

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY FOR TRANSITION CITY LANCASTER

PREAMBLE

As a charity Transition City Lancaster (TCL) seeks to practise within its organisation those principles of sustainability, justice and citizen inclusion which it aims to promote in the wider sphere.

TCL strives to be an Equal Opportunities organisation. This policy aims to ensure that no worker or volunteer (whether paid or unpaid) is treated less favourably on grounds of nationality, ethnicity, religion, sex, age, marital status, responsibility for dependants, sexuality, social class or disability.

It is the intention of TCL to apply this principle in volunteering, remuneration, procedures, terms and conditions of membership and as far as possible in premises, facilities and equipment. TCL also intends to apply the same principle to actual and potential attendees at events and to materials and methods used in its publicity and promotion.

TCL will take practical steps to move progressively towards this goal. Mechanisms will be set in place to assess regularly both the effectiveness of current measures and progress towards future targets.

GUIDELINES

This section provide guidelines for all those involved in TCL; members, steering group, special interest groups and volunteers; and for all those who enjoy our activities. In drafting it, we have drawn upon examples of good practice from other organisations. We intend this document to:

- Be a useful working reference manual.
- Be specific enough to be useful without being impossibly detailed.
- Allow space for further developments of the policy in the future.
- Be written in a way that makes the policy itself accessible.

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1. Members

We will consider how we can reach diverse groups and individuals (based on ethnicity, gender, age and disability) not well represented in TCL, and encourage them to become involved with TCL's work.

2. Steering Groups and Special Interest Groups

We will

- Annually monitor the composition of the Steering Group (we will do this in advance of the annual general meeting) and if necessary encourage under-represented groups to make nominations to the Group, where necessary by considering co-opting individuals from under-represented groups on to the committee. We will ask special interest groups to make similar audits.
- Provide support from an experienced group member to help any new member who is unfamiliar to settle in.
- Ensure that all Group members know that some expenses may be available and ensure that they are paid promptly.
- Provide new core group members (and as special interest groups develop these as well) with an information pack on their role and responsibilities
- Consider issues of access relevant to membership of groups (see Access).

3. Providing Services

TCL aims to provide a framework of activities to different sections of the community. We aim to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. We will:

- Positively encourage and assist disadvantaged and under-represented groups to participate
- We will, where appropriate, consult with special interest groups to find out needs.
- Ensure when planning a new project that it considers the needs of under-represented groups.

4 Access

We aim to make our activities as accessible as possible. On our own premises, or where we are holding meetings or other events, we aim to ensure that:

- our premises (or any other premises) comply with the Disability Discrimination Act
- we work towards having our equipment useable by people with disabilities;
- we use colour contrast on literature and signs for people with visual impairments.
- We are responsive to user needs and hold the desire where tenable for us to provide information where appropriate on tape/in Braille/in large print/in translation or making available signers, induction loop systems or translators if required.
- AGMs are always held in wheelchair accessible spaces, and all other events if necessary.

5 Publicity

We ensure that in our publicity we:

- Use positive images and pictures of a wide range of groups.
- Avoid jargon and use clear, direct language.
- Where appropriate distribute publicity on tape/in Braille/in large print/ in translation.
- Aim to reach all sections of the community by advertising in a wide range of appropriate publications and locations.
- Target particular groups where appropriate.

6. Participation

TCL intends to create a welcoming environment in which all members of the community will feel encouraged to participate. We intend to follow good practice in our policy for volunteers

We will:

- consider what steps can be taken to attract and support a wide cross section of members and supporters from under- represented groups.
- ensure our activities are described clearly and avoid creating barriers for people from under-represented groups.
- ensure our activities and guidelines– insurance, expenses, complaints – are fair and are communicated to participants

7. Implementing and Monitoring

TCL regards the implementation of its EO Policy as a continuing process. The Steering Group is responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy.

We will:

- Make sure a copy of the policy is available on the web, which will also be made known to members and participants
- Provide training and guidance to ensure that all involved understand their responsibilities under the policy.
- Examine all our procedures, services and work practices, identify areas where improvements can be made and draw up plans to implement them.
- Ensure that the working of the policy is considered by the Steering Group at least once a year.

Appendix: Relevant Legislation

The relevant anti-discrimination legislation comprises the Sex Discrimination Acts, 1975 and 1986, the Race Relations Act 1976, and (for those employing more than 20 people) the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

These state that it is illegal to discriminate against people because of their sex of (for employment purposes) their marital status, or because of their race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality (including citizenship), national origin, or disability. The Acts cover both direct discrimination – treating someone less favourably because of their race, sex, marital status or disability – and indirect discrimination – applying a condition which puts a racial group, one sex, married, or disabled people at a disadvantage.

This policy was reviewed by the Steering Group in 2010

