

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBLE EVENTS POLICY

Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Thought Bubble Festival LTD aims to be an inclusive organisation where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and where there is equal opportunity for all. Thought Bubble Festival LTD respects and values the diversity of its staff and users.

This means that all Thought Bubble Festival LTD's staff and users should understand and respect that there is a diverse workforce and user community and that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and equality. This includes the legal and ethical requirement for Thought Bubble Festival LTD to provide public services and conditions of employment that are appropriate to the needs of a diverse society.

Valuing diversity means that we recognise that we all have complex identities made up of many strands. These can include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical and mental aptitudes, nationality, socioeconomic status, and religious, political or other beliefs. This means we embrace and celebrate our differences in a positive environment, and are committed to engage with the needs of our diverse staff and users to enable us, both individually and corporately, to achieve our aims.

Thought Bubble Festival LTD will tackle barriers to participation and create a culture in which equal opportunities and equal treatment are a priority for all staff and users. In the recruitment, training, pay and management of staff, and in all our day-to-day work with both colleagues and users, we seek to create an environment where attitudes and biases that hinder the progress of individuals and groups are dismantled and where we work together in mutual respect and tolerance.

General Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff including the Director, managers, workshop leaders, and supervisors to:

- ensure that the standards established within this policy are adhered to within their own area of responsibility;
- familiarise themselves with the procedures in all Equal Opportunities documentation;
- ensure that they are not instructing employees to act in a discriminatory manner;
- ensure they are not putting pressure on employees to discriminate;
- bring the details of the policy and procedure documents to the attention of all staff;
- ensure that information on equal opportunities is incorporated in all induction processes for new or temporary staff and is supported by ongoing training.

It is the responsibility of employees at all levels to:

- co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity;
- report any discriminatory acts or practices;
- not induce or attempt to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination;
- not victimise anyone as a result of them having reported discrimination;
- not harass, abuse, bully or intimidate others.
- Legal Responsibilities:
- Over and above the provisions set out in its own policy and procedures, the committee is also bound by certain legal responsibilities in the field of equal opportunities. These include, but are not limited to: The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended); The Equal Pay Act 1970, Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulation 1983 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986 (as amended); Disability Discrimination Act 1995; European Law. Additionally, evidence of non compliance with the Codes of Practice (incorporated in this policy and procedural document) issued by the Cabinet Office is admissible before an Employment Tribunal and will usually lead the Tribunal to draw the inference that an unlawful act of discrimination has occurred.

Useful definitions

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination in employment happens as a result of prejudice, misconception and stereotyping which in turn hinders the proper consideration of an individual's talents, skills, abilities, potential and experience. It can be direct or indirect, intentional or not intentional.

The following are terms which may be used when discussing matters of equal opportunities:

- Direct Discrimination – takes place when a person is treated less favourably than others (in the same circumstances) on the grounds of their race, sex, disability etc.
- Indirect Discrimination – means applying a condition, or requirement, which adversely affects one particular group more than another, and cannot be justified in terms of the requirements for performing a job.
- Victimisation – consists of taking action against a person for asserting their rights under the law.
- Harassment and Bullying – take many forms, occur on a variety of grounds, and may be directed at one person or many people. In general terms it can be described as persistent unwanted behaviour which a person finds intimidating, upsetting, embarrassing, humiliating or offensive.
- Positive Action – is allowed by law to encourage employees who are members of disadvantaged groups which have been under-represented in particular work areas to receive special training programmes so as to enable them to compete equally for jobs.

- Positive Discrimination – is where an employer discriminates in favour of a certain group with the intent of raising the profile of that particular group. It is illegal in this country but used widely in the USA and allows employers to limit activities to specific under-represented groups.
- Genuine Occupational Qualification – the law recognises that there will be occasions when it is necessary to restrict certain jobs to certain categories or groups of people. This is rare and an employer would have to demonstrate that they have researched the requirement thoroughly before setting it. These are referred to as genuine occupational qualifications or GOQs.

