**1. Introduction:**

An Equality and Diversity Policy for Volunteers can be incorporated into your overarching Volunteer Policy or sit separately. Remember when creating your policy that you do not refer to employment rights or employment policies such as unfair dismissal, grievance, or absence. Although volunteers don’t have these employment rights, which will be tied to your Equality and Diversity Policy for Staff, they do still fall under ‘provision of services’ and therefore it is still unlawful to discriminate, as below.

“The Equality Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone because of a protected characteristic in a wide range of areas, including the provision of services.

Protected characteristics:

Age   
Disability   
Gender reassignment   
Marriage and civil partnership   
Pregnancy and maternity   
Race   
Religion or belief   
Sex   
Sexual orientation

There are some exceptions to this, one of which is the charities’ exception.”   
- *Charity Commission*

More information about the charities’ exception can be found on the Charity Commission website (see link below).

**2. Useful links:**

[Charity Commission - Equality Act Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-guidance-for-charities/equality-act-guidance-for-charities)

[Equality and Human Rights Commission - Core Guidance](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/core-guidance-voluntary-charity-and-community-organisations)

[The National Lottery Community Fund - Our equality principles](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/about/customer-service/equalities)

[Resource Centre - Equality and diversity policies for small groups](https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/equality-and-diversity-policies-for-small-groups/)

Further information can be found within [Beecan.org](https://app.beecan.org/) library of resources.

**3. Actions:**

 Review the characteristics and the Equality Act

 Consider how you engage individuals within your work

 Consider how you can encourage diversity amongst your volunteers

 Review whether a change in policy is required

 If required, action Appendix 1 + 2 and update staff, volunteers and relevant stakeholders

**4. Additional notes:**

The National Lottery Community Fund encourages applicants to understand their responsibilities with regards to Equality. They have provided guidance and tools that could be embedded within your organisation (see above link).

For additional support, please contact:  
Hull CVS at [enquiries@hull-cvs.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hull-cvs.co.uk) for Hull based organisations

HEY Smile at [volunteering@heysmilefoundation.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@heysmilefoundation.org.ukF) for East Riding based organisations

**5. Disclaimer:**

Whilst we have done our best to source appropriate links and best practice templates to support your organisation, please be aware that due to regulatory changes, these templates may not always be the best example.

We therefore strongly suggest thoroughly reading and amending templates as necessary and conducting periodic reviews of all policies within your organisation to ensure they still meet national guidelines and regulations.

**6. Appendix 1:**  
  
**Example of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for Volunteers**

Introduction

**[Insert your organisation’s name]** is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our volunteers, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our volunteer workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our service users, and for each person to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation, in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities, is also committed against unlawful discrimination of service users or the public.

Our policy’s purpose

This policy’s purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all of our volunteers.

2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

· 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

Our commitments

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.

2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all volunteers are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training managers and all other paid employees about their rights and responsibilities under the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Where possible, this will be extended to volunteers as well. Responsibilities include volunteers conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in volunteering, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All in the organisation should understand that they can be held liable for unlawful discrimination.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, volunteers, service users, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others during the organisation’s work and volunteer activities. In addition, it should be noted harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Monitor the make-up of the volunteer workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Monitoring will also include assessing how the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions and/or employee representatives **[insert details as appropriate].**

**7. Appendix 2:**  
**Example of a Volunteer Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form**

Introduction

# We recognise the benefits of a diverse community of volunteers and are committed to being an inclusive organisation, where everyone is treated with respect, dignity and where there is equal opportunity for all.

# We are committed to eliminating discrimination from our volunteer recruitment and day to day practice. We will take steps to ensure that volunteers are recruited, trained and developed based on ability, the requirement for the role and the need to maintain an effective and efficient service.

# To monitor our effectiveness and to comply with the obligations placed on use under equalities legislation, we collect and analyse the following information. All volunteers are requested to complete this form which will be used for monitoring purposes only and will be stored securely.

## How to fill in the form

Please complete the form by ticking the relevant boxes and by giving as much information as possible. You can choose not to fill in any or all the sections, and whether you choose to do so will have no effect on your application to volunteer with us.

## Data Protection

The data you provide is subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 (GDPR 2018). By completing this form and returning it to us, whether electronically or by hand, you are giving your permission for us to process the data for equal opportunities monitoring purposes. This information will be held confidentially and will only be used for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring. All data will be treated as strictly confidential.

|  |
| --- |
| Age 16-24  25-29  30-34  35-39  40-44  45-49  50-54  55-59  60-64  65+  Prefer not to say |
| Gender Male   Female   Non-binary   Intersex   Transgender   Prefer not to say  If you describe your gender in another term please write in:  Is the gender you identify with the same as your gender registered at birth?  Yes  No  Prefer not to say |
| Disability Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is described as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.  Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes  No   Prefer not to say |
| Ethnicity Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about the group to which you perceive you belong. **Asian or Asian British** Indian  Pakistani  Bangladeshi  Chinese  Prefer not to say  Any other Asian background, please write in:  **Black, African, Caribbean or Black British** African  Caribbean  Prefer not to say  Any other Black, African or Caribbean background, please write in:  **Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups** White and Black Caribbean  White and Black African  White and Asian Prefer not to say  Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background, please write in:  **White** English  Welsh  Scottish  Northern Irish  Irish British  Gypsy or Irish Traveller  Prefer not to say Any other White background, please write in:  **Other ethnic group** Arab  Prefer not to say  Any other ethnic group, please write in: |

|  |
| --- |
| Religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief Do you identify with any of the following belief systems?  None  Church of England  Roman Catholic  Other Christian  Buddhist  Hindu  Muslim  Jewish  Sikh  Prefer not to say  Any other Religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief, please write in: |
| **Sexual Orientation**Heterosexual  Gay  Lesbian  Bisexual  Asexual  Pansexual  Unsure  Prefer not to say  If you describe your sexuality in another term, please write it here: |
| **Comments** |
| I choose not to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form |