

FRIENDS PROVIDENT FOUNDATION

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Friends Provident Foundation (“FPF”) believes that a diverse workforce and trustee base bring value to the organisation in terms of new and different experience and perspective and that this in turn increases our understanding of, and relevance to, those our funding is intended to benefit and organisations with which we work.

It is the FPF’s policy not to discriminate against its trustees, employees, applicants, grant-holders or investees on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability or age, pregnancy, maternity or trade union membership or the fact that they are a part-time worker or a fixed-term employee.

Our trustees, employees and applicants for employment or support shall not be disadvantaged by any policies or conditions of service which cannot be justified as necessary for operational purposes. The Foundation shall, at all times, strive to promote best practice as well as work within legislative requirements.

This policy is for guidance only and shall be provided to all trustees and employees but does not form part of your contract of employment.

This policy applies to the Foundation’s trustees in addition to employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to ex-employees and to job applicants (collectively **employees**). The principles included underpin our treatment of applicants for funding, grant-holders and those in which we directly invest in our programme of social investment.

All employees have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and therefore to treat all with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, whether junior or senior to them. This applies equally to the treatment of our stakeholders, including grant applicants and grant-holders, by our employees.

Scope and purpose of the policy

The Foundation will not unlawfully discriminate on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability or age, pregnancy, maternity, trade union membership, or part-time or fixed-term status.

This policy applies to all aspects of the grant application and management processes, including dealings with grant applicants and grant-holders, advertising of jobs and recruitment and selection, to training and development, opportunities for promotion, to conditions of service, benefits and facilities and pay; to health and safety and to conduct at work, to grievance and disciplinary procedures, to termination of employment, including redundancy and all aspects of grant administration.

The Foundation will take reasonable steps to accommodate the requirements of employees' religions, cultures, disabilities and domestic responsibilities.

Forms of discrimination

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Direct discrimination occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage for a reason related to one or more of the grounds set out above. Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. If this criterion cannot be objectively justified for an unconnected reason, it would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of sex or race. Discrimination also includes victimisation (less favourable treatment because of action taken to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague, trustee, grant applicant or grant-holder in that regard) and harassment (as per the Foundation's Bullying & Harassment policy).

Breaches of the policy

Applicants and grant-holders

If a grant applicant or grant-holder believes that they may have been disadvantaged on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, they are encouraged to raise the matter through the Foundation's Complaints Procedure, by writing to the Foundation Director. If your complaint relates to the Foundation Director, you should write to the Chair of the Foundation (using the address provided on this website), marking your letter 'private and confidential'.

Employees

If an employee believes that they may have been disadvantaged on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, they are encouraged to raise the matter through the Foundation's Grievance Procedure.

If an employee believes that they may have been harassed on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, they are encouraged to raise the matter through the Foundation's Bullying and Harassment and/or Grievance Procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations of a breach in this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the Foundation's Disciplinary Procedure.

If after investigation an employee is proven to have harassed another worker on the unlawful grounds listed above they will be subject to disciplinary action. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. The Foundation will always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

As this policy applies equally to the Foundation employees' relations with stakeholders, including grant applicants and grant-holders. If, after investigation, an employee is proven to have discriminated against or harassed a stakeholder they will also be subject to disciplinary action.

Responsibilities

The Foundation Director has responsibility for the implementation and effective operation of the Foundation's Equal Opportunity & Diversity policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination.

All employees are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they familiarise themselves with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives. In particular, employees must treat grant applicants, grant-holders and each other fairly and reasonably.