

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY AND PRINCIPLES

Policy Date	Policy Owner Name	Policy Owner Title	Review Date
August 2026	Gill Green	Director of Operations	August 2027

Policy Scope

Forever Manchester is Greater Manchester's Community Foundation, the only charity that raises money to fund and support community activity across Greater Manchester.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers including trustees and job applicants, and donors, fund holders, grant applicants and suppliers, collectively referred to as service users.

This policy applies to governance, recruitment and employment, philanthropy development, grant making, publicity and investments.

Policy Statement and Aims

As an organisation, Forever Manchester values the variety of different views, outlooks and approaches that a diverse workforce brings. This assists the charity to provide improved services and increase our understanding of its donors, fund holders, grant applicants, employees and trustees.

Forever Manchester will do everything to create a working atmosphere where there is freedom from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. (Please see Appendix A for Types of Discrimination.)

Forever Manchester will do everything to ensure no one receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by requirements or conditions which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Forever Manchester recognises and values people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential.

Forever Manchester will do all it can to ensure it recruits, trains and promotes people based on qualifications, experience and abilities for all roles within the organisation.

This policy is designed to ensure that Forever Manchester complies with its obligations under equality legislation and demonstrates our commitment to treating people equally and fairly.

Forever Manchester is unreservedly opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, part-time or fixed term status, low socio-economic background or parental responsibilities defined as Protected Characteristics.

Using fair and objective employment practices, the charity aims to ensure that:

- ✕ All employees and potential employees are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment.
- ✕ All employees, trustees, and service users have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description or any other form of unwanted behaviour.

- ∞ Such behaviour may come from other employees or by third parties who are not employees of Forever Manchester such as donors or grant applicants.
- ∞ All employees, trustees and service users have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination.
- ∞ All employees, trustees and service users have the right to be free from discrimination because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic or because others perceive that they have a particular Protected Characteristic, even if they do not.

Legal Requirements

In valuing EDI, Forever Manchester is committed to go beyond the legal minimum. However, current equality legislation and associated codes of practice are considered, including but not limited to the:

- ∞ Equality Act 2010
- ∞ Employment Rights Act 1966
- ∞ Part time working regulations 2000
- ∞ Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- ∞ Equal Pay Act 1970
- ∞ Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended)

Note: the above legislation serves to protect individuals against all forms of discrimination because of a particular protected characteristic.

Definitions

Diversity means people's different experiences, identities and points of view. Forever Manchester's focus is the diverse backgrounds of its local population. That includes legally protected characteristics and other things which can affect people's life chances, like appearance, gender identity, caring responsibilities, being from a working-class background, or being a migrant, refugee or asylum seeker.

Equity means everyone, no matter their background or characteristics, getting fair treatment and access to opportunities. This means recognising that some people experience inequality and injustice. So, for Forever Manchester, treating everyone the same ('equality') is not enough – Forever Manchester must work to remove barriers some people face.

Inclusion means everyone feeling they belong, being safe and respected, able to take part and realise their potential. For Forever Manchester, this involves striving to reach and involve people in its work who tend to be under-represented or whose voices tend not to be heard. It also means acting to tackle hate and prejudice targeted at people because of their characteristics or backgrounds.

Protected characteristics are defined in the Equality Act 2010 as follows. (Please see Appendix B for definitions.)

- ∞ Age
- ∞ Disability

- ∞ Gender Reassignment
- ∞ Marriage and Civil Partnership
- ∞ Pregnancy and Maternity
- ∞ Race
- ∞ Religion or Belief
- ∞ Sex
- ∞ Sexual Orientation

The Act also covers people who care for someone who is elderly or disabled as being associated' with someone whose characteristics are legally protected.

Responsibility

All members of staff, trustees and fund panel members have a duty to act within this policy, ensure it is followed and to draw attention to any suspected discriminatory acts or practices. All employees are required to comply with this policy when dealing with other employees, job applicants, donors, fund holders, grant applicants, suppliers and anyone else with whom they come into contact during their employment.

