



Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Equalities Policy

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (VCKC) believes in the right to equality of opportunity for all and recognises and celebrates society's diversity. It is committed to operating within the principles of equal opportunity in all aspects of its work. It is committed to ensuring that no person receives less favourable treatment or reduced access to services on the grounds of sex, age, disability, race, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, sexuality, family responsibility, trade union activity, class, political or religious belief.

VCKC recognises that certain groups and individuals in society are discriminated against on grounds such as race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religious affiliation, national origin, age and disability. It recognizes that discrimination can occur not only through the actions of individuals but is often embedded in patterns of employment, education, housing, health and social services provision and social interaction. These patterns are so pervasive that frequently neither the perpetrators nor victims recognise their existence.

VCKC will ensure that it applies the provisions of the following:

- Equalities Act 2010
- Age Discrimination Act 2006
- Employment Rights 1996
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Health and Safety at Work. Act 1974

VCKC will seek to apply the spirit of these Acts to individuals and groups not covered by the legislation. The principles of equal opportunity and diversity are key to the work of VCKC. These beliefs shall underpin all areas of our work.

Governance: the Board of Trustees

VCKC's Board of Trustees gives time, energy and expertise to understanding the views, needs and the interests of the whole community. VCKC will seek to ensure diversity and community representation within its Board.

Staff and Volunteers

VCKC's team is a small one and cannot fully reflect all in society. However, as the number of staff and volunteers grow in VCKC, it will aim to create an even more balanced team.

All candidates for posts and employees shall be afforded equal opportunities irrespective of colour, culture, race, nationality, ethnic origins, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religion. In accordance with these objectives, VCKC will adhere to good practice by implementing equal opportunities in relation to recruitment, selection and retention, terms of employment and career development.

VCKC will ensure that staff and Trustees involved in the recruitment process are aware of this policy and have received suitable training and support where appropriate.

Volunteers

This Equalities Policy also covers the treatment of those who work with VCKC on a part-time or on a voluntary basis. VCKC recognises that it is an essential part of this policy that volunteers are treated on equivalent terms as employees.

Partners, Stakeholders and Community

So far as is reasonably practical, VCKC will aim to promote equal opportunities among those with whom it enters into contractual arrangements and in the communities with which it works and serves. VCKC will exercise ethical judgments and use the opportunities which are open to it to exercise influence over the policies of the bodies with which it works.

In carrying out its core functions, VCKC will seek to ensure that it:

- Produces policies that target services to respond to the needs of the community
- Wherever possible, consults with under-represented and disadvantaged groups to identify changing and unmet needs
- Encourages and supports under-represented and disadvantaged groups to deal with inequality, disadvantage and discrimination
- Develops a flexible systems to cater for changing and unmet needs
- Establishes and maintains a complaints system and takes action to improve services where the complaint is appropriate
- Ensures that all staff, volunteers and beneficiaries are aware that discrimination, harassment, abuse or intimidation of others will be seen as serious and will be acted upon
- Monitors services on a regular basis and carries customer surveys and seeks beneficiary feedback wherever possible.

Premises

VCKC will endeavour to ensure that its premises are suitable and accessible the needs of people with a physical disability, subject to the availability of resources.

Publicity Materials

VCKC will endeavour to ensure that its information and publicity materials produced are accessible to the users of our services.

Responsibilities and Monitoring

Although the day to day responsibility for implementation and monitoring of this policy will rest with the Chief Executive, all VCKC Board, employees and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is put into practice and to:

- Understand the value and benefits of diversity
- Familiarise themselves with this policy, follow it, and ensure that any staff for whom they are responsible do so as well
- Draw to the attention of the Chief Executive to any instances of apparent discrimination or any perceived problem in relation to working practices; and
- Work in a way which demonstrates a commitment to the policy.

Policy History

Policy approved by Board of Trustees July 2009

Revised September 2011

Revised June 2014

Revised November 2019