



Equal Opportunities Policy

What Does the Policy Cover?

This Equal Opportunities Policy covers Native Ecology's commitment to promoting equality, preventing discrimination, and fostering an inclusive environment in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. It applies to all aspects of employment, including:

- Recruitment and Selection
- Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Training and Development
- Career Progression and Promotion
- Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures
- Termination of Employment

The policy aims to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities to fulfil their potential, free from discrimination, and that individual differences are celebrated.

Policy Statement

Native Ecology LLP is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment and opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. Our objective is to create a workforce that is diverse, promotes positivity, and allows everyone to thrive, regardless of their background or characteristics.

We affirm that:

- All employees and job applicants will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on the basis of any protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010.
- All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- We will work to build on legal responsibilities to go beyond Equal Opportunities and develop a meaningful Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and culture.

Definitions and Legal Framework

Protected Characteristics

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against individuals based on any of the following protected characteristics:

- **Age:** Includes all age groups.
- **Disability:** A physical or mental impairment with a substantial and long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activities.
- **Gender Reassignment:** Individuals proposing to undergo, undergoing, or having undergone a process to change their sex.
- **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Being married or in a civil partnership.
- **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Pregnancy, childbirth, and maternity leave.
- **Race:** Includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins.
- **Religion or Belief:** Religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief.
- **Sex:** Male or female gender.
- **Sexual Orientation:** A person's sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, opposite sex, or both.

Types of Discrimination

- **Direct Discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably directly because of a protected characteristic.

- **Indirect Discrimination:** Applying a provision, criterion, or practice that puts individuals with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage.
- **Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation:** Subjecting a person to a detriment because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- **Associative Discrimination:** Direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- **Perceptive Discrimination:** Direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic.

Who is Covered by the Policy?

This policy applies to all:

- Employees: Full-time, part-time, permanent, and fixed-term staff.
- Job Applicants: Individuals applying for positions within the company.
- Workers and Agency Workers: Individuals working under a contract or through an agency.
- Volunteers and Interns
- Contractors and Suppliers
- Clients and Customers

The Company's Responsibilities

Native Ecology acknowledges its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and commits to:

- **Legal Compliance:** Ensuring all employment practices comply with the law.
- **Promotion of Equality:** Fostering a culture where diversity is valued and equality is promoted.

- **Preventing Unlawful Discrimination:** Taking all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Providing adjustments for employees or applicants with disabilities to remove or reduce disadvantages.
- **Policy Communication:** Disseminating this policy to all employees, contractors, and relevant third parties.
- **Fair Procedures:** Ensuring recruitment, selection, training, and promotion procedures are based on merit, circumstance, needs of the business, and free from bias.
- **Monitoring Compliance:** Regularly monitoring employment practices and taking action to address any issues identified.

Employee Responsibilities

All employees are expected to:

- **Adhere to the Policy:** Understand and comply with the principles of this policy.
- **Promote an Inclusive Environment:** Treat colleagues, clients, and visitors with dignity and respect.
- **Avoid Discriminatory Behaviour:** Refrain from actions or words that may be considered discriminatory, harassing, or victimising.
- **Report Concerns:** Promptly report any incidents of discrimination or harassment to their manager or HR.
- **Participate in Training:** Engage in training sessions to increase awareness and understanding of EDI issues.

What Happens If I Need to Raise a Concern?

If you believe you have been subjected to or have witnessed discrimination, harassment, or victimisation:

- **Early Resolution:** If comfortable, address the issue directly with the individual(s) involved to explain that their behaviour is unacceptable.

- **Formal Complaint:** If the issue is not resolved or is too serious for informal resolution, raise a formal complaint through the company's Grievance Procedure.
- **Confidentiality Assured:** The company will handle all complaints sensitively and maintain confidentiality where possible.
- **Investigation:** An impartial investigation will be conducted promptly.
- **No Retaliation:** You will not face any detriment for raising a genuine concern.
- **Outcome and Action:** If the complaint is upheld, appropriate action will be taken, which may include disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal.

Training and Communication

- **Employee Training:** All employees will receive training on EDI principles, their rights, and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.
- **Managerial Training:** Managers and supervisors will receive additional training to handle complaints and promote equality effectively.
- **Policy Accessibility:** The policy will be readily accessible to all employees, included in induction materials, and available on the company intranet.
- **Ongoing Awareness:** Regular updates, workshops, and communications will be provided to reinforce the importance of EDI.

Monitoring and Reviewing

- **Data Collection:** We will collect anonymized data on recruitment, promotion, training, pay, grievances, and disciplinary actions to monitor diversity and identify any patterns of inequality.
- **Regular Reviews:** The policy will be reviewed at least annually or when significant changes in legislation occur.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Employee feedback will be sought through surveys, focus groups, and suggestion schemes to assess the effectiveness of the policy.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Findings from monitoring and feedback will inform action plans to improve our practices and eliminate any form of discrimination.

Updated 10 Sept 2024

Signed for and on behalf of Native Ecology LLP

Adam Bedwell BSc

Sustainability and Business Lead

Member of LLP

Resources

[New report seeks to end ineffective business EDI practices - GOV.UK](#)

[What is EDI and why does it matter? | Equality and Diversity Unit](#)



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