

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Last Updated 1 April 2021

OUR COMMITMENT

Leap recognises the value of a diverse workforce which contributes to the following:

- A Leap community with different perspectives
- Increased retention and productivity of staff
- Increased responsiveness to the needs of young people and our partners
- Improved relations with the young people we interact with and the surrounding community
- Expanded creativity of the organisation overall

Leap is committed to enhancing diversity and inclusion by recognising, respecting and valuing different identities, perspectives and backgrounds, and promoting equality for all employees, participants, trustees, freelance trainers, volunteers and visitors.

We will demonstrate this by taking a pro-active and inclusive approach to equality, supporting and encouraging all groups to learn about difference, and promoting an inclusive culture which values diversity. We are committed to ensuring fair access to our services and representation of all.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

The rationale for this policy is guided by the following principles:

- Leap is a welcoming, fair and inclusive place to work.
- Leap carries out its activities within a legal framework.
- The policy is easy to understand and accessible.
- There is a safe space for people to learn about differences and resolve any issues informally.
- Leap is pro-active in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion where reasonably practical.
- All staff are clear on their rights and responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.
- Leap will contribute to emerging thinking in equality and diversity practices.



POLICY STATEMENT

Leap is committed to creating a fair, equal and inclusive environment for participants, employees, freelance trainers and trustees. We will stand up and challenge discrimination wherever we see it.

No person will be discriminated against on grounds of any of the following as outlined in the Equality Act 2010: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex or Sexual Orientation.

We will also ensure that employees, freelance trainers and trustees will not be discriminated against based on: socio-economic background, employment history or working pattern, parental or non-parental status, guardian or carer status, nationality or ethnicity.

Leap will not discriminate based on health issues (physical or mental) if the organisation can genuinely support the individual to succeed in the role. However, these characteristics may not be protected if the condition prohibits the individual from doing the job, and reasonable adjustments have been exhausted.

Leap is committed to supporting people with criminal convictions however the charity has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults and children we work with. Therefore, engagement is dependent on the suitability of the individual to work with children and vulnerable adults. Please refer to our Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all Leap employees, freelance trainers, trustees and participants to adhere to this policy, behave in a non-discriminatory manner and to help change practices and procedures that deny or limit equality of opportunity or treatment.

Leap will take steps to encourage participants, employees, freelance trainers and trustees to treat others with respect at all times, actively discourage discriminatory behaviour or practice, and participate in training and learning opportunities that would enable them to adopt good practice.

Leap will take a proactive approach to equality and diversity by supporting employees to combine personal and professional lives successfully, and actively and fairly identify future leaders and support them in their ambition regardless of gender, ethnicity, status and other characteristics.

Trustees	The board of trustees has overall responsibility for this policy and will hold the Chief Executive accountable to ensure compliance with the law relating to equality, diversity and discrimination.
CEO	Responsibility for implementation of this policy lies with the Chief Executive.
People and Culture Group	The People and Culture Group coordinated by the HR Manager, is responsible for the review of this policy annually and publicising results.
Line Managers	It is the responsibility of every line manager to implement this policy and ensure employees and volunteers in their area are aware of, and comply with this policy.
All Employees	All employees are responsible for their own behaviour and should strive to ensure equality and diversity best practice within their area of work.
Leap Community	All trustees, employees, participants, freelance trainers and volunteers are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring that personal harassment of another member of staff or a participant does not occur. ▪ Their own behaviour and should strive to respect difference and act in accordance with the policy.

HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

If anyone feels they have not been treated in accordance with this policy they have the right, and are encouraged, to bring this to the attention of their line manager or the HR Manager.

Participants can raise complaints via a member of the delivery team e.g. a trainer or project worker.

All complaints made in good faith are free from repercussions. All complaints will be handled with consideration to both sides and with the utmost confidentiality.

Where appropriate Leap will aim to resolve the complaint informally through mediation, internal conversations and other methods to create a safe space for all parties to talk through the incident.

If a resolution cannot be reached then a formal process will be triggered as outlined in our Grievance Policy.

