

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

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Policy Document OP-02

RISE LEARNING ZONE

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Equal Opportunities Statement

RISE welcomes and celebrates the richness and diversity of young people in Nottinghamshire and is strongly committed to achieving equal opportunities for all young people and others who engage in RISE.

RISE recognises, however, that some people suffer oppression, unfair discrimination and lack of opportunity on various grounds, including, for example, their:-

- Race, skin colour, nationality or heritage
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Physical, sensory or learning disability
- Faith, religion, beliefs or culture
- Address
- Age
- Family situations
- Class
- Physical, sexual or emotional health
- Marital status
- Spent and unspent criminal convictions
- Trade union activity
- Unemployment

Working Practices

RISE is committed to:-

- establishing and maintaining a culture of implementing equal opportunities in all that it does

- taking positive action in seeking to promote social justice
- implementing anti-discriminatory practices in all areas of work, and amongst young people who use the services of the Project
- challenging oppression and inequality
- sharing its experiences through openness and transparency
- empowering young people through discourse and informal education

RISE seeks to show the following indicators of being an equal opportunities organisation, including having:-

- high quality services that are accessible and sensitive to the needs of a diversity of young people who use (and potential users of) the services of the project
- a commitment to work with the most disadvantaged young people and groups and to record and monitor the young people who do use the project
- fair and effective employment practices
- proper representation of young people, in terms of management, paid staff and volunteers
- procedures for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating all aspects of the organisation's performance every year, in order to continually develop good practice and up-to-date policies
- reporting and accounting to appropriate people and agencies
- regular training and support for Zone team members (employees and volunteers) to implement the policies of the Project

Equal Opportunities in Employment

RISE intends to be a good equal opportunities employer, not only obeying the law but also implementing good practice to be able to demonstrate fair and effective employment practices.

RISE recognises that certain groups of people experience discrimination in employment, is opposed to this situation, is firmly committed to combat all forms of unfair discrimination and to take steps to ensure that its practices are fair and equitable, such that no employee or volunteer experiences unfair or unlawful discrimination.

Legislation

The Management Team (as employers) and project manager as Team member responsible for the implementation of policies, are aware of their legal obligations under anti-discriminatory legislation which includes:-

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005

They must also obey other legislation regarding employment, for example the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Asylum and immigration Act 1996, under which it is a criminal offence to employ someone who is not entitled to work in the UK.

Principles of fair employment

RISE seeks to:-

- Carry out fair and effective staff recruitment from the widest possible pool of talent and select the best candidate on merit, without personal or other bias
- Create an environment where all talents, even those that do not initially fit the established way of doing things, are used to the full to make the organisation more effective
- Understand the support needs of different groups of staff and how to develop them to meet agreed performance targets
- Appraise staff effectively and without prejudice and make good post-appraisal decisions
- Be a role model of healthy ways of relating to and working with people of different races, genders, sexual orientation etc.

Good employment practice

RISE will ensure that:-

- paid and un-paid posts are advertised to encourage applications from a diversity of communities
- all applicants for jobs and volunteer placement are treated fairly, without personal or other bias
- all appointments are made on the basis of merit, that is the perceived ability of the person to do the job, as per the job description and person specification
- all employees are treated equally
- all volunteers are treated equally
- the training needs for specific groups of people are recognised
- the needs of people with disabilities are met as thoroughly as possible and evaluated by those with disabilities
- the equal opportunities in employment policy and practice is regularly monitored and reviewed and outcomes are used to improve the effectiveness of the policy and its implementation
- better links with groups experiencing discrimination are established externally to assist with developing good practice within RISE

Recruitment Procedure

A job description will be available for all staff, which will be drawn up according to the needs of the project for the post, and taking into account the views of outgoing staff. If it is a new post then a job outline may be available from the funding application, or will be compiled by the project manager.

The Project Manager will notify the Management Committee of a vacancy and then finalise and approve all job descriptions prior to recruitment. The Project Manager will examine whether and how it might be possible to use a vacancy as an opportunity to take positive action to recruit someone from a community which is under-represented on RISE Team by:-

- considering using exemptions under the Race and/or Sex Discriminations Acts, For example under “genuine occupational qualification” regulations where being

of a particular gender or racial group is required to provide services to persons of same gender or racial group

- considering whether any adaptations can be made, for example to the equipment used in the job, which would enable a disabled person to be considered, either prior to advertising and/or once a person is appointed
- considering whether any adjustments in the job description and/or person specification can be considered, in order to make the vacancy more suitable for recruiting someone from a target group
- adjusting or amending the roles of other members of staff providing that service, to make the vacancy more suitable. Obviously this can only be done by agreement of all concerned
- considering whether any other services could be adjusted or amended to make a vacancy more suitable for recruiting someone from a target group. Obviously this can only be done by agreement of all concerned and may require Trade Union involvement
- whether the hours envisaged could be reduced or made more flexible to allow a person with health difficulties or caring responsibilities to carry out the job

Recruitment Advertising

In order to carry out fair and effective staff recruitment from the widest possible pool of talent and select the best candidate on merit, without personal or other bias RISE will:-

- always openly and publicly recruit for all vacancies amongst established posts
- as a matter of principle have no restrictions on where it advertises vacancies
- wherever possible offer assistance in filling in application forms to potential applicants who have a disability which would not affect their performance in the job
- always state that interviews can be conducted using various communication methods, for example, to enable a deaf person to be assessed fairly by having a signer present
- always operate a system for recording how people learn about vacant posts to assist future advertising decisions

- on the basis of previous monitoring and evaluation of its equal opportunities practices, take positive action to ensure that advertising is effective in communities which are under-represented on RISE Team.