

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Mayor's European Social Fund (ESF) 2019-23 Programme

Round 2 – Ex-Offenders – Positive TurnAround

Project ID: P1.4/EO/P17669:LTEN

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This document sets out the Equality and Diversity Policy of the Positive TurnAround Partnership. It explains why equality and diversity are important to us, the basic principles we will follow, our equality and diversity policy and how we intend to implement, monitor, and review it.
- 1.2. The Equality and Diversity Policy covers both the work we do with our beneficiaries and the internal procedures that govern how we function as a Partnership. Throughout this policy the term 'staff' applies to paid staff, consultants, trainees on work placement, volunteers, and the members of the Board of Trustees/Directors of the partner organisations.
- 1.3. This Policy sets out how the partnership intends to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010:
- 1.4. Partners provide services to Ex-Offenders who have completed their statutory provision targeting those with language and other barriers to finding work or progressing in work including men and women; older people, people with disability or health conditions and believe that all beneficiaries should be treated with understanding and respect. Our beneficiaries have the right to both appropriate access to our services and equitable treatment by our staff.
- 1.5. At the heart of what we do is a recognition of the discrimination many face because of their ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, and a commitment to combating it. For women, gay men and lesbians, bisexuals, transgender, older people and people with disabilities, these equality and diversity issues are also particularly acute.
- 1.6. This policy is an important public statement of the partnership's intent so that our staff and beneficiaries can be clear about their rights and responsibilities and to ensure clear criteria against which the performance of the partnership can be judged. However, we recognise that the creation of a genuine equality and diversity culture is a continuous process. We must strive constantly to achieve it.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Equality and diversity are an integral part of the partnership's beliefs, and strategic objectives.
- 2.2 The partnership will uphold equality and diversity:

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- (a) in service delivery, by providing appropriate, sensitive, and impartial services and being accessible to all beneficiaries who meet the eligibility criteria,
- (b) by fostering a co-operative working environment which is free from harassment or victimisation and which promotes good relations among the partners, to create the conditions for the partnership to realise its full potential,
- (c) by employing and providing opportunities for all, women, older people, people with disabilities or health conditions and other disadvantaged groups and in so doing develop a partnership which reflects the diversity of our beneficiaries and society,
- (d) by promoting the values contained in the Policy in our relationships with other partnerships, networks and organisations,
- (e) in employment, by ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer, or trainee is unfairly discriminated against on the basis of their gender, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, age, physical or mental capabilities, marital status, sexual preference, social background, sexuality, or organisation role.

2.3 In implementing these principles, the partnership will ensure that it meets all the necessary legal requirements and strive to set standards of good practice that others will follow.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

- 3.1 The partnership will adhere to the principle of equality of opportunity and adopt a partnership working approach in its endeavour to:
- (a) Develop and implement systems for communicating with partners
 - (b) Develop a policy and procedure for dealing with complaints
 - (c) Support, monitor and guide the partners
 - (d) Develop a strategy for sustaining the partnership
 - (e) Develop, implement, and review policies of the partnership.
- 3.2 The partnership will promote equality and diversity in staff recruitment, selection and development.
- 3.3 The partnership will ensure its publicity and promotion activities and materials are underpinned by the principle of equality of opportunity and take into consideration the diverse needs of the target beneficiary groups.
- 3.4 The partnership will ensure equality of opportunity and promote diversity in the delivery of its services.
- 3.5 The partnership will endeavour to create a conducive environment that will ensure all staff and beneficiaries feel valued and are treated fairly.
- 3.6 The partnership will ensure parity of outcomes for the diverse target beneficiary groups.
- 3.7 The partnership will develop and agree a framework for evaluating the partnership that takes into account the needs of the partners and assess the impact of the work of the partnership on the diverse target beneficiary groups.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

- 4.1 The project steering group will ensure the policy, procedures and action plan are understood, supported and promoted by all partners and is applied to all activities of the partnership.
- 4.2 The project steering group will develop and agree an Equality and Diversity Action Plan and ensure it is implemented consistently and reviewed regularly.
- 4.3 All partners will ensure the Equality and Diversity Policy is understood and followed by their staff and implemented in their projects consistently.
- 4.4 The project steering group will ensure open and honest discussion of equality and diversity issues involved and create an environment where all staff and beneficiaries feel encouraged to air their views; express their concerns; learn from each other's experience and treat different perspectives and values with respect.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

- 5.1 The partnership will review the Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan annually.
- 5.2 The project steering group will oversee implementation of the policy and approve further action(s) to promote equality and celebrate diversity.

