

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

Multistory has adopted the following Equality & Diversity Policy to provide guidelines to members of staff, Trustees and those working on behalf of the company for the delivery of our arts programme and our employment policies. The aim of the policy is to communicate our commitment to promoting equality and diversity throughout the company and our work and it sets out how we want to achieve this. This policy is fully supported by Multistory staff and was approved by the Board at its meeting of 21 October 2020.

### **1.0 Policy statement**

Promoting equality and diversity is fundamental to the mission of Multistory. This policy exists to ensure equal access to employment and arts engagement opportunities in every part of our work.

Multistory will not unlawfully discriminate, or give less favourable treatment, because of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation as well as trades union activity either as an organisation or in delivery of our arts programme. We also understand that social and economic disadvantages can lead to inequalities and we seek to recognise this through our work.

Multistory will not unlawfully discriminate in these areas: pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline; dismissal; redundancy; leave for parents; requests for flexible working; recruitment and selection for employment; promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

Multistory is fully committed to treating equally every person, group and organisation that we work with. We aim to promote equality to everyone and celebrate diversity in terms of employment (including freelance work and volunteering), participation in the company's activities and the audiences who engage our work. We are committed to taking positive steps to redress discrimination and we will take all reasonable steps to provide environments in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity and that are free of discrimination and harassment.

Our vision for the development of the arts is based on equality of access and opportunity and recognition and celebration of cultural diversity and cultural democracy by:

- actively promoting the inclusion of people from all social groups and backgrounds;

- celebrating and valuing difference as a creative and sustaining force for our business, artistic expression and our staff.

Our organisational aims are:

- to meet the needs of the diverse communities and partners we serve;
- to be an arts organisation that diverse communities and partners want to work with;
- to be an employer of choice;
- to be an open and inclusive organisation;
- decisions are fair and based on merit, competence and potential;
- to take into account the experiences and needs of individuals throughout our work;
- to create an environment where people feel safe; differences are accepted; engagement and contributions by all are encouraged, valued and respected so that everyone involved can give their best;
- that there is equality in every aspect of our work.

This policy underpins all policies and procedures operated by Multistory.

## **1.1 Policy aims**

### Employment

We will not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, Board member, artist, freelance worker, volunteer, temporary member of staff or associate of the company for any of the reasons set out in the policy statement above.

### Board of Trustees

We will always strive to ensure that the membership of the Board reflects the communities we work with and work to achieve a broad representation on the Board and any advisory groups to the Board.

### Participation

We aim to work in as inclusive a way as possible ensuring that no community members are excluded from project participation by a lack of information, lack of physical access, transportation issues, venues that are perceived as unsafe or unwelcoming or any other access requirements.

Multistory values the celebration of diversity, engaging with our audience and increasing the accessibility of the arts.

### Positive action

We will target, where appropriate, those groups and individuals least likely to have the opportunity to participate in arts activities.

## 2.0 Legal duties

We acknowledge that discrimination is illegal under the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010.

We use this policy as the mechanism for ensuring our compliance as an employer and service provider as set out in these Acts. The purpose of the Equality Act is that everyone has the right to be treated fairly at work or when accessing Multistory's services. It protects people from discrimination by employers and services providers based on nine protected characteristics which are: age; disability; sex; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race (including colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins); religion and/or belief, including lack of religion and belief (belief refers to religion and / or philosophical); sexual orientation (known as the 'protected characteristics' throughout this policy).

There is also protection for trade union representatives and members against unfair treatment on the grounds of trade union involvement. Multistory will not treat employees unfairly on the grounds of trade union membership or non-membership. This includes dismissal and subjecting employees to unfair treatment. We respect the right of staff to join a trade union of their choice.

The types of unfair treatment or discrimination our staff, commissioned artists, associates, volunteers, board of trustees, clients, contractors, delivery partners, consultants and visitors are protected against under the Equality Act are listed below.

### Direct discrimination

This occurs where, because of a protected characteristic, a person receives worse treatment than someone who does not have that characteristic. To show direct discrimination, you need to compare your treatment with the treatment of someone else who doesn't have the same protected characteristic as you. Age is the only protected characteristic that allows employers to justify direct discrimination. In such cases the employer must be able to demonstrate that the different treatment because of age is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

### Discrimination by association

This is discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

### Perception discrimination

This is discrimination against someone because others think (incorrectly) that they possess a protected characteristic.

