

Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

Conciliation Resources values diversity and inclusion and seeks to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination in its working practices. It also aims to take positive steps to support staff, volunteers and trustees from groups that are or have been disadvantaged through discrimination.

This policy aims to:

- Outline Conciliation Resources' commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and fair treatment for employees, volunteers and trustees;
- Affirm our commitment to diversity across our employees, volunteers, trustees and others working with Conciliation Resources, in recognition of the benefits that diversity brings;
- Provide guidance on anti-discriminatory practice and creating an environment in which diversity and inclusion are actively supported.

Conciliation Resources regards discrimination, abuse, harassment, victimisation or bullying of others in the course of work as a disciplinary offence that could be regarded as gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal (in line with our Bullying and Harassment policy and Disciplinary policy).

Aims and rationale

Conciliation Resources provides practical professional support for community based and national organisations seeking to develop effective, non-violent responses to conflict or potential conflict. In line with our belief in the importance of building inclusive societies, Conciliation Resources prioritises the creation of an inclusive work environment for its employees, volunteers and trustees. We believe that diversity within Conciliation Resources strengthens our ability to provide effective and appropriate support to people in areas affected by armed conflict, and we aim to offer ourselves as a model of good practice to those with whom we work.

Conciliation Resources aims to ensure a working environment that is international, multicultural and welcoming of diversity, and to attract and retain people with the skills necessary to help it deliver its vision and mission.

Conciliation Resources aims to ensure that staff, volunteers and job applicants do not face conscious or sub-conscious discrimination in the recruitment process or in working for or with Conciliation Resources, in respect of '**protected characteristics**' as defined in the UK Equality Act 2010¹:

- Age
- Disability

¹ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics> accessed 6 Mar 2018

- Race
- Sex
- Religion or cultural beliefs
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity

or in respect of these additional characteristics:

- Political opinion
- Social origin or class
- Educational background
- Gender identity
- Sexuality
- Health
- Caring Responsibilities
- Ex-offender status.

Conciliation Resources will adhere to International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as UK and EU legislation in areas such as equality, diversity and human rights legislation, in addition to its own commitments.

Conciliation Resources recognises that despite its existing and historical commitment to equality and diversity, the composition of its employee, volunteer and trustee body will never be entirely representative of the constituencies in the world or the UK. Over time the composition will change reflecting the requirements Conciliation Resources has at any particular point, the pool of candidates available to recruit and the methods used for such recruitment. Conciliation Resources is committed to continue to working for continuous improvement towards the aims stated above.

The success of this policy in increasing diversity and inclusion will therefore ultimately be reflected in the effectiveness of Conciliation Resources' work and in how people feel about working for Conciliation Resources.

Definitions

'Protected characteristics' have specific meanings in the UK Equality Act 2010:

- Age: a person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).
- Disability: a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- Race: Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.
- Sex: man or woman.
- Religion and belief: religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
- Gender reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another.

- Marriage and civil partnership: marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).
- Sexual orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or both sexes.
- Pregnancy and maternity – pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating somebody unfavourably because they are breastfeeding.

Scope

This policy applies to all grades within Conciliation Resources including trustees, those on fixed term contracts, volunteers, or employees seconded to Conciliation Resources.

It is also expected that agency workers, consultants or contractors and others working on behalf of Conciliation Resources in a paid or unpaid capacity will comply with this policy.

This policy, which is reviewed and updated from time to time, must be brought to the attention of all new trustees, employees and volunteers of Conciliation Resources as part of their induction process. All consultants and contractors will be provided with a copy of this policy as part of the Consultant's Handbook.

Whilst this policy is part of the terms and conditions of employment with Conciliation Resources it does not form part of the contract of employment as the content may be subject to revision based on experience and changes in UK or other laws.

The policy applies across the range of employment policies and practice, including those relating to standards of conduct and recruitment.

Types of Discrimination

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

Direct discrimination – where someone with a *protected characteristic* is treated less favourably than another, because of having that *protected characteristic*.

Indirect discrimination – when a rule, criteria or condition is put in place which then results in a particular group of individuals or employees being put at more of a disadvantage than another group of individuals or employees. 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.

Victimisation – when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equalities Act 2010 or it is thought that they have done so.

Recruitment Practices

As an employer, Conciliation Resources aims to promote equality and diversity and to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that are not justifiable in the context of this policy.

Selection and recruitment practices are subject to regular review to ensure that they comply with this Equality and Diversity Policy and with UK law.

Job vacancies must be drafted to be as inclusive as possible and must be published widely, whether just in Conciliation Resources or externally, so as not to exclude. Training opportunities should be widely promoted to all employees and volunteers and not in such a way as to exclude particular groups.

When carrying out advertising for any role, it is important to carefully consider the pool of candidates that you are seeking to reach in the context of the role and in the context of the representation within Conciliation Resources of that group from which you may wish to recruit. This may mean using different and alternative channels from those Conciliation Resources usually uses, and actively seeking applications from people within the group that is under-represented in Conciliation Resources. You should discuss your requirements with the HR Manager as part of planning the recruitment campaign and allow sufficient time to investigate options prior to publication of any recruitment advert.

Positive Action

Whilst positive discrimination is illegal under UK employment law it is permitted to carry out positive action before or at the application stage, or in tie-break situations².