The London Training and Employment Networks' Responsibilities

The London Training and Employment Network (LTEN) is fully committed to the active promotion of Equal Opportunity in its employment practices, in the work it undertakes and in the provision of all its services. Our understanding of Equal Opportunity is therefore all encompassing and forms LTEN's relationship with project partners, job applicants, existing staff, beneficiaries, suppliers and any other organisations or individuals we deal with in the course of our activities.

While we do not discriminate against any existing or potential staff or users of our services, we do acknowledge the need for positive measures that can help improve the position of some of our fellow citizens.

Since its inception, LTEN has channelled considerable resources towards the provision of services to some of the most disadvantaged groups in our society, including vulnerable young and older people, women, the unemployed, refugees, and other black and minority ethnic communities and the disabled. Our commitment to Equal Opportunity in this area of work does not primarily relate to the fact that we provide services to disadvantaged people but to our permanent concern for offering the best service that we are capable of.

Project Delivery Partners

As partners on the Positive TurnAround project, we expect all partners and project staff to adhere to all areas of the partnership Equal Opportunities Plan and Policy, covering the following summary areas of:

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- i. Recruitment and Career Progression
- ii. The Responsibilities of Individual Staff Members
- iii. Monitoring the Equal Opportunity Policy
- iv. Sexual Harassment
- v. Racial Abuse

Recruitment and Career Progression

During the process of recruiting new staff and their subsequent career progression within the partnership, essential principles of Equal Opportunity will be observed. These include (but are not limited to):

- Avoiding questions on the applicant's marital status, religion or plans for children in application forms and interviews for new posts.
- Ensuring that any requirement or condition specified for new posts is strictly necessary to avoid any potential indirect discrimination.
- Publicising new posts using regional and/or local BAME networks and/or any other such media to reach people of diverse ethnic origin.
- Supporting announcements of job vacancies with the following statement: "The Positive TurnAround Partnership promotes Equal Opportunity and therefore will not discriminate on the grounds of sex, sexuality, age, race, and disability, political or religious beliefs".

The partnership's Equal Opportunity Policy also includes non-discriminatory practices concerning recruitment procedures, staff training, performance appraisal, and terms of employment, grievances, disputes, disciplinary procedures, and redundancy.

The Responsibilities of Individual Staff Members

While the Positive TurnAround partnership assumes the primary responsibility for providing Equal Opportunity, the successful implementation of this Plan and Policy will depend on the active co-operation of all individual project staff members. Any project staff member found to have committed an act of discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action and may be dismissed.

Monitoring the Equal Opportunity Policy

The Project Manager has overall responsibility for the partnership's Equal Opportunity Policy implementation. Monitoring its implementation will be the subject of discussion at monthly Project Steering Group Meetings as well as regular contacts between the Project Manager and individual project staff members and Partners. It is during the Project Steering Group Meetings that detailed information about all aspects of our services can be analysed.

Sexual Harassment

The Positive TurnAround partnership believes that all people have a right to be treated with dignity in the workplace. Sexual harassment will not be permitted or condoned by the partnership and staff and beneficiaries have a right to complain about it should it occur.

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Sexual harassment means unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex, affecting the dignity of women and men at work. It can include unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal contact.

Examples of sexual harassment include the following:

- i. Unwanted physical contact
- ii. Unwelcome sexual advances
- iii. Continued suggestions for social activities outside the workplace after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome
- iv. Lewd remarks
- v. Innuendoes or suggestive comments
- vi. Leering, whistling, or making sexually suggestive gestures; or
- vii. The display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures.

It also includes non-sexual conduct where conduct denigrates or ridicules or is abusive of a project staff member or beneficiary because of his or her sex. This may include gender related insults or offensive comments about appearance or dressing.

Racial Abuse

Racial abuse and harassment will similarly not be condoned or permitted by the partnership. Examples of racial abuse/harassment include offensive jokes and racist literature.

The partnership recognises that the victimisation of complainants is unlawful, provided that the complaint is made in good faith.

As with all forms of discrimination, the partnership will take complaints of sexual harassment or racial abuse very seriously and implement its grievance and/or disciplinary procedures where appropriate.

In addition, all delivery partners must adhere to the project's contract obligations, including the action plans below:

1. Identify the needs of the target beneficiary group(s) and respond to needs as they change over the project period.
2. Promote a system of referral within the partnership and outside it, to ensure that beneficiaries have access to the best available opportunities.
3. Meet the cost of all project support expenses, thus contributing towards participants' development and progression.