Disciplinary action will be considered in all cases where a claim of discrimination, harassment or bullying is substantiated following the exhaustion of informal mechanisms.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION OBJECTIVES

REVIEW DATE: 2018 DECEMBER / COMPLETION DATE: 2019



CATEGORY	GOAL	HOW	PERSON
Commitment and Policies	Promotion of equality and diversity is a priority throughout the whole organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will conduct annual reviews (through consultations, surveys and data analysis) to evaluate our progress against these objectives. An annual report will be circulated to all staff and trustees. • There will be a nominated person or group who are responsible for the promotion of equality and diversity. • Flexible working opportunities are made available to all staff through our flexible working policy. • Leap recognises its responsibilities to ensure that part-time staff are in no less favourable position than full time employees by ensuring these working patterns are considered when planning meetings and work events. • Leap has grievance and disciplinary policies that ensure groups or individuals contravening this equality and diversity policy will be subject to a process and penalties will be applied without discrimination. • Our HR forms and software will be updated to take into account multiple options for self-definition such as pronouns. 	HR Manager People & Culture Group

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Training & awareness	Leap will ensure that all participants, employees and trustees are aware of Leap's commitment to equality and diversity and that they are expected to promote its objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will build close relationships with organisations who specialise in equality and diversity and/or individual protected characteristics (through newsletters, professional networks) to ensure we are up-to-date on best practice and information for example Stonewall (LGBT), Runnymede (BAME), Equality Challenge Unit, ROTA, CMI Women etc. 	HR Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leap shall take steps to publicise and raise awareness of this policy ensuring that all employees and trustees are aware of and conform to this policy by circulating it annually, including it in the handbook, training at inductions and publicising on our website. 	HR Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide fair and accessible opportunities for training for employees through pulling together all training requests following appraisals and mapping out needs and skills gaps before approving requests. All employees will receive equality and diversity training when they join Leap. All staff will get unconscious bias training every 2 years. We will increase knowledge and consciousness of the issues facing different demographics through sharing information via email, presentations, training and sessions with equality and diversity organisations. 	HR Manager

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<p>Monitoring</p>	<p>Leap will monitor and reassess its own practice and procedures to ensure that they are in no way discriminates or excludes any particular group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leap will monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Candidates will complete equal opportunity monitoring forms which will be kept separate from the application form. • Leap will maintain an anonymous statistical record in terms of protected characteristics through all stages of the recruitment process. This will be analysed twice a year to ensure there is no unconscious bias and show the success of underrepresented groups in our recruitment process. An annual report will go to the board. 	<p>HR Manager</p> <p>HR Manager</p>
<p>Facilities</p>	<p>We aim to make our facilities as accessible as practicably possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leap will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants or participants at a substantial disadvantage. • Where reasonable and affordable, Leap will take steps to improve access for disabled employees and participants. • Where facilities are inaccessible, Leap will endeavour to find alternative space for meetings and events in order not to exclude any interested party. 	<p>Director of Finance & Resources</p> <p>Director of Finance & Resources</p> <p>Office Manager</p>

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Recruitment	Creation of a diverse community through operating a fair, open and transparent procedure for the recruitment of employees, freelance trainers and trustees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and all other marketing literature shall include a reference to Leap's Equality and Diversity Policy. 	HR Manager/ Comms Officer
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will take steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market. These will include using a variety of channels and networks, working with partner organisations, sharing roles on specialist networks for various protected characteristics and ensuring any agencies we use value diversity. 	HR Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertised posts will outline the relevant skills, qualifications, knowledge, competencies, and experience necessary for the job in order to attract the best applicants, as well as outline the value we place on lived experiences and diversity of backgrounds. 	HR Manager/ Comms Officer
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leap will produce a shortlist of job applicants who, from the evidence available, appear to have the necessary skills and abilities in relation to criteria stipulated in the job description/person specification. The shortlisting is conducted by more than one person. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will ensure that any invitation to interview asks all candidates about any adjustments due to a disability that may have to be made for the interview process. 	HR Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job applicants will not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As an employer we will consider making reasonable adjustments, involving the disabled employee or job applicant in the decision. When considering reasonable adjustments we will work with the individual to assess their needs and the needs of Leap looking at: budget, physical environment, ability to do the job and team dynamics. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review our recruitment processes annually as outlined in the monitoring section. 	HR Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will be member of Open to All ensuring our job descriptions do not indirectly discriminate candidates. 	