Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

At the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) we champion the folk arts at the heart of England's rich and diverse cultural landscape.

We are fully committed to leading by example and to calling out all forms of discrimination including against race, sexuality, gender, age, religion and disability (this list is not exhaustive) – wherever, whenever, and however they take place.

Why have this Policy?

At the English Folk Dance and Song Society we recognise, respect and value diversity in all our activities, and in the activities that our organisation supports. We are committed to treating all people with dignity and respect, valuing diversity for all. We will make every effort to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on any of the protected characteristics, or any other factor irrelevant to the activity.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles are embedded as fundamental principles within all of the organisation's activities.

This policy has deliberately been kept brief and approachable and is written in conjunction with current legislation. The policy is to be considered as an addition to and a clarification of the organisation's existing legal responsibilities.

Who does this Policy apply to?

All contracted staff, freelance professionals engaged by the organisation, artists while delivering projects funded in whole or in part by the organisation, board members, and volunteers are obliged to conform to this policy.

All participants at events organised by the English Folk Dance and Song Society are required to abide by the organisation's Code of Conduct.

EFDSS is a membership organisation. Both individuals and organisations (groups, libraries, and other bodies) can apply to become paying members. Just like anyone else, members of EFDSS have certain legal obligations in terms of equity and diversity: in addition, the organisation expects all members to embody appropriate standards of behaviour. Individual members are strongly encouraged to always act in a spirit of inclusiveness. Group members are encouraged to formulate their own EDI policies and Codes of Conduct, and to share them with all interested parties. EFDSS reserves the right to terminate group or individual membership for any inappropriate behaviour.

The Equal Opportunities appendix covers in detail the important obligations of the organisation and its employees under employment law.

Opening Statements

At the English Folk Dance and Song Society:

We accept that in society certain groups or individuals are denied equity. The causes of these inequities are sometimes conscious or unconscious bias of an individual. Inequities can also be institutional; embedded within the systems which govern all of us. Factors which regularly result in inequalities include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We acknowledge the statutory requirements laid down in:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- The Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

We acknowledge all protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Discrimination by association or perception
- In addition, class and socio-economic background are not protected characteristics, but are recognised as creating barriers to equity

We recognise that our organisation has moral and social responsibilities that go beyond provisions in law.

We are committed to taking positive steps to ensure that:

- All people are treated with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of society in 21st-century England.
- Equity of opportunity and inclusivity is promoted throughout all our activities.
- Services are accessible, appropriate, and delivered fairly to all.
- The mix of our employees and Board reflects, as far as possible, a broad mix of England's population.
- We follow proper processes to ensure that any cases of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are dealt with efficiently through our grievance procedure.
- We do not engage with individuals (eg staff, board, volunteers, participants, members) or organisations that have discriminatory views.

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion webpage is regularly updated with our ongoing actions.

Procedures

Responsibility for Implementation

Overall responsibility for ensuring adherence to and implementation of this policy lies with the senior management team and the Board.

Method of Implementation

The English Folk Dance and Song Society intends to implement this policy by:

- Ensuring that it is a condition of paid employment by EFDSS.
- Ensuring that the Board, volunteers, and funding recipients are made aware, understand, agree with, and are willing to implement, this policy. All staff, volunteers and Board members will be given a copy of this policy as part of their induction.
- Actively encouraging staff, Board members and volunteers to participate in anti-discriminatory training and making time and resources available for such training.
- Monitoring the work, communications and events provided by EFDSS, to ensure that they are accessible to all sections of the population and do not discriminate.
- Taking active steps aiming for participation that is representative of the full population of England.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The English Folk Dance and Song Society has declared its commitment to establishing, developing, implementing, and reviewing a policy of equity of opportunity. The policy will be reviewed annually.

All contracted employees, and specialists employed regularly on a freelance basis, are invited to engage in discussions concerning Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. In addition to formal meetings where discussions are invited, comments and suggestions can be made at any time.

