



Equal Opportunity Policy: Statement of Intent

Equal Opportunities is about removing bias, prejudice and stereotyping, so that difference does not hold back an individual from any undertaking or other opportunity.

Diversity is about recognising that everyone is different and that our differences lead to varied experiences, values, attitudes, ways of thinking, behaving, communicating and working.

INTERIM embraces diversity and through its commitment to equal opportunities and diversity it will:

- Positively bring equality and diversity into the workplace – encouraging a culture where diversity is welcomed and everyone feels valued and respected.
- Embed equality in service delivery, personnel practices and management
- Be sensitive, creative and reasonable when responding to the diverse needs of users of our services

INTERIM's Equal Opportunity statement applies to users of our services, paid staff and volunteers (including Trustees), unless otherwise stated.

INTERIM provides a comprehensive range of services for members of the public and believes in promoting equal opportunity of access both in service provision and volunteering/employment practices within the organisation.

INTERIM recognises individuals and groups of people including children and young people can suffer discrimination for many reasons and be marginalised and not receive the same equality of opportunity as other individuals and groups in society.

As such INTERIM opposes all forms of prejudice, discrimination and harassment whether on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, (physical ability or mental

health) marital status, HIV status, gender identification, religious belief, colour, creed, age, class, caring responsibilities, marital status, sexual orientation.

We will establish and maintain a fair, accessible and safe environment for users of our services, volunteers and everyone who works with us.

We support and uphold all current equality legislation and operate under the:

Equality Act 2010

Equal Pay Act 1970

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Race Relations Act 1976 and amendment 2000

Employment Act 1990

Human Rights Act 1998

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

INTERIM is aware of the statutory requirements laid down and will ensure these are adhered to throughout the charity. We welcome the requirement that all areas of our work and practice must be designed to ensure they do not have directly or indirectly discriminatory effects and include specific equal opportunities elements in all our policies and procedures.

Our policies recognise the benefits of diversity and ensure all staff and volunteers have equal opportunity and receive fair treatment in accordance with their legal rights.

Recruitment is in line with our recruitment policy. We advertise widely and recruit only on the basis of a person's ability to do the job. We will make any necessary adjustments in accordance with disability legislation.

We encourage personal development and provide training to our staff and volunteers.

INTERIM has a code of conduct and grievance, disciplinary and whistle-blowing procedures to protect staff and volunteers. We take action against those who discriminate against or harass our staff and volunteers and will support them if they get harassed.

We have systems to ensure all staff and volunteers are treated fairly in terms of pay and conditions. We have systems to ensure we examine our policies and practice regularly and that problem areas or breaches of our equal opportunities policy are raised and resolved.

Data Collection

INTERIM complies with the requirement of the Data Protection Act (1998) and GDPR (2018). Any data, either qualitative and or quantitative, required in order to monitor the requirements or the impact of the Equalities Act 2010, will be collected where it is reasonable, proportionate and practical to do so. Any such requirements will be notified to users of our services.

INTERIM will actively monitor and appraise this statement to ensure good practices are being applied across the charity. Specific responsibility for implementing the policy is delegated to the Trustees who ensure, through our management structure that it is consistently applied.

This policy supports discrimination and equality of opportunity in respect of 'protected characteristics' as defined in the Equalities Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Religion or cultural beliefs
- Gender reassignment
- Marital status and civil partnership
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity

INTERIM's commitment to anti-discriminatory practice relates to all kinds of discrimination, as set out below:

- Direct discrimination - where someone is treated less favourably than another because they have a protected characteristic
- Indirect discrimination – when a requirement or a condition is applied which has a detrimental effect on a particular group or individual. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.
- Associative discrimination – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who has a protected characteristic.
- Perceptive discrimination - direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic even if they do not possess that characteristic.

- Harassment – unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This applies even if the conduct is not directed at the individual or if they do not have the protected characteristic.
- Third party harassment – potential liability for the harassment of staff by others such as users of the service
- Victimisation – when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equalities Act or it is thought that they have done so.

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and amended in line with new developments in Equality and Diversity best practice.