THOUGHT BUBBLE FESTIVAL LTD CODES OF PRACTICE

The following are a number of specific areas which everyone should be aware of:

Attracting suitable applicants. Thought Bubble Festival LTD will:

- Review Job Descriptions to ensure they do not contain any potentially discriminatory criteria that are not essential for the role;
- Advertise vacancies so that they are likely to reach all potential applicants;
- Encourage the participation of relevant staff in drafting suitably open advertisements;
- Ensure that recruitment literature and advertisements make it clear that applications are welcome from all suitably qualified candidates and that they avoid stereotypical images;
- Include in any advertising details of flexibilities such as childcare vouchers, job share and flexi time where they are available;
- Advise any agencies, job centres, career offices etc. of our equal opportunities policy and practices and ask them to convey these to potential applicants;
- Ensure that agencies assisting in recruitment operate appropriate diversity policies and procedures when acting on behalf of Thought Bubble Festival LTD;
- Ensure that copies of the Diversity and Equal Opportunities Statement is sent out to applicants together with job specifications;
- Incorporate a welcome statement in any adverts;
- Monitor returns of application forms to identify any concerns in failing to attract a broad range of individuals;
- Operate the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled applicants.

Learning & Development. Thought Bubble Festival LTD will:

- Ensure equal opportunity of access to, and benefit from, all forms of learning and development activity;
- Train all those in delivering learning and development across Thought Bubble Festival LTD in equal opportunities and diversity issues;
- Ensure that all staff receive induction training which covers their rights and responsibilities under the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Policy and Procedures;
- Ensure that diversity and equal opportunities issues are addressed fairly and equitable in all management-related courses such as performance management, selection interviewing, managing attendance and conduct and efficiency, as well as customer care training;

- Provide flexibilities to accommodate the needs of staff on flexible working patterns;
- Provide flexibilities to accommodate cultural or religious needs of staff e.g. days of worship, diet etc;
- Provide flexibilities to accommodate any special arrangements e.g. wheelchair access, signing etc;
- Monitor who takes part in training in terms of age, gender, ethnic origin and disability;
- Ensure external training providers are provided with a copy of Thought Bubble Festival LTD Diversity Statement.
- Monitor learning activities across departments to ensure staff are not excluded.

Recruitment and Selection (including promotion). Thought Bubble Festival LTD will:

- Ensure that selection decisions are based on objective, non discriminatory, job related criteria, consistently applied to all candidates;
- Ensure that nationality requirements are applied correctly;
- Invite applicants to identify any special arrangements they may need at interview;
- Ensure that all those involved in recruitment and selection have had appropriate training in recruitment interviewing, diversity and equal opportunities or receive the appropriate guidance from Human Resources;
- Ensure that selection decisions for any post are taken by more than one person;
- Ensure that membership of recruitment boards takes into account, so far as possible, the range of candidates being seen;
- Ensure that selection criteria and reasons for the selection or rejection of individual candidates are recorded;
- Ensure that decisions in relation to promotion opportunities including temporary promotion are non-exclusive and that extended use of temporary promotion is discouraged where it will give one individual an unfair advantage over others;
- Monitor the results of recruitment processes with particular regard for decisions which appear to be inconsistent.

Performance Management. Thought Bubble Festival LTD will:

- Quality assure completed performance agreements, interim reviews and main reviews to ensure that performance targets are fairly set and progress fairly assessed and there is no indication of the use of stereotypical assumptions;
- Monitor annual main review assessments in relation to age, gender, ethnic origin and disability and take action to remedy practice which contravenes Thought Bubble Festival LTD policy on Diversity and Equal Opportunities;
- Act on learning and development needs identified in personal development plans.

Thought Bubble Festival LTD Processes. Thought Bubble Festival LTD will:

- Ensure that any written communications are produced in a clear and accessible format;
- Ensure that oral communications are produced in a form which is supported for those with hearing impairments. This may include subtitles for videos and sign language interpreters for meetings;
- Ensure that access to work requirements for those with any form of disability are considered in a fair and open manner;

- Ensure that, where possible, information is available in respect of age, gender, ethnic origin and disability across pay bands.