



The Gaia Network

EQUALITY
AND
DIVERSITY
POLICY

September 2018

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Aim of the Equality and Diversity Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and in the provision of services. This includes prevention of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of gender (including gender reassignment), marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and pregnancy/maternity, as well as prevention of unfair discrimination based on other elements of diversity, such as caring commitments, employment status or offending background.

This policy is supported by:

- Equality legislative framework
- **The Gaia Network** policies and procedures, including:
 - Recruitment and Employment Terms and Conditions
 - Training and Staff Development
 - Customer Care and Complaints
 - Maternity and Paternity
 - Recruitment of ex-offenders
 - Investors in People and Investing in Volunteers quality standards

Values

The Gaia Network exists to develop, support and promote local voluntary and community action amongst **all The Gaia Network projects attendees, volunteers, employees** and we recognize that every person has a right to equal recognition, treatment and opportunities.

At **The Gaia Network**, we believe that:

- everyone is different and we value the unique contribution that individual experiences, knowledge and skills make in delivering high quality services to **all** groups and residents
- we have a responsibility to provide an environment characterised by dignity and mutual respect, in which people want to work and volunteer
- we are working towards a just and participatory society
- everyone has equal rights to work towards social justice and to participate in decision-making processes and local action
- we have a role to affirm and enable all residents to play an active part in their community, both individually and collectively; we will give priority to working with communities and groups whose full participation in society is limited by economic and social disadvantage and/or discrimination

Relationship with other policies

Recruitment and Employment

Principles of equality and diversity are applied throughout our Recruitment and Employment policy.

Learning and Development

The Gaia Network believes that all staff, volunteers, and trustees should have access to development opportunities in order to carry out their jobs successfully and to be able to contribute as widely as possible to the positive achievements of the organisation. This is reflected in our Learning & Development policy.

Board of Trustees

The Gaia Network will strive to ensure that the Board of Trustees (BOT) reflects the widest possible representation of the local community.

Volunteers and Volunteering

All **The Gaia Network** volunteers will be treated within guidelines laid down in the Equality & Diversity policy and within the CVS' Volunteer policy. Volunteers are also required to act within the guidelines set out in the policy when dealing with staff, other volunteers, clients and the public.

Service Users

Whenever possible, services offered **The Gaia Network** will be tailored to respond to the diverse needs of **The Gaia Network** users.

Positive Action: Roles and Responsibilities

All **The Gaia Network** staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and consultants have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is put into practice.

Responding to breaches

All actions and behaviors in breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be taken seriously and acted upon.

Serious breach of the Policy by:

- Staff - will be dealt with under the **The Gaia Network** Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure
- Volunteer - will be dealt with through a one-to-one meeting with **The Gaia Network** Manager
- Trustee - will be dealt with through a report to the Board by the Chair or the Chief Executive as appropriate.

Monitoring the Policy

To ensure that this policy is implemented effectively and in line with legislation and guidance, **The Gaia Network** will regularly collect data from job applicants, volunteers and service users. **The Gaia Network** will take action to address any identified shortcomings of the policy.

Review

These procedures will be reviewed by the **The Gaia Network** Board of Trustees every three years, after consultation with employees or to accommodate alterations to current legislation, reforms or Employment Law.

Approved by The Gaia Network Board:

Chairwoman - Ariane Eva Morin
Vice Chairwoman – Grace Mae Willis Hodgins
Committee Member – Rozana Alia Abdul Rahim
