

Erewash Voluntary Action (EVA)

Policy title	Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure
Version number and issue date	1 April 2022
Audience	Trustees, Staff, Volunteers, members of EVA and the public
Definitions	<p>Erewash Voluntary Action is a Registered Charity – number 1069838 and a Company Limited by Guarantee Registration - number 3537038.</p> <p>Trustees/Directors are volunteers appointed by the membership. They are 'the Board'.</p> <p>Equality can be described as breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups both in employment and in volunteering, and to goods and services; the basis of which is supported and protected by legislation.</p> <p>Diversity can be described as celebrating differences and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for EVA.</p> <p>Equality and Diversity are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued, harnessed and taken into account.</p>
Policy statement	<p>EVA is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work. EVA aims to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is valued, respected and built upon, which recruits and retains a diverse workforce that reflects the communities it serves. Within this framework EVA specifically refers to measures it has in place to provide equality of opportunity and the facilities that it can provide to its diverse workforce, job applicants and volunteers.</p> <p>EVA is committed to compliance with relevant equality legislation, the Equality Act 2010, Codes of Practice and relevant best practice guidance. This policy pursues and builds on the statutory position to ensure effective policies and practice of promoting equality.</p>

EVA aims to pro-actively tackle discrimination or disadvantage and aims to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason with regard to employment, volunteering or accessing its services.

EVA is mindful of the provision in discrimination law for the rare circumstances when the organisation may need to justify its decisions. This could be, for instance, where there is a conflict with other legislation that EVA has to comply with or between service needs. In such circumstances EVA is committed to following the required proper assessment and objective justification of any decision in order to demonstrate that the provision, criterion or practice is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

EVA is committed to ensuring:

that the existing Board, members of staff, volunteers, external contractors, membership, job applicants, stakeholders and members of the public accessing its services are treated fairly in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination with regard to the protected characteristics as outlined by the Equality Act 2010 which are:

age; disability; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race (includes colour, nationality and ethnic origins); religion and or belief; gender and gender reassignment; sexual orientation and economic disadvantage.

In addition, EVA is committed to ensuring:

that the Board, members of staff, volunteers, external contractors, membership, job applicants, stakeholders and members of the public accessing its services are treated fairly in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination with regard to: caring responsibilities, part-time employment, membership or non-membership of a trade union or spent convictions.

that all employment-related policies, practices and procedures are applied impartially and objectively;

that equality of opportunity is extended to all whereby staff and volunteers are provided with the opportunity to develop and realise their full potential;

that EVA works towards achieving a diverse workforce at all levels;

that employees and volunteers of EVA can work in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

	<p>EVA will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amounts to direct discrimination, associative discrimination, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination including harassment (harassment by a third party), victimisation and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping.</p> <p>EVA recognises the importance of monitoring, reviewing and reporting on its equality and diversity policy and practice and to measuring progress in meeting our policy statement.</p>
Procedure	<p>The Equality and Diversity procedure provides a clear framework for translating the EVA Equality and Diversity policy into action. It outlines the responsibilities of the Board, CEO, staff and volunteers to comply with the Equality Act 2010. Both management and staff are strongly committed to its full and active implementation.</p>
1	<p>Practical support for a diverse workforce As an employer committed to diversity and equality EVA recognises its success depends on creating a working environment which supports the diverse make-up of its staff with supporting policies and procedures to create a framework of assistance.</p> <p>Work Life Balance EVA recognises the value of work-life balance. EVA is committed to helping its employees fulfill their potential at work whilst finding the right work/life balance by offering flexible working hours and opportunities to job share where appropriate.</p> <p>Office Accommodation EVA will make every effort to ensure that premises used in relation to its work are accessible and inviting for all members of the community.</p> <p>Travel EVA recognises that not everyone has access to personal transport or is able to use it and will plan its services and activities with this in mind.</p>
2	<p>Publicity and promotion In all its publicity and information materials, EVA aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid jargon and use clear, direct language • use positive images of a wide range of equality groups • reach all sections of the community by advertising in a wide range of appropriate publications and locations as far as possible • target particular groups where appropriate • produce materials in a variety of formats (e.g. on tape, in Braille, in large print, or in translation) where requested

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proactively liaise with disadvantaged groups to promote its services.
3	<p>Policies and procedures All EVA policies and procedures support our commitment to equality and diversity.</p>
4	<p>Review and monitoring EVA undertakes monitoring that not only meets statutory requirements but also aims for best practice. This is used to inform and improve all our practices. If through monitoring any discrimination is identified EVA will take corrective action to address this.</p> <p>The monitoring of the EVA workforce is produced across all areas of employment practice and is discussed at Board, staff, and individual levels as appropriate.</p> <p>Such monitoring will be carried out using appropriate statistical analysis and will normally deal with all areas covered under the protected characteristics to ensure compliance with legislation.</p> <p>Monitoring of the Equality and Diversity policy and its implementation is the responsibility of the Board. This is done through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Board receiving reports from its recruitment panels and staff all staff receiving supervision which includes monitoring the equal opportunities aspects of their work projects managed by EVA are regularly evaluated by means of questionnaires, surveys and other forms of consultation specific surveys are carried out from time to time with communities experiencing deprivation and/or discrimination relevant to EVA services the results of any monitoring and evaluation exercises are fed into future planning. <p>EVA may publish its progress and achievements on equality and diversity in annual reports.</p>
5	<p>Training EVA is committed to ensuring its staff and team leaders are trained in equality and diversity and aims to ensure that adequate training is provided so that staff and volunteers are able to operate within the Equality and Diversity policy.</p> <p>Diversity and equality forms an integral part of EVA's induction package. The CEO ensures that all new staff, volunteers, external contractors, Board members, new members of EVA are given a copy of our Equality and Diversity policy, which, in addition, is available to any interested parties on request.</p>

