



Equality and Diversity policy

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Purpose

In carrying out our functions as a charity, Green Light Trust (GLT) is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all, and to ensuring that no individual is discriminated against in the planning and delivery of any of our activities.

We therefore aim to ensure that the values of equality, diversity, and respect for all are embedded into everything that we do.

Our Vision is a society where everyone has equitable access to the power of nature. In terms of our services, we endeavour to ensure that these are accessible to all and will proactively seek to address any gaps we identify in communities and groups accessing our services.

Principles

This policy is intended to demonstrate Green Light Trust's commitment to eliminating discrimination and encouraging and valuing diversity among staff, volunteers, partners, suppliers, and users of our services.

We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to meeting them in full. We believe that a culture that embraces equality, and values diversity, will help us to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in our plans, programmes, and activities.

We aim to create an environment which respects and welcomes everyone, and in which no form of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour is tolerated by anyone towards anyone. This particularly applies in relation to the 'protected characteristics' named in the Equality Act 2010: Age, disability,



gender reassignment, income, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (as further detailed below).

Guidelines

Green Light Trust understands that for equality to be achieved this policy needs to be made understandable to, and embraced by, staff, volunteers, suppliers, and partners.

This policy will be subject to agreement with any trade union which staff choose to join or to which they belong. The policy is fully supported and welcomed by all employees and by our Board of Trustees.

All staff, volunteers, suppliers, and partners have a responsibility to ensure that their own language and actions are consistent with the spirit as well as the contents of this policy.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with Green Light Trust's Chief Executive Officer and the governing Board of Trustees.

Our commitments

Green Light Trust recognises that an Equality and Diversity Policy alone is not enough to ensure that equality and diversity are central to everything that we do.

We will seek to create an environment in which diversity and the contributions of all staff, volunteers, suppliers, and partners are recognised and valued in all that we do. In this way we hope to provide an example of good equality practice and promote community cohesion.

In implementing this policy, we recognise that some people are unfamiliar with the ways in which discrimination and disadvantage affect people's health, wellbeing, and quality of life. We will therefore support people to develop equalities awareness and understanding.

To ensure that we are meeting the aims and the spirit of this policy we will:

- discuss and review how well we are implementing this policy and adjust our practices/develop an action plan where necessary;
- assess any significant new or revised policies and procedures for their impact on equality;
- embed equality and diversity into our development plans;
- ensure our employment practices and procedures, and our recruitment and treatment of participants in our programmes, are consistent with the aims of this policy.



Working with contractors, suppliers, and partners

It is important to us that suppliers, contractors and any other individual or organisation working on behalf of Green Light Trust are aware of and agree to comply with our Equality and Diversity policy whilst working for or on our behalf.

In addition, we are committed to:

- using accessible venues for events and meetings wherever it is possible to do so without affecting our overall service to our clients;
- using plain English, and offering accessible communications, for example, emails, letters, reports, and publicity materials as far as it is within our means to do so.

Recruitment

Our recruitment, selection and appointment procedures ensure that people are chosen on their merits and abilities.

Due value and consideration is given to the informal skills and experience (to be specified in job descriptions) of applicants as well as formal qualifications and training. We will advertise and select staff in a manner that meets objective job requirements and promotes equality of opportunity.

Green Light Trust respects family and other personal commitments through supporting flexible working, conducive to supporting a healthy work-life balance.

Accessibility of Service

Green Light Trust works to provide access to its service for people who might want to benefit from it. We endeavour to work with our partners to meet specific needs and overcome barriers to access.

In order that no volunteer is excluded from being able to carry out duties due to financial status, discretionary expenses may be claimed (at an approved rate).

Wherever possible, we provide transport for participants in our programmes, and reimburse travel expenses when required.

Promotion and Marketing

All general publicity about services offered is aimed at the widest possible audience within the localities where Green Light Trust works.

This does not prevent us directing publicity at certain target groups within the communities, if we think that it is justified because the groups appear under-represented among our participants.



Monitoring of Service

Green Light Trust regularly collates information on the make-up of communities, user groups, staff and volunteers in order to ensure that we meet the aims of our Equality & Diversity Policy.

We monitor the age, gender and ethnicity of our staff, volunteers, trustees and anyone who expresses an interest in any of these roles. As a result of this monitoring process, recruitment can be targeted where necessary towards any groups in the community who are shown not to be adequately represented on the bodies of staff, volunteers and trustees.