Complaints

Complaints or concerns regarding equity and diversity should be referred in person or in writing to the relevant member of EFDSS staff, who will then inform this to their Head of Department. If this is not appropriate, or further action is required, matters should be referred to the Chief Executive, who will assess appropriate next steps and possible further action according to the grievance procedure. (EFDSS members of staff should refer to the Staff Handbook for details of this procedure.)

The Chair of the Board has overall responsibility for this Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

Appendix 1: Equal Opportunities in Employment

1. Introduction

The English Folk Dance and Song Society recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all persons without discrimination – either direct or indirect.

This policy sets out the organisation's position on equal opportunity in all aspects of employment, including recruitment and promotion for all staff including those on part-time, fixed-term and casual contracts.

It provides guidance and encouragement to all staff (working with EFDSS on any basis including freelance) and volunteers to act fairly and prevent discrimination on the grounds of the 'Protected Characteristics' as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

2. Definition of Discrimination

(a) Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Both forms of discrimination must be avoided.

(b) Direct discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another on grounds relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

(c) Indirect discrimination occurs where a requirement is imposed which can be complied with by a smaller proportion of persons of a particular age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, or part-time or fixed term contract status – than persons in another group and which is not objectively justifiable in the given situation. Examples include:

- seeking job applications only from persons under 27 years of age and with five years' post-graduate experience;
- demanding qualifications for a job which are not strictly necessary;
- sending only full-time employees on training courses.

3. Statement of policy

(a) It is the policy of EFDSS to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, or part-time or fixed-term contract status, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. The organisation is committed not only to its legal obligations but also to the positive promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment.

(b) The organisation recognises that adhering to the Equal Opportunities Policy, combined with relevant employment policies and practices, maximises the effective use of individuals in both the organisation's and employees' best interests. EFDSS recognises the great benefits in having a diverse workforce with different backgrounds, solely employed on ability.

(c) The application of recruitment, training, and promotion policies to all individuals will be on the basis of job requirements and the individual's ability and merits.

(d) All employees of the organisation will be made aware of the provisions of this policy.

4. Recruitment and promotion

(a) Advertisements for posts will give sufficiently clear and accurate information to enable potential applicants to assess their own suitability for the post. Information about vacant posts will be provided in such a manner that does not restrict its audience in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or part-time or fixed-term contract status.

(b) Recruitment literature will not imply a preference for one group of applicants unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which limits the post to this particular group, and / or there is a well-founded case for positive action in which case this must be clearly stated.

(c) All vacancies will be circulated internally.

(d) All descriptions and specifications for posts will include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.

(e) All selection will be thorough, conducted against defined criteria and will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job. Where it is necessary to ask questions relating to personal circumstances, these will be related purely to job requirements and asked to all candidates.

5. Employment

(a) The English Folk Dance and Song Society will not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or part-time or fixed-term contract status in the allocation of duties between employees employed at any level with comparable job descriptions.

(b) The English Folk Dance and Song Society will put in place any reasonable measures and/or adjustments within the workplace for those employees who become disabled during employment or for disabled appointees.

(c) All employees will be considered solely on their merits for career development and promotion with equal opportunities for all.

6. Training

(a) Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or part-time or fixed-term contract status.

(b) All employees will be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their Line Manager or the Business Development & Operations Director (the lead staff member for Human Resources).

7. Monitoring

(a) It is the responsibility of the Business Development & Operations Director to ensure that all aspects of this policy are kept under review and are operated throughout the organisation.

(b) Where it appears that applicants/employees are not being offered equal opportunities, circumstances will be investigated to identify any policies or criteria which exclude or discourage certain employees and, if so, whether these are justifiable.

8. Grievances and victimisation

(a) The English Folk Dance and Song Society emphasises that discrimination is unacceptable conduct which may lead to disciplinary action under the organisation's Disciplinary Procedure.

(b) Any complaints of discrimination will be pursued through the organisation's Grievance Procedure.

See efdss.org/policies

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