

# **Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (EDI) Policy**

*Community First Oxfordshire 2025*

Community First Oxfordshire is a community development and placemaking charity. Our values and practices are rooted in human rights, social justice, and respect for diversity.

We are committed to being inclusive, accessible, and fair in the way we design and deliver our services and to always treating everyone with openness and respect.

As an employer, we aspire to being a diverse, inclusive, and responsible organisation. We respect and value our individual characteristics and differences, whether visible or not, allowing staff to fully realise their potential. We are committed to a policy of treating all our employees and job applicants equally. Our aim is to have a workforce that can reflect and best understand the communities we serve.

We recognise that many people are discriminated against in their daily lives. We are opposed to discrimination in all its forms and will take all necessary steps to eliminate discriminatory practices. This includes in our recruitment process and working environment.

This policy is informed by The Equality Act 2010 and The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

*The foundations of our policy are based on equity, diversity, and inclusion, as well as an understanding of discriminatory practices.*

**Equity:** recognising that we do not all start from the same place, and making adjustments for inequities to create a fairer society.

**Diversity:** valuing the benefits of different perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. Identifying under-representation and taking active steps to address it.

**Inclusion:** creating welcoming spaces for all, improving accessibility, and enabling diversity.

**Discriminatory practices include:**

- Discrimination - unjust treatment of someone because of a particular characteristic, real or perceived. Discrimination can result not only from conscious acts, but also due to unconscious bias and circumstantial factors.
- Prejudice - assumptions or opinions about someone because of a particular characteristic, real or perceived.
- Intolerance - unwillingness to respect someone.
- Bullying and harassment - behaviour which intimidates or humiliates someone, including abusive language and derogatory jokes. If this is repeated, it may be bullying.

- Exclusionary language – words or phrases which reject or devalue people, often based on bias. For example, phrases such as “man up” which can be attached to mental health stigma and gender stereotypes.

These principles are particularly important in relation to the nationally recognised protected characteristics of age, gender, marriage/ pregnancy status, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We will work to ensure that no employee or job applicant is discriminated against on these bases.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an act of unlawful discrimination. Discriminatory conduct and sexual or racial harassment will be treated as gross misconduct. **The Disciplinary Policy is available under Policies, Procedures, and Guidance on SharePoint.**

The grievance procedure is available to any employee who believes that they may have been discriminated against. Should those circumstances apply, you must use this procedure. **The Grievance Policy is available under Policies, Procedures, and Guidance on SharePoint.**

### **Objectives:**

CFO strives to:

- Remove barriers, increase accessibility, and actively reach out to under-represented people/ communities to participate in our services.
- Challenge discriminatory practices wherever they occur.
- Spread and promote good practice about social inclusion across Oxfordshire, working in partnership.
- Ensure that staff recruitment and organisational culture/ systems follow best EEDI practices.
- Achieve a Board membership and staff team that reflects the diverse communities we serve.
- Value and celebrate diversity in our work.
- Ensure that our communication materials and events are accessible and available in alternative formats when required.

Throughout these objectives, we aim to:

- Encourage others around us to make these commitments.
- Use an organisation-wide approach.
- Challenge ourselves, acknowledging that this is a learning process which needs long-term commitments.

**Responsibilities**

This policy applies to everyone who is involved in CFO, including the Board Members, the staff, our associates, and any volunteers who act on our behalf.

The CEOs and Chairperson are responsible for ensuring that this EEDI Policy is implemented amongst the staff and Board. We expect that our staff and board continuously address the EEDI policy to help them make better and informed decisions.

Complaints about breaches to CFO's EEDI Policy, from users of CFO services or from the wider public, are dealt with using the procedures set out in the CFO Complaints Policy.

An EDI sub-committee, which consists of our CEOs, two board members and members of staff, oversees the implementation of the EDI policy and any initiatives or activity which support it. This group will meet bimonthly, ahead of Community First board meetings.

**Implementing and reviewing our policy**

This policy is a living document and will be used to inform our organisational activities. It is underpinned by our EDI Action Plan, which details how we will carry out this policy both within our organisation and in our wider work. You can find this EDI Action Plan on SharePoint under Admin>Policies and Procedures, or as a printed copy in our office. Our equal opportunities policy has been folded into this policy and our action plan.

This EDI Policy will be reviewed every year by the EDI sub-committee, reporting back to the board.

Manager responsible for implementation:	Co-CEOs
Review Interval:	Annual
Last Reviewed:	October 2025