Responsibilities

The Head of People and Culture is responsible for the overall implementation of this Policy. All employee, volunteers and trustees are responsible for adhering to the Policy's aims.

Training

All employee and volunteers are expected to complete annual training. On top of this we look to facilitate conversations around unconscious bias and have included this in our delivery debriefing.

Links to other Policies and Procedures

Staff Handbook

Approved	Lauren Shand
Signature	
Position	Chief Executive
Date	07/12/2023

Date created 07/12/2023

To be reviewed on 27/11/2024

Replacing 27/11/2023

Appendix 1: Explanation of the Protected Characteristics



Age: An age group includes people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages. Where people fall in the same age group they share the protected characteristic of age. An age group would include “over fifties” or twenty-one-year-olds. A person aged twenty-one does not share the same characteristic of age with “people in their forties”. However, a person aged twenty-one and people in their forties can share the characteristic of being in the “under fifty” age range. *(Note: Green Light Trust may administer projects or services aimed at specific age groups. This is not intended to exclude those outside that specific age group; but to aid in researching and providing effective help to specific groups of beneficiaries)*

Disability: A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This section replaces similar provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and provisions in secondary legislation made under that Act.

Gender reassignment: A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person’s sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Marriage and civil partnership: A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner.

- A person who is engaged to be married is not married and therefore does not have this protected characteristic.
- A divorcee or a person whose civil partnership has been dissolved is not married or in a civil partnership and therefore does not have this protected characteristic.

Race: Race is defined as:

- a) Colour: includes being black or white.
- b) Nationality: includes being a British, Australian or Swiss citizen, etc.
- c) Ethnic or national origins: includes being from a Roma background or of Chinese heritage.

A racial group could be “black Britons” which would encompass those people who are both black and who are British citizens.

This section replaces similar provisions in the Race Relations Act 1976. However, the power to add caste to the definition of race is a new provision. The term “caste” denotes a hereditary, endogamous (marrying within the group) community associated with a traditional occupation and ranked accordingly on a perceived scale of ritual purity. It is generally (but not exclusively) associated with South Asia, particularly India, and its diaspora. It can encompass the four classes (varnas) of Hindu tradition (the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra communities); the thousands of regional Hindu, Sikh, Christian, Muslim or other religious groups known as jatis; and groups amongst South Asian Muslims called biradaris. Some jatis regarded as below the varna hierarchy (once termed “untouchable”) are known as Dalit.

Religion or belief: Religion means any religion and a reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion.



A religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered to be a religion or belief, such as Protestants and Catholics within Christianity.

A belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief. A "philosophical belief" must:

- Be genuinely held.
- Be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on the present state of information available.
- Be a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.
- Attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance.
- Be worthy of respect in a democratic society, compatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

Any cult involved in illegal activities is not covered. Beliefs such as humanism and atheism would be covered.

This section replaces similar provisions in the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act 2010.

Sex:

- a) a reference to a person who has a particular protected characteristic is a reference to a man or to a woman.
- b) a reference to persons who share a protected characteristic is a reference to persons of the same sex.

**See Note below*

Sexual orientation: is a person's sexual orientation towards:

- people of the same sex as him or her (in other words the person is a gay man or a lesbian)
- people of the opposite sex from him or her (the person is heterosexual)
- people of both sexes (the person is bisexual)

The definition is designed to replicate the effect of similar provisions in the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act 2006.

**See Note below*

**Note: Green Light Trust recognises and respects the wide variety of gender identities and sexual orientations that exist and would include additional terms in the above.*

The list of various sexual identity and sexual orientations is ever-changing, so the below list is not exhaustive, but examples of these would include:

- *Gender fluid (the person does not identify as one particular sex or other)*
- *Non-binary (those whose gender identity and/or gender expression fall outside of the traditional binary gender categories of "man" or "woman". Some non-binary people identify as a blend of male and female; others identify as a gender different from male or female; some do not identify with any gender)*
- *Transgender (the person may have transitioned, or be in transition, from one sex to another, or identify as a different sex to that at birth)*
- *Pansexual (People of multiple sexual orientation including non-binary genders)*
- *Asexual (The person does not experience any sexual attraction)*



Source: Equality Act 2010 and Explanatory Notes to the Equality Act 2010

(In addition to the above requirements of the 2010 Act, and to further clarify, Green Light Trust seeks to also not discriminate on the grounds of mental health or socio-economic status.)