

 Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy

Gladrags is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce and in relation to the general public as well as to the elimination of unlawful discrimination.

Our organisation provides a unique service to communities, and we celebrate the fact that our workers, volunteers and beneficiaries are unique too. We recognise that every person is an individual with different characteristics, needs, preferences and abilities. We aim to reflect this diversity in everything we do, including making our services inclusive and accessible to people from all sections of the community, and providing volunteer opportunities for people from a range of backgrounds and with a range of learning and support needs.

This policy sets out our approach to diversity, equality and inclusion and the prevention of discrimination for workers, volunteers, trustees and members of the public who access our services. We recognise that to realise the benefits of diversity and inclusion, we will need to focus on key objectives.

**Our policy’s purpose is to:**

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all those working with us, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, whether temporary, part-time or full-time, enabling everyone to thrive and make a meaningful contribution to our organisation.

2. Commit to the statutory provision set out in the Equality Act 2010 that legally protects people from discrimination, harassment and bullying in the workplace and in wider society. Gladrags does not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment full stop in relation to the below protected characteristics:

* age
* disability
* gender reassignment
* marriage or civil partnership
* pregnancy and maternity
* race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
* religion or belief
* sex
* sexual orientation

3. Identify and prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

* pay and benefits
* terms and conditions of paid work and volunteering
* requests for flexible working
* selection for employment, paid work, volunteering and attached promotion, training or other developmental opportunities
* dealing with grievances and discipline
* dismissal
* redundancy

**To enable this policy to be delivered, we will ensure that:**

* our internal policies and procedures remain up to date, are compliant with the law and reflective of best practice, where achievable
* there are clear, well communicated procedures in place explaining how to raise concerns or complaints (see separate Grievance policy and Whistleblowing policy below). All issues will be taken seriously, no matter who they are from or who they involve. They will be considered and acted upon with a focus on independence, timeliness and impartiality. We will ensure that appropriate support is in place for those who raise complaints. As an organisation, we will learn lessons from complaints and encourage the individuals involved, to do so too
* we raise awareness of our equality duties specifically around protected characteristics and our wider commitment to equality and inclusion. We will ensure that all workers, volunteers and Trustees are aware of their responsibilities and the behaviours we expect with the use of training, consistent messaging and role modelling from Senior Management and the Board of Trustees

**Our commitments:**

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1. Foster an organisational culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and actively celebrate the positive impact of this on our team and organisation in terms of wellbeing, productivity and building an ever more diverse team going forward.

2. Pro-actively tackle discrimination or disadvantage, and create a working environment free of bullying, harassment (see our separate policy below), victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow workers, volunteers, customers, service users, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation’s work activities.

4. Seek recruitment messaging and advertising methods appropriate to our target audience, including reaching under-represented groups

5. Make reasonable adjustments to the working environment according to a worker or volunteer’s individual differences and needs and involve them equitably in team consultation and organisational decision-making

6. Support workers and volunteers who experience mental health challenges, who become or are disabled, who acquire or have a long-term health condition, enabling them to stay in work

7. Communicate with our team via a variety of platforms and media, taking account of communication preferences and needs.

8. Create regular, defined opportunities for volunteers and workers to discuss their wellbeing at work confidentially, in alignment with our Wellbeing - Support framework (see separate document below).

9. Make opportunities for training, development and progress accessible to all workers and volunteers to whom they apply, ensuring reasonable adjustments are made to ensure all have the chance to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

10. Make decisions concerning workers and volunteers based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

11. Review organisational practice and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

12. Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability as a means of improving how diverse communities are reflected within our team, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Additionally, we continue our commitment to make our costume-based resources accessible to all members of society, especially our disadvantaged service users. This is fundamental to Gladrags’ key aims and objectives. Furthermore, we actively reach communities who are experiencing challenging lives or isolation, and those who have a community focus that bring people together of all ages, to provide an inclusive meeting point that is supportive and friendly.

**In this, we are committed to supporting our service users with:**

* our affordable hire rates
* accessible premises
* our proactive promotion and engagement with a range of communities. In our outreach projects we strive to include all members of a particular community, addressing a variety of access issues in relation to our community workshops and events
* promoting events through multiple networks to reach the greatest scope of people possible

 **Agreement to follow this policy**

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with our Board of Trustees.

 We are aware that continued learning and even greater provision of differentiated recruitment and support is needed across our footprint, and we will continue to listen to and consult with local communities, our volunteers, and workers to achieve this.

We have high expectations of the behaviours and the standards that we want to hold ourselves to. Hopefully, in that way we can play our part in not only building a stronger Gladrags, but also making the world a fairer and more just place to live and work.

***Documents linked to this policy:***

Wellbeing-support framework

Grievance Procedure

Anti-bullying and Harassment policy

Whistleblowing policy