

Policy Guideline 06 – Anti-Discrimination

Introduction

1. [Name of Organisation] recognises that prohibiting discriminatory policies and practices is both a legal obligation and good practice.
2. [Name of Organisation] endorses diversity, supports equal rights and equal opportunity, and does not advocate, support or practice discrimination based on characteristics such as race, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability, whether covered by applicable legislation or not.

Purpose

3. This document sets out [Name of Organisation]’s anti-discrimination policy and the governance structures, responsibilities and processes to give effect to the policy and ensure the organisation complies with its obligations under legislation.
4. This policy aims to foster an organisation culture that maximises access to membership and grows organisational performance.

Policy

5. *Discrimination* consists of treating an individual with a particular attribute less favourably than an individual without that attribute or with a different attribute under similar circumstances. It can also involve seeking to impose a condition or requirement on a person with an attribute who does not or cannot comply, while people without that attribute do/can comply.
6. *Equal Opportunity* consists of ensuring that all volunteers and members are given equal access to the services and benefits provided by [Name of Organisation].
7. *Victimisation* happens where a person is treated harshly or suffers detriment because they have made a complaint of discrimination. Victimisation will also happen if a person suffers detriment because they have provided information or evidence in connection with a complaint.
8. [Name of Organisation] does not advocate, tolerate, condone or practise discrimination and regards as unfair, all forms of unlawful discrimination or vilification, including but not limited to that which relates to:
 - gender
 - pregnancy and potential pregnancy
 - marital/domestic status

- disability
 - race, colour, national extraction, social origin, descent, and ethnic or national origin
 - age
 - family responsibilities, family status, status as a parent or carer
 - racial classification or caste
 - sexuality, transsexuality or transgender
 - religious or political beliefs or activities
 - trade union or employer association membership or activities
 - physical features
 - occupation or calling
 - medical record, including HIV/AIDS vilification
 - criminal record.
9. [Name of Organisation] is an equal opportunity manager of volunteers. In all cases no factors other than performance and competence will be used as the basis for training and development opportunities for volunteers and/or intending volunteers.
10. [Name of Organisation] will ensure that its programs, policies, procedures, practices, publications and forms accord with the principles expressed in this policy.
11. [Name of Organisation] will make all reasonable accommodations to allow people who experience difficulties in their dealings with it to benefit equally from its activities.
12. All of [Name of Organisation]'s members and volunteers will comply with the principles expressed in this policy.

Procedures

13. [Name of Organisation]'s Committee of Management will:
- review the organisation's practices and processes to ensure that they adequately incorporate precautions against discrimination
 - conduct elections to positions on the Committee of Management that are free from discrimination and provide an equal opportunity for all members to stand for election
 - periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the systems established to remove and/or prevent discrimination
 - make reasonable accommodations to allow diverse groups to access benefits provided by membership of the organisation and its programs and activities
 - monitor the performance of office bearers and volunteers in regard to this policy
 - analyse all reported breaches to identify systematic trends and ensure that any adverse trends are addressed
 - ensure a culture of anti-discrimination and equal opportunity compliance is promoted across the organisation.
14. All members, volunteers and employees will be made aware of the organisation's anti-discrimination policy by its publication on the organisation's website and/or newsletter.
15. A person who believes they are being treated unfairly as a result of discrimination may report the matter to [Name of Organisation]'s Secretary. The Secretary will inform the President immediately.
16. A report of discrimination will be investigated promptly, confidentially and fairly, in accordance with the organisation's *Grievance Policy*.

Responsibility

17. [Name of organisation]’s Committee of Management is responsible for:
- establishing, implementing, publishing, and reviewing this policy
 - fostering equal opportunity and setting an example by their own behaviour
 - ensuring that the organisation’s practices and processes incorporate precautions against discrimination in such areas as selecting volunteers, admitting members and providing access to programs
 - ensuring reasonable accommodations are made to allow diverse groups to become members and participate in the organisation’s programs and activities
 - ensuring that allegations of discrimination or vilification are properly investigated.
18. It is the responsibility of all members and volunteers to:
- treat each other with respect and without regard to non-relevant criteria or distinctions
 - familiarise themselves with this anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policy
 - where appropriate, suggest ways in which practices, systems and procedures could be improved to reduce the likelihood of discrimination occurring.
19. It is the responsibility of [name of organisation]’s Secretary to receive complaints about a breach of this policy and to bring them to the attention of the President.
20. U3A [name of organisation]’s President is responsible for ensuring that a complaint of a breach of this policy is handled in accordance with [name of organisation]’s *Grievance Policy*.

Authorisation

21. This policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of U3A [Name of Group], and minuted as such, on [insert date of meeting].
22. This policy will be published by the Committee of Management of U3A [Name of Group] on its website within 4 weeks of the date of this authorisation.

Related Policies

- U3A [Name of U3A Group]’s Bullying Policy
- U3A [Name of U3A Group]’s Code of Conduct
- U3A [Name of U3A Group]’s Health and Safety Policies
- U3A [Name of U3A Group]’s Privacy Policy
- U3A [Name of U3A Group]’s Risk Management Policy
- U3A [Name of U3A Group]’s Sexual Harassment Policy

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