6	<p>Promotion of Equality and Diversity policy The Equality and Diversity policy is available on the website of EVA. Please contact the Facilities and IT Manager if you require a copy in an alternative format.</p> <p>Copies of the policy will be freely available to staff, volunteers, members and any other interested parties. Laminated copies of the statement of intent, together with a named contact for more information, will be placed in prominent positions in EVA's offices.</p>
7	<p>Discrimination Discrimination may take nine main forms and is defined in law along with the protected characteristics associated with each provision as listed below:</p> <p>Direct Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic. Relevant protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>Associative discrimination occurs when someone discriminates against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. Relevant protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.</p> <p>Discrimination by perception occurs when someone discriminates against an individual because they think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic. Relevant protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.</p> <p>Indirect discrimination occurs when a seemingly neutral provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone places a group who share a characteristic e.g. type of disability at a particular disadvantage. Indirect discrimination may be justified if it can be shown that the provision, criterion or practice is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.</p> <p>Dual Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of a combination of two relevant protected characteristics. This means that it will be possible for an applicant to claim that they have been treated less favourably not just because of their race but also because of their gender.</p>

	<p>Detriment arising from a disability arises when you treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability. This type of discrimination is unlawful where the employer or other person acting for the employer knows, or could reasonably be expected to know, that the person had a disability. This type of discrimination is only lawful if the action can be justified and the employer can show that is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.</p> <p>Victimisation occurs when an employee or volunteer is treated unfavourably, disadvantaged or subjected to a detriment because they have made or supported a complaint of discrimination or raised a grievance under the Equality Act, this policy, or because they are suspected of doing so. (However, an employee or volunteer is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint).</p> <p>Abuse and/or harassment – Discrimination also covers actions which amount to abuse and/or harassment of people or groups of people because of a protected characteristic.</p> <p>Third party harassment occurs when an employee or volunteer is harassed by someone who does not work for the employing organisation such as a customer, visitors, client, contractor or visitors from another organisation. The employer will become legally responsible if they know an employee or volunteer has been harassed on two or more occasions by one or more individuals and fails to take reasonable steps to protect the employee from further harassment.</p> <p>Complaints of Discrimination EVA takes all claims of discrimination very seriously and will take appropriate action against those concerned. If a worker or volunteer considers they have been discriminated against they should raise their complaint directly with their team leader through the appropriate procedures.</p> <p>All other parties should follow the EVA complaints procedure.</p>
8	<p>Responsibility All staff and volunteers of EVA have a responsibility to guard against any form of discrimination and to work within the spirit of the Equality and Diversity policy and procedure. Staff and volunteers at all levels will work to ensure that there is no discrimination in any of their decisions or behaviour.</p>

All staff and volunteers must:

- report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices
- not induce or attempt to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination
- co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity
- not victimise anyone as a result of them having complained about, reported or provided evidence of discrimination
- not harass abuse or intimidate others.

There are also specific responsibilities as follows:

The Board and CEO are responsible for:

- Providing leadership on the equality and diversity policy, acting as overall champions to ensure the policy is implemented
- Communicating the policy, internally and externally
- Maintaining a commitment that Board membership (including co-opted members) reflects a fair balance and representation of the local community and endeavours to redress any imbalance of under-represented groups.

The CEO is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy as part of their day-to day management of staff and in applying employment and volunteering policies and practices in a fair and equitable way
- Ensuring equality and diversity issues are addressed in performance
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers act in accordance with the equality and diversity policy
- providing necessary support and direction
- Effectively managing and dealing promptly when investigating issues relating to potential discrimination, including those matters concerning members of the general public who visit EVA and attend its events.

Each employee and volunteer is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy in their day-to-day activity and their dealings with colleagues, and visitors
- Ensuring their behaviour is appropriate to the policy and that they treat people with respect and dignity
- Not discriminating against other employees, volunteers or service users
- Notifying their team leader of any concerns with regard to the conduct of other employees, volunteers, service users, the public or third parties
- Seeking advice and support to fulfill the policy and procedure.

Related policies and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct – Trustees, Staff, Volunteers • Equality and diversity policy statement of intent • Recruitment policy and procedure • Disciplinary and grievance policies and procedures • Flexible working policy and procedure
Financial issues	Access to relevant training opportunities
Policy owner	Board of Trustees/CEO
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Review date & comments	April 2025, or sooner if legislation changes.