



Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

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1 Statement of Intent

ARCADEA promotes an environment of equality of opportunity and mutual respect. All employees, participants and freelance staff are expected to follow and actively promote the 'Ethos and Code of Practice Statement' and the 'Equal Opportunities and Diversity' policy in all aspects of their work.

ARCADEA strives to be an equal opportunities employer. This means that it is company policy that there should be no discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment of any employee or job applicant, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of:

- race, colour, nationality or national or ethnic origin
- gender or marital status
- disability
- sex change status
- sexual orientation
- religion or philosophical belief
- political belief
- age.

This policy will be given to all management committee members, employees, freelance and sessional workers, consultants and volunteers, and project participants. It will be available in a range of accessible formats

2 Principle

Arcadea works towards the equal status of Disabled people following a social model of disability and promotes the four core values of human rights law of dignity, autonomy, equality and solidarity.

The four human rights values are of particular importance in the context of disability:

- the *dignity* of each individual, who is deemed to be of inestimable value because of his/her inherent self-worth, and not because s/he is economically or otherwise "useful";

- the concept of *autonomy* or self-determination, which is based on the presumption of a capacity for self-directed action and behaviour, and requires that the person be placed at the centre of all decisions affecting him/her;
- the inherent *equality* of all regardless of difference;
- and the ethic of *solidarity*, which requires society to sustain the freedom of the person with appropriate social supports.

arcadea aims to create an environment of respect where all are included and have equal status. We will endeavour to ensure that people working with us are treated with respect and fairness, in positive and supportive ways. We aim to encourage people and ensure that people are able to participate in all activities as equals. We are the regional organisation promoting the cultural and artistic equality of all Disabled People and take our role very seriously, aiming for high professional standards of practice in all aspects of our work. These statements aim to provide a secure framework within which we all agree to work. The framework is implemented in all areas of our practice.

3 Social Model of Disability

The Social Model of Disability has a focus on people with impairments being disabled by the barriers they face in society. People are Disabled by a lack of access to education, information, employment, services, buildings, transport; by negative cultural stereotyping and representation; and by attitudinal discrimination.

4 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all ARCADEA employees, freelance and contract staff, consultants, sessional workers and volunteers, and it applies all areas of our organisations provision and recruitment.

5 Application of the Policy

ARCADEA'S policy is to:

- Eliminate and prevent, as far as is reasonably possible, discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment in the workplace
- Encourage all its employees to take a positive active role against all forms of discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment
- Deter employees from participating in discriminatory behaviour, victimisation, bullying or harassment
- Demonstrate to all employees that they can rely upon the company's full support in cases of discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment at work.

ARCADEA is fully committed to providing a good, harmonious and diverse working environment that offers equal treatment and equal opportunities for all employees and one where every employee is treated with respect and dignity. Our aim is that remuneration, recruitment, promotion, training and retention should not be affected either directly or indirectly by irrelevant considerations such as prejudices or stereotyping.

ARCADEA recognises that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice; it also makes sound business sense. ARCADEA'S equal opportunities policy works towards ensuring that all employees develop towards their full potential, and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

While ARCADEA recognises that the overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy lies with the management of the organisation, it is incumbent upon all employees, whatever their position within the company, to take responsibility for ensuring its effective implementation in their day-to-day activities and working relationships with colleagues.

Employees should ensure that:

- they co-operate with any measures introduced to develop equal opportunities and diversity in the workplace
- they respect the sensitivities of others

- They actively promote and support this policy and associated procedures
- they refrain from taking discriminatory actions or decisions which are contrary to either the letter or spirit of this policy and, for employees of managerial status, that they ensure that those who report to them also comply with the policy
- they do not instruct, induce, or attempt to induce or pressurise other employees to act in breach of this policy
- employees who make, or support, complaints in respect of breaches of this policy are not victimised but treated fairly and responsively both when the complaint is made and thereafter.

The policy shall also apply to employees of contractors working at the company's premises.

Recruitment and selection

The selection process is of crucial importance in this policy and must be carried out according to objective job-related criteria, which must be subject to regular review. The effectiveness of the policy will be determined to a great extent by this aspect of employment procedure. ARCADEA will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection decisions will not discriminate whether consciously or unconsciously in making these decisions.

All employees and members of ARCADEA who are involved in the recruitment and selection of staff should be familiar with the terms and conditions of employment and the related policies which have been designed to ensure that ARCADEA recruits the most appropriate people in terms of abilities, experience and skills.

The main principles of ARCADEA'S recruitment procedure are:

- Recruitment drives should reach diverse communities through diversity and disability networks, groups and publications
- Application packs will be available in a range of accessible formats
- Job descriptions will be clearly and concisely written, be representative of the role and free from bias,
- Person specifications will only detail criteria relevant to the performance of the job

- Advertisements will be free from unlawful discrimination
- A minimum of three weeks should be available to applicants to make an application (ie from publicity to closing date should span a three week period)
- Adequate notice should be given to applicants if they are expected to prepare a presentation, particularly taking into consideration a range of access requirements
- Agencies which may be involved in the recruitment process e.g. temporary staff agencies and recruitment consultants will be informed of and given a copy of this policy
- Members of ARCADEA who are involved in the recruitment of staff will be informed of and given a copy of this policy and the terms and conditions of employment
- ARCADEA will train all staff involved in the recruitment, selection and employment of staff
- During the recruitment process applicants will not be asked inappropriate or unlawful questions
- A standardised equal opportunities format will be applied to each interview with clearly structured assessment and scoring procedures. Interviewers should not deviate from the interview template.
- Interview candidates will be invited to inform us of their access requirements so that we can aim to meet them in a realistic time frame
- Clear records of the reasons for decisions made throughout the recruitment process will be maintained

Training

Equal opportunities must be integrated into all training concerned with selection skills, staff assessment, counselling, staff development and the management or supervision of staff. The company's policy will form part of the induction training of all staff and must be signed up to by any freelance or contract workers.

Grievances

Employees who believe they have experienced any form of unfair or unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment should raise their concern through ARCADEA'S grievance procedure outlined in each employees contract and in the Office Handbook.

Where such grievances may concern the normal line of supervision or management, individuals may approach the Chief

Executive Director or the Personnel Sub Committee of the Management Committee of arcadea. This approach should be made through the Chief Executive.

Disciplinary process

Where following an investigation it is deemed that there is a case to answer, matters will be dealt with under ARCADEA'S disciplinary procedure, outlined in each employees contract and in the Office Handbook.

Monitoring

Examining the effects of policy and programmes of action on a regular and structured basis is a fundamental part of the process of successfully establishing equal opportunities. Personnel data are therefore collected, analysed and interpreted across the group. The objectives of monitoring are to:

- to identify areas of and reasons for under-representation of particular groups in the workforce
- to assess the effect of employment procedures and practices and identify any unintentional impact on particular groups
- to enable appropriate corrective action to take place, including defining targets for future change
- to enable ARCADEA to review and reshape its equal opportunities policy and programme of action.

Communication

This policy must be communicated widely and effectively throughout the workforce and to potential employees. It is the responsibility of management at all levels to ensure that such communication takes place and that the policy is adhered to.

6 Breaches of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Breaches of the ARCADEA'S equal opportunities policy and procedures, and any unfair or unlawful discrimination, bullying, victimisation or harassment will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under ARCADEA'S disciplinary procedures. In serious cases,

this could lead to dismissal of the relevant individual on the grounds of gross misconduct.