Before or at the application stage positive action could include encouraging particular groups to apply, or helping people with particular protected characteristics to perform to the best of their ability (for example, by giving them training or support not available to other applicants).

An example of a tie-break situation is where two applicants are equally qualified and could undertake the role: here, it is permitted to use the fact that one of them is from a less represented group as a deciding criterion.

² <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/what-equality-law-means-you-employer-when-you-recruit-someone-work-you> Accessed 7 Mar 2017

Working Environment in Conciliation Resources

As an employer, Conciliation Resources aims to promote equality and diversity and to ensure that no employee, volunteer or trustee receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that are not justifiable in the context of this policy.

Conciliation Resources is committed, to the extent possible within the framework of the law and delivering on our mission and vision, to providing a working environment that supports all staff in their life inside and out of work. It also seeks to provide an environment where staff can be appropriately supported as both they and Conciliation Resources develop over time. Training and promotion practices are subject to regular review to ensure that they comply with this Equality and Diversity Policy and with UK law.

This policy forms part of creating that environment along with other Conciliation Resources policies.

Sustaining and developing this environment requires constant work; the Executive Management Team is committed to developing and strengthening this over time.

Conciliation Resources as Service Provider

In developing its publications and other products and services, Conciliation Resources seeks to ensure accessibility. This may include, where practicable, making specific access arrangements for those with disabilities or any other protected characteristic which may apply. Conciliation Resources will attempt to ensure that none of its policies discriminate directly or indirectly against any group or individual.

Monitoring

In order to assess performance against its stated aims and legal responsibilities, Conciliation Resources carries out diversity surveys of applicants for vacant positions and (periodically) of staff and volunteers. Participation in these surveys is voluntary and responses anonymous. The data is reviewed by the Chief Operating Officer and the HR Manager to look at the mix of candidates applying and what we can learn in seeking to reach other constituencies. Periodically information is reported to the Executive Management Team and the Board.

Reporting

If an issue arises, in the first instance you should raise it with your Line Manager, or if this is not possible, with the Chief Operating Officer or the HR Manager. If the issue involves the Chief Operating Officer you should either talk with your Executive Management Team Director or the Executive Director in the first instance. If an issue cannot be resolved in this way, you should use the procedures detailed in the Grievance Policy.

If you believe that serious misconduct has or may have taken place, you should follow the procedure for serious misconduct as detailed in the Grievance Policy (if you work for Conciliation Resources) or Complaints Policy. Serious misconduct includes racial or sexual harassment.

If the matter cannot be resolved internally, seek guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com>

Anonymous Reporting

If you feel unable to associate yourself with a report, you are encouraged to present relevant information anonymously to the Chief Operating Officer by the following means:

- Via anonymous google form which can be found at <https://goo.gl/forms/BkskeAfcayzzMHSE2>
- Via email from an alternative & anonymous email address
- Via anonymous letter
- Via any other anonymous and confidential means

It is acknowledged that the ability to follow-up on such reports is extremely limited, both legally and practically. Conciliation Resources encourages the use of our informal and formal reporting methods outlined above wherever possible.

Regulatory Reporting

Some incidents and reports, particularly those that involve a formal Grievance, Complaint or Disciplinary Procedure or that otherwise involve Serious Misconduct, may need to be reported to the Board of Trustees and various regulatory bodies.

The Chief Operating Officer will work with the Board to ensure that serious incident reporting requirements are complied with, following Charity Commission Guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>)

External Reporting

Staff, volunteers, board members and guests should not hesitate to bring incidents to the attention of local authorities when they feel that it is necessary and appropriate. Staff, volunteers, board members and guests must bring incidents to the attention of local authorities when required to do so by law.

Further external reporting may be necessary in some instances. Depending on the incident, the individual/s, the conditions and contractual relations, incidents and complaints may need to be reported to funders and consortium partners. The Chief Operating Officer will evaluate all Grievances and Complaints to determine whether they need to be reported to regulatory authorities. With the assistance of the Director of Programmes, the Chief Operating Officer will evaluate whether such incidents need to be reported to funders.

In all instances, care must be taken to ensure the rights of individuals.

Whistleblowing

Whilst Conciliation Resources asks all staff, volunteers, board members and guests to attempt resolution of incidents within the framework provided by the organisation, it is recognised that in some circumstances external awareness may need to be raised outside this framework. Conciliation Resources maintains a Whistleblowing Policy which can be found on The Hub (please see <http://hub.c-r.org/content/policies-and-guidelines>)

Charity employees can report concerns about certain categories of serious wrongdoing at their charity to the Charity Commission. The commission asks that whistleblowing reports are made in writing via the dedicated email address: whistleblowing@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk.

Responsibilities

Conciliation Resources values its staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants, board members and partners, and expects them to be treated in a respectful manner. Equally, all have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. Responsibility for human resources issues rests with the Chief Operating Officer and the HR Manager. The Diversity and Inclusion Adviser is responsible for ensuring that this policy is kept up to date, and for providing advice and guidance on equality and diversity issues along with the HR Manager, Chief Operating Officer and Senior Adviser, Gender and Peacebuilding.

The Operations team will provide guidance on best practice, provide training where appropriate and provide links to external sources of best practice guidance.

Guidance provided by Conciliation Resources or other sources should be considered in addition to human rights and equality legislation, not in place of it.

March 2018