All staff are made aware of their day-to-day responsibilities under this policy when they join Forever Manchester, and training is provided where individuals require it.

The Chair of the Trustees and the CEO are responsible for promoting awareness of the policy and monitoring that it is being followed.

Breaches of this policy or unlawful discrimination by employees will be treated as a disciplinary offence which may result in disciplinary action as laid out in the Forever Manchester Disciplinary Procedure.

Breaches of this policy or unlawful discrimination by volunteers including trustees will be treated as a disciplinary offence and may result in their position with Forever Manchester being withdrawn.

Employees, trustees and volunteers are also personally liable under equality legislation for any act of unlawful discrimination.

Equality and diversity in practice

Governance

Forever Manchester expects its management and governance to benefit from a wide range of opinions, experience and beliefs. Forever Manchester ensures that:

- ∞ Recruitment of members to the Board of Trustees and funding panels is done based on the skills required, irrespective of a particular Protected Characteristic.
- ∞ Diversity is taken into consideration when recruiting members to the Board of Trustees, committees and funding panels.
- ∞ Policies and strategies recommended to the Board of Trustees comply with our stated commitment to diversity and equal opportunities.

- ∞ Strategies to broaden diversity among trustees and advisory panel members are promoted wherever possible.

Employment

Forever Manchester's aim is to recruit the best person for the job, to make full use of the talents and resources of all its employees, to support and develop its staff and to create a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment, in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect.

Recruitment

Forever Manchester aims to be an equal opportunities employer and has developed procedures to assist in achieving this aim and to ensure that no applicant is treated unfairly. Forever Manchester undertakes to ensure that:

- ∞ No applicant receives less favourable treatment based on a Protected Characteristic
- ∞ Each vacancy is based upon a clear and concise job description and person specification. The person specification includes only objective criteria which are required for the duties and responsibilities of the post.
- ∞ The assessment of applications is done on the basis of information provided so that ability and potential performance are the only criteria used in selection.
- ∞ All applications are monitored for equal opportunities purposes and this information does not play a part in short-listing or recruitment.

If there is a genuine and lawful reason for limiting the vacancy to a particular group, it will be clearly stated together with the grounds for it on any advertisements. Forever Manchester retains the discretion to invite applications from individuals whose jobs might be at risk of redundancy or who are being re-deployed for health or disability reasons before advertising any post more widely.

Terms and conditions of employment

Forever Manchester will ensure that terms and conditions of employment are free from all forms of direct and indirect discrimination and apply equally regardless of a particular Protected Characteristic. No requirements or conditions will be imposed, directly or indirectly, which will or might place any group of employees at an unfair or unlawful disadvantage.

Forever Manchester recognises that flexibility regarding working patterns will assist the broadest range of people to work for the charity. Forever Manchester will not reject any request for non-standard working patterns unless there is objective justification after careful consideration.

Training, career development and promotion

All employees will be provided with the appropriate training, according to business need, to enable them to improve their performance and to achieve the performance standards and targets set for them by Forever Manchester. This is regardless of having a Protected Characteristic.

Forever Manchester will also ensure that opportunities for training and career development are made equally available to all employees regardless of the length of service or the number of hours worked. Forever Manchester will take steps to ensure that those who have caring responsibilities

are able to access training and development opportunities that involve time outside the usual working day.

Promotion within Forever Manchester is based on merit and the reasonable requirements of the job regardless of having a Particular Characteristic.