### Indirect discrimination

This occurs when there is a policy or a practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic compared with people who do not have that characteristic.

### Harassment

This is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

### Victimisation

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than someone else because they have complained about discrimination or are suspected of doing so or have supported someone else who has.

We expect our board of trustees, staff, volunteers, freelance workers, contractors and visitors to act in accordance with the provisions outlined above. We will not accept any form of discrimination carried out by employees or third parties working with the company. Action will be taken under the company's disciplinary procedure against anyone contracted to work with us who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination.

## **3.0 Policy implementation**

Ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Director who is guided by the Board and an Equality & Diversity Advisory Group that supports staff and the Board. In order to ensure that this policy reflects our values, and is lived out through our practice, we will carry out the following.

- Make our workplace as accessible as possible implementing reasonable adjustments, wherever possible, for those that need them.
- Actively encourage all staff to determine their learning and development needs; the company will undertake to enable these wherever possible by providing funding/time to ensure that these are met in line with business priorities
- Prior to taking up role or commencing a contract with Multistory, new staff, volunteers, trustees, commissioned artists and contractors will be asked to read and confirm adherence to this policy.
- Provide training to our staff, volunteers and board of trustees to help them implement this policy and ensure that equality and diversity principles are embedded in our workplace.
- Communicate this policy to staff, volunteers, clients and stakeholders ensuring that they are aware of our commitment to treat all people fairly and their obligations to operate in line with this policy
- Take appropriate and timely action when an incident occurs that may have breached this policy.

On a day-to-day basis, breaches of this policy could occur at a number of levels and some will require an urgent response. If staff, artists or volunteers find examples of discrimination within Multistory's working practices, it should be brought to the attention of the relevant line manager or the Company Manager who will then ensure that the matter is responded to in the most appropriate way.

We strongly urge all staff, artists and volunteers to ensure that they take action if they believe they have witnessed anything that would constitute a breach of this

policy. Issues that are of a more serious nature will be dealt with through the grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Multistory will collect data annually on the participants, groups, organisations and artists we work with, as well as from recruitment and selection processes, in order to monitor the implementation of this policy and our Equality & Diversity Action Plan and inform our practice.

This policy document will be made available to partners, funders and other stakeholders on request.

### **3.1 Roles and responsibilities**

#### Director

- Take responsibility for the delivery of this policy and integrate equality and diversity across Multistory's work.
- Provide strong leadership on equality.
- Work closely with the Equality & Diversity Advisory Group to monitor the effectiveness of Multistory's equality and diversity aims and objectives.
- Respond to allegations that may constitute a breach of the policy fairly, quickly and effectively.
- Attend mandatory training and development events.

#### Staff

- Act in accordance with this policy.
- Act as equality role models.
- Treat others with dignity and respect and express opinions constructively and with sensitivity.
- Report discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment that they experience or witness.
- Help identify discriminatory practices or procedures and bring this to the attention of the Company Manager.
- Contribute to creating an inclusive learning environment that values difference.
- Attend mandatory training and development events.

#### Board of Trustees, freelance associates, commissioned artists and volunteers

- Act in accordance with this policy.
- Treat others with dignity and respect and express opinions constructively and with sensitivity.
- Play a role in creating an environment where people are valued and respected.
- Report discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment that they experience or witness to the Company Manager.
- Attend mandatory training and development events.

## **4.0 Complaints**

All allegations of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, confidentially and speedily. Multistory will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints of unlawful discrimination from employees or anyone they work with. If an employee wishes to make a complaint of discrimination, you should do so promptly and use the company's grievance procedure.

Should anyone other than an employee wish to make a complaint, they should do so using the company's Complaints Procedure.

## **5.0 Links to other policies**

This policy underpins all of our policies but in particular the following documents should in be read in conjunction with this policy.

Recruitment & Selection Policy  
Disciplinary & Grievance Policy  
Complaints Procedure

## **6.0 Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in line with Multistory's business plan. Monitoring will also include assessing how the supporting action plan is working in practice and make recommendations for action to address any issues.

Policy Revision Date: 21 October 2020  
(to be reviewed annually)