



Equality and Diversity Policy

Key contact: Centre Manager

Date agreed: January 2017

Next revision due: January 2019

Introduction

Nottingham Women's Centre accepts that, in society, women suffer discrimination. We are committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality for all women at Nottingham Women's Centre.

Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given fair chances. Equality of opportunity is about everyone being evaluated fairly and being able to progress purely on the basis of their merit. The policy encompasses our commitments in relation to equality and equality of opportunity and ensures that we comply with a range of employment legislation that's been put into place to prevent people being treated unfavourably because of certain characteristics that they share.

Our commitment to equality and diversity

We are positively committed to opposing discrimination against women in the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (full details available at www.equalities.gov.uk)

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage & Civil Partnership status
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Gender Reassignment

In addition, we are positively committed to opposing discrimination against women in respect to other irrelevant factors such as their: gender, trans status, political beliefs, criminal convictions, medical conditions, HIV/AIDS status, mental health status, caring responsibilities, language, appearance, socio-economic status or class. This list is not exhaustive.

Diversity is about respecting and valuing all forms of difference in individuals and positively striving to meet the needs of different people. It goes beyond legislation, encompassing any

aspect of an individual that isn't directly related to their ability to do a specific job or undertake a task such as social background, personality type, etc...

People with different backgrounds, personalities and approaches bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and as a diverse organisation we can draw upon the widest range of experiences so that we can offer the best services possible and be a welcoming Centre for all women.

As part of our organisation's commitment to equality and diversity, our aim is to encourage dialogue across difference. This means that we actively promote respectful and on-going discussion and commit to addressing attitudes, beliefs and actions that we believe go against our organisation's ethos and that have the potential to harm others.

What will we do?

In order to ensure equality and diversity is considered in all that we do, we will:

- Consider equality and diversity issues in our business plan and in all plans for specific services.
- Review equality and diversity across the organisation on an annual basis.
- Strive to work in a way which promotes equality and diversity and which does not discriminate against any of our staff, volunteers or service users.
- Encourage a culture where everyone receives respect and can talk about their needs, knowing that they will be heard.
- Encourage each team to nominate an 'equality champion' to raise equality issues within the team and to help to monitor our performance on equality and diversity across the whole organisation.
- Regularly review this policy and its implementation.

We will also ensure that we take practical and reasonable steps to make sure that our services are accessible to all, such as, but not limited to:

- Placing adverts in newspapers aimed at ethnic minorities, lesbian, bisexual and trans women or other marginalised groups when recruiting staff, volunteers or trustees
- Considering accessibility needs when holding open meetings and taking steps to accommodate disabled service users in all that we do
- Making reasonable adjustments to enable disabled women to undertake paid or voluntary employment with us
- Ensuring that selection for employment, training or any other benefit will be based on aptitude and ability only
- Ensuring that all staff receive regular training on equality and diversity issues
- Taking seriously any complaints of unlawful discrimination made by staff, volunteers, trustees, service users or other parties and taking action where appropriate

Application of Policy

All members of Nottingham Women's Centre, employees, volunteers, trustees, as well as members of the public using our services, shall be required to abide by this policy. We are

committed to ensuring this policy is easily accessible and understood by all our members and staff through our communications channels. Failure to comply with the principles of this policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings for members of staff or sanctions against Centre users.

In addition we expect other organisations which use the Centre and/or work in partnership with us to comply with the principles of our Equality and Diversity Policy unless their objective is to use a safe space for the inclusion and well-being of a minority group. These would be considered on a case by case basis but may include, for example, a Muslim Women's Group or a meeting space for trans women.

Any concerns relating to the implementation of this policy should be directed to the Centre Manager in the first instance.