Disability code of good practice

Forever Manchester values the individual contribution of employees and prospective employees from all sectors of the community. The charity is committed to facilitating the employment of disabled individuals wherever practicable and to achieve this Forever Manchester operates the following code of good practice:

- ∞ Forever Manchester will take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment, working practices and terms and conditions of employment do not prevent disabled people from taking up positions for which they are suitably qualified and the best person for the job.
- ∞ Forever Manchester will bear in mind the desirability of avoiding barriers to the employment of disabled people when acquiring and fitting out buildings with equipment and devising working practices.
- ∞ Forever Manchester will make reasonable adjustments to recruitment arrangements, to the working environment, to working practices and to terms and conditions of employment to ensure that no disabled person is placed at an unreasonable disadvantage.
- ∞ A decision not to make an adjustment which might enable or assist an employee or a prospective employee to be employed in a particular post will not be taken below the level of CEO. Before making such a decision, the CEO will ensure that all possible adjustments have been fully investigated, including carrying out consultation with the employee or prospective employee concerned and taking any appropriate expert advice.
- ∞ Any employee who becomes disabled whilst in employment, will be given full support to continue in their own job where practicable and having put in place any reasonable adjustments, or to move to an alternative job appropriate to their experience and abilities if available.
- ∞ Forever Manchester will encourage the participation of disabled employees to ensure that, wherever possible, its employment practices recognise and meet their needs and will consult disabled employees on action to make sure they develop and use their abilities at work.
- ∞ Further guidance can be obtained on an entirely confidential basis from the CEO. If an employee knows or believes they may be disabled, they are encouraged to discuss this with the CEO so that Forever Manchester can ensure they achieve their full potential, and that the organisation complies with its duties under the law.

Grant Making

Forever Manchester is keen to uphold the principles of equal opportunities in all grant making activities – publicity, application, assessment and decision making. Forever Manchester considers all requests fairly against the criteria of relevant funding schemes. Priorities within discretionary grant programmes take account of the needs to recognise diversity. Forever Manchester tries its best to meet the needs of smaller community organisations and aims to reach people who are

most disadvantaged or isolated, helping them to take advantage of opportunities that would not otherwise be available to them.

Forever Manchester is keen to support people who experience discrimination or disadvantage for whatever reason.

Forever Manchester undertakes to ensure that:

- ∞ Eligible groups are fully aware of its grants programme by widening public knowledge of the organisation.
- ∞ Guidelines and application forms are written in plain English and are jargon free.
- ∞ Grant assessment is consistent between staff members and assessment is carried out in accordance with the published grant making guidelines, taking into account any fund holder requests and the amount of funding available.
- ∞ Training is offered to staff, trustees and fund panel members so that they are aware of disability and cultural issues that may affect an application.
- ∞ The application and decision-making process is transparent.
- ∞ Grant recipients uphold equality opportunity principles and implement them in their activities.

Philanthropy Development

Forever Manchester encourages local philanthropy from all people and gifts of all sizes through general donations, named funds, legacies, sponsorship and fundraising events. It especially encourages gifts from donors and sections of the community not already involved in Forever Manchester's activities.

Forever Manchester seeks to involve donors from diverse backgrounds, so we offer options to give in line with different wishes and means. Some groups – notably people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities – are under-represented among our donors. So, we will take positive action to encourage and support people with protected characteristics and from other diverse backgrounds to take part.

Donors may establish named or collective funds at Forever Manchester with benefits restricted to people with one or more protected characteristics. We will accept such restrictions where the intention is to tackle greater needs or disadvantages linked to that protected characteristic. In such cases, donor's wishes will be clearly set out in the Fund Agreement. Donors can also seek restrictions on who benefits from a fund that do not relate to a protected characteristic. For example, a fund can legitimately be restricted to people with a particular social need or disadvantage, a place, or a type of activity, without unlawfully excluding people with one or more protected characteristics.

Participation in Forever Manchester's fundraising activities can, where appropriate, be restricted to one sex e.g. an holding an event to raise money for the Women's Fund.

We advise donors and panel members on how this policy applies to funds and to grant recommendations. Where needed, we will constructively challenge donor assumptions and attitudes which are based on prejudices or unconscious bias. In line with our Donor Acceptance Policy, the Board reserves the right not to accept, or to return, a gift if any restrictions cannot be justified on the grounds of need or disadvantage, or doing so would otherwise be unlawful,

conflict with our values or breach this policy. We also reserve the right not to approve grants recommended by donors or panels if doing so would conflict with this policy.

