in Volunteer Cornwall's Business Plan for the current, or forthcoming, year.

10. Non-compliance

- 10.1 In the event of non-compliance with the Equal Opportunities policy, restitution should be made using Volunteer Cornwall's Grievance or Disciplinary Procedure.

Signed:
Ian Jones
Chief Executive



Date: 20th April, 2022

Review Date: 04/25