

## Equality policy

### 1) Introduction:

Ripon City of Sanctuary (RCoS) has a duty to ensure equality in all aspects of its work – in the way the organisation is run, and in the way we deliver our services. RCoS will take every opportunity to promote anti-discriminatory practice and equality of opportunity regardless of immigration status, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or political opinion, and will take positive steps to ensure that no person or group receives a lesser quality service, or achieves less favourable outcomes because of their differences.

### 2) RCoS is committed to:

- developing and delivering services that meet the needs and aspirations of refugees and asylum seekers living in the Ripon area, regardless of their immigration status
- promoting a working culture which embraces and celebrates fairness and difference in everything we do
- recruiting, training and supporting volunteers and management committee members in ways that ensure the involvement and inclusion of a wide range of people, and reflects the diversity of the communities and groups we serve.
- working in collaboration with clients, volunteers, and partner organisations to provide accurate, accessible information on the services of RCoS, and how to access them
- supporting clients, volunteers and committee members in providing positive and constructive challenges to inequality, wherever they find it.

By providing clear information to volunteers and committee members, we will ensure transparency in the management and development of RCoS and its services.

We will actively challenge instances of discrimination against and/or involving our volunteers or committee members including those involving organisations external to ourselves.

### 3) How we will promote this to staff, volunteers and our partners

- All committee members and volunteers will be inducted and trained using this policy at the start of their time at RCoS.
- A copy of this policy will be included in all RCoS handbooks.

### 4) The steps we will take to make sure all aspects of what we do are fair and equal

#### a) As a service provider

- Our services are relevant to the needs and aspirations of asylum-seekers and refugees in the Ripon area;
- No prospective or actual client, volunteer or committee member will be discriminated against, or disadvantaged by, any condition or requirement which is not demonstrably justifiable;
- We will not show favouritism towards any recipients of our services, carefully balancing the effects of emerging friendships (which are important) with the effect on others
- we will provide and/or make use of appropriate interpreting facilities in the course of delivering and/or explaining our services;
- we are responsive to the cultural needs and requirements of clients – e.g. by responding positively to requests for services to be delivered by someone of a particular gender;

- the information we produce about RCoS will be simple and accessible;
- we aim to hold organisational events in fully accessible venues;
- we work with partner organisations to ensure information about RCoS and how to access our services is available to anyone who wants it.

**b) As an organization delivering services via volunteers**

- our volunteers and committee members are aware of and managed to act in accordance with this policy; our recruitment and selection procedures encourage and enable the participation of individuals from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible;
- we provide training for all volunteers and committee members to ensure they have the necessary skills and abilities to deliver our services
- we aim to ensure our training events and meetings are held in fully accessible venues;
- we ensure all our volunteers are able to access support and advice from our management committee in any aspect of their role with RCoS service users;
- volunteers and management committee members will not fund any support for the recipients of our services out of their own pockets (unless they then reclaim those costs as expenses) without prior permission of the management committee
  - where resources allow, we ensure RCoS volunteers are informed of the activities and plans for future development of the organisation;
- our committee members and volunteers are supported to recognise and challenge discrimination in all its forms, and to address any issues of discrimination in the workplace, using our policies and procedures (i.e. by using the grievance procedure.)

**c) As a managed organisation**

- We ensure our management committee members and volunteers are aware of and act in accordance with our equal opportunities policy;
- We ensure our programme of recruitment for management committee members and volunteers encourages and enables the participation of individuals from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible;
- We regularly audit the skills and knowledge of our management committee and volunteers to help us identify gaps, and to help direct our recruitment of new individuals
- We provide the management committee with support and training to ensure they are able to manage and guide the development of RCoS in an efficient, effective, professional and sensitive manner.

**5) The ways we will check we are doing what we say, and how we know we are being effective**

RCoS will nominate a single member of the management committee to lead on the annual review and continual development of our equality policy, and to act on behalf of the group on issues relating to equal opportunities and the conduct of the management committee, individual volunteers and of the whole organisation.

We will publish the findings of our discussions with clients, partners and volunteers and make it clear how we have learned from this, and any changes we have made as a consequence.

Date approved: 21 May 2018  
 Appointed lead: Sara Trewhitt  
 Next review date: 21 May 2019