

Equal Opportunities Policy

Volunteers and employees have a right to be treated fairly and considerately, which is supported by law. Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom is therefore committed to taking positive steps to promote and sustain equal opportunities amongst its management and volunteers.

An equal opportunities policy should state the organisation's values on equality and diversity (fairness) and how it will be put into practice. The policy will also demonstrate to staff, potential recruits, volunteers and customers that the organisation is serious about fairness and will help to identify the behaviour expected, the behaviour which is not acceptable and what can be expected from the organisation. An equal opportunities policy may assist organisations to obtain funding, it underpins the organisation's action plan and assists the organisation to comply with the law. There are several pieces of legislation that combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities and diversity. These are:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Employment Act 2002
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Work and Families Act 2006

For an equal opportunities policy to be effective, it must have the support of everyone in the organisation and be an integral part of the business strategy. Involve managers at all levels to gain their commitment and develop the policy in consultation with volunteers and employees and their representatives. All volunteers and employees should be made aware of the organisation's equal opportunities policy and it is good practice for all existing and new volunteers and employees to receive training.

Policy

Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our management and volunteer groups. Our aim is that our management and volunteers will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all volunteers, future volunteers and employees, workers and applicants, whether full-time or part-time, and not to discriminate on grounds of gender (including sex, marriage, gender reassignment), race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

Equal Opportunities Policy Cycle

1. Responsibility

The overall responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of this Equal opportunities policy is assigned to Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom Director and staff. This responsibility includes ensuring that all volunteers and future volunteers and employees and workers are notified of the details of this policy and are aware of its implications through the provision of appropriate training.

All managers have responsibility for promoting equality of opportunity, and should ensure that their own procedures and practices comply with the provisions of the opportunities policy. The performance and example of managers is crucial to improving opportunities for all.

Individual volunteers and future volunteers and employees and workers at all levels have responsibility for ensuring that equality of opportunity is consistently provided in all of Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom's employment practices and activities.

2. Recruitment and selection

Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom will strive to:

- Ensure that all volunteers and employees are recruited on the basis of ability and other objective relevant criteria.
- Work towards ensuring that through recruitment, its management and volunteers better represents all sections of society.
- Ensure that it communicates job opportunities to all sections of the community, ensuring that it does not discriminate against, or discourage applications from any section of the community.
- Ensure that all involved in the recruitment selection are trained on equalities issues.
- Use appropriate legislation as a framework for action to support the recruitment process in a positive way.
- Offer fair terms and conditions of employment to volunteers and employees.

3. Training and organisational development

Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom will:

- Seek to ensure that all volunteers and employees are developed by the provision of appropriate and accessible learning opportunities in line with organisational and individual needs.
- Ensure that vacancies are open to existing staff.
- Ensure that equalities training is provided as part of its overall training and organisational development programme.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring will be carried out to measure the effectiveness of Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom's Equal opportunities policy and to check that the policy is working and to act as a basis for future plans. This will be done by:

- Monitoring recruitment and selection procedures to ensure discrimination is not occurring.
- Checking the representation of applicants.
- Checking the representation of Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom's management and volunteers.

5. Disciplinary

All volunteers and employees should be aware that whilst an employer can be held liable in law for acts of discrimination committed by volunteers and employees, volunteers and employees too can be held personally liable in law for acts of discrimination which they commit, authorise, contribute to, or condone in relation to other volunteers and employees, workers and members of the public. Volunteers and employees therefore should be aware that breaches of Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom's Equal opportunities policy will be dealt with through the Director.

6. Grievances

Should an employee have an issue or concern in relation to Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom's Equal opportunities Policy, then they should follow Sorrel & Sage Woodland Wisdom's Complaints Policy.

Further information

See Information Sheet 2.9 Equal Opportunities - Equality and Human Rights Commission -

Tel: 0808 800 0082 - www.equalityhumanrights.com

ACAS - Tel: 0300 123 1100 - www.acas.org.uk

Disclaimer

The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.

Version and Change Control History

Version	Date	Author	Change
1.0	06/09/2023	Jane Russell	New policy