Investments

Although donations are pooled for investment purposes, Forever Manchester will, wherever possible, provide an investment system which takes account of special investment requirements of donors.

Publicity

Forever Manchester tries to ensure that in all its communications it reflects the mix and diversity of its activities and beneficiaries.

Forever Manchester ensures that publicity about the availability of grants is accessible to as wide an audience as possible and that appropriate means of communication are used to reach those communities less likely to have access to traditional means of communication.

Forever Manchester ensures that publications reflect the diversity of activities and beneficiaries supported and are attractive to all sections of the community. Written communications are written in plain and jargon free language.

Implementation of the policy

All staff and trustees will be involved in creating an equality environment and one that values diversity.

Communications

Forever Manchester ensures that the policy is communicated through:

- ∞ Ensuring the policy is discussed with all new starters as part of the induction process.
- ∞ Providing Equality and Diversity training and guidance to employees and trustees if required.
- ∞ Including reference to abiding by the policy in the Employee Terms and Conditions and Employee Handbook.

Working in Partnerships

Forever Manchester ensures that when selecting the partnerships the charity works in, it considers their commitment to Equality and Diversity through:

- ∞ Requesting to see their policy if necessary.
- ∞ Discussing their practice including monitoring the policy if necessary. Users of our Service

Forever Manchester ensures that its services are made accessible through:

- ∞ Using a wide range of social media platforms.
- ∞ Written promotional material and application forms being in plain English and jargon free.
- ∞ Forever Manchester Fund Officers completing application forms over the telephone or face to face if the applicant does not have the facility or capability to complete online.

Monitoring the Policy

Forever Manchester is committed to monitoring the effectiveness of this diversity and equal opportunities policy. All aspects of policies, procedures and practices in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, training, career development, promotion and grievance and discipline to identify any trends or patterns emerging are reviewed annually. Forever Manchester is committed to identifying and taking all steps necessary to eliminate any unjustified discrimination which is revealed by this monitoring process. Recommendations for change are agreed by the Board of Trustees.

Reporting discrimination

Employees who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should, in the first instance, raise the issue with the Director of Operations or where the Director of Operations is implicated, to the CEO. All employees will be entitled to follow the Forever Manchester Grievance Procedure.

Service users who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should, in the first instance, raise the issue with the CEO or where the CEO is implicated, to the Chair of Trustees when the Forever Manchester Complaints Policy will be followed.

Employees, trustees and service users should also use this approach if they feel that they have been the subject of harassment from someone who is not an employee of Forever Manchester. The charity will not tolerate any harassment from third parties towards its employees and service users and will take appropriate action to prevent it happening again.

If an employee, trustee or service user witnesses' behaviour that they find offensive in relation to a Protected Characteristic, even if it is not directed at them, they should also use this procedure.

Review

Forever Manchester will review this policy every year to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and practices of the organisation.

The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that the policy should be altered.

APPENDIX A: TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION (IN RELATION TO THE NINE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS)

Direct discrimination

Occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a Protected Characteristic.

Associative discrimination

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic (e.g., a mother of a disabled child).

Perceptive discrimination

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur when there is a condition, rule, policy, or a practice in the organisation that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination can be justified if the organisation can show it acted reasonably in managing its business.

Harassment

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.”

Employees are able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves. Forever Manchester extends this right to Trustees, other staff, job applicants/potential applicants, volunteers, members, donors, and grant applicants.

Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

Third party harassment

Forever Manchester will take appropriate action to provide Trustees, other staff, job applicants/potential applicants, volunteers, members, donors and grant applicants with protection from third party harassment.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Act; or because they are suspected of doing so.

An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

There is no need to compare treatment of a complainant with that of a person who has not made or supported a complaint under the Act. Forever Manchester will take appropriate action to

provide Trustees, other staff, job applicants/potential applicants, volunteers, members, donors, and grant applicants with protection from victimisation.

APPENDIX B: THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g., 32-year olds) or range of ages (e.g., 18-30-year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples may be married or may have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it, but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices, or the way you live, for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.