

## EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

This policy sets out Iverson Trust's commitment to Equality and Diversity. In all aspects of Iverson Trust's work it will be guided by principles of fairness, inclusivity and anti-discrimination.

This Policy does not form part of any contract of employment or terms of engagement and it may be amended at any time. Iverson Trust may also vary any part of this policy including any time limits.

### 1. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Iverson Trust aims to promote equality and diversity as an employer and seeks to ensure that equality and diversity principles underpin all areas of the organisation's work and service provision.
- 1.2 Iverson Trust recognises that many people and groups suffer discrimination and face serious barriers when trying to fulfil their true potential. It is the aim of this organisation to take positive steps to prevent and redress discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to improve equality of opportunity and to combat any unreasonable or unfair treatment which places people at a disadvantage for any reasons not directly related to their ability to do a job for this organisation or to their eligibility to receive services from us.
- 1.3 This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the prevention of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- 1.4 Iverson Trust will treat all staff and any job applicants equally as required by the Equality Act 2010, which brought together legal protection from discrimination on the grounds of certain characteristics which were previously subject to separate pieces of legislation. The Equality Act 2010 is the main piece of legislation in England, Wales and Scotland that seeks to protect individuals from unfair or discriminatory treatment. There are nine legally Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. These are age;

disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. The Equality Act 2010 includes provisions for lawful exceptions to what would otherwise be unlawful discrimination, for example, to provide single-sex services such as rape crisis centers. In all cases where exceptions are applied, they must be proportionate so as to achieve a legitimate aim.

## 2. DISCRIMINATION

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy:

- 2.1 **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic, for example refusing to employ someone on grounds of their age, or failing to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate an employee with a disability.
- 2.2 **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time could adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- 2.3 **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in Iverson Trust's Grievance Policy.
- 2.4 **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

## 3. MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND DELIVERY MECHANISMS

- 3.1. Iverson Trust's Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for the Equality and Diversity Policy. It is however the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer to implement, monitor and evaluate the Equality and Diversity Policy in terms of staff training, employment practice and service delivery. S/he is also under a duty to ensure that the Board of Trustees is regularly

kept informed of the policy's implementation and the implications of the Board of Trustees' decisions and policies for equality and diversity issues. It is the responsibility of all staff members to report any discrimination of which they become aware.

- 3.2. All staff and Board of Trustee members will be informed that an Equality and Diversity Policy is in operation and that they are bound to comply with its requirements. The policy will also be drawn to the attention of Iverson Trust's members, funding agencies, job applicants and those using the services of Iverson Trust.
- 3.3. The 'Equality and Diversity Statement' above will be easily available in our offices, accessible to staff and visitors. Staff and trustees are to be given a copy of the whole policy upon appointment/election and the policy will be drawn to the attention of staff on a regular basis and whenever the policy is revised.
- 3.4. Iverson Trust's Grievance and Disciplinary procedures will be used to deal with any complaints about discrimination, harassment or bullying involving staff and the Board of Trustees.
- 3.5. Staff or a Trustee member must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under Iverson Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.
- 3.6. Complaints from people using the organisation's services will be through the Complaints Procedure for Iverson Trust.

#### 4. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

- 4.1. Iverson Trust aims to promote equality and diversity as an employer and to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment because of a Protected Characteristic or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that are discriminatory and cannot be shown to be objectively justifiable, i.e. by application of the principle of using a proportionate means to achieve a legitimate aim.
- 4.2. Selection, recruitment, training, promotion and employment practices generally will be subject to review as necessary, to ensure that they comply

with the Equality and Diversity Policy.

- 4.3. Iverson Trust will attempt to accommodate staff requests to work flexibly, whether part-time or some other working arrangement, for whatever reason, so long as the agreement is consistent with the needs of the organisation and its service users.

## 5. SERVICE DELIVERY

- a. All staff are required to bear in mind the principles underpinning this policy when dealing with people who use Iverson Trust's services.
- b. Iverson Trust will adopt a Complaints Procedure that will include its objectives with regard to equality and diversity in service delivery.

## 6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- a. Iverson Trust will regularly evaluate its services and the effectiveness of its Equality and Diversity Policy, by a variety of means.
- b. Monitoring may be carried out by Iverson Trust to provide the data for this regular evaluation. For instance, Iverson Trust may ask service users, job applicants, volunteers and trustees for information about their ethnic origin, disability, age or other personal information. Iverson Trust will only do this for a specific defined purpose such as collecting statistical data for funders, for research or for internal monitoring to evaluate this policy's impact. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, but must not be used for employment selection or decision-making purposes.
- c. Iverson Trust will have due regard for data protection when seeking personal information. Where sensitive information is gathered, those responding will be explicitly informed of the purpose and that they are at liberty to withhold the information. All monitoring information will be securely stored, aggregated and anonymised.

## 7. REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

- a. Iverson Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed as and when required and in line with changes in legislation.

**Adopted by Board of Trustees on 4 April 2016**  
**Signed: Graham Brownlee, Chair of Trustees**

**Reviewed: 10 September 2018**  
**Signed: Rebecca Challoner, Vice-Chair of Trustees**

**Reviewed: 21 May 2021, CEO and Board of Trustees**  
**Signed: 13 September 2021, Jane Martin, Chair of Trustees**

**Reviewed: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023**  
**Signed:**