

National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH)



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan

Registered Charity No. 1190515

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1. WHY WE HAVE A POLICY

The National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion throughout our organisation, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

2. AIMS OF POLICY

The aim is for our organisation to be truly representative of our partners, service users and all sections of society and, and for employees, trustees, freelance staff, contracted workers, temporary staff, patrons and volunteers (aka 'associated personnel') of NCCH to feel respected and able to give their best.

We aim to make NCCH an inclusive organisation where everyone feels welcome and that our work is relevant and meaningful to everyone who wishes to engage with us.

NCCH aims to proactively reach out to diverse communities and individuals beyond our known circles of influence to strengthen the NCCH and make it truly effective. We aim to:

- 2.1.** Ensure our policy and plans are in-line with those recommended by the Charities Commission.
- 2.2.** Celebrate diversity amongst those who are accessing Creative Health activities, and to represent diversity through our online presence, resources and content.
- 2.3.** Ensure equality of opportunity in all aspects of our activities, including with our staff, associated personnel, trustees and service users.
- 2.4.** Proactively reach beyond our networks to increase the diversity of our workforce.
- 2.5.** Work with accessibility and inclusion at the heart of decision making and in our core activities, including making reasonable adjustments to address barriers that prevent people from being able to access our resources, attend our events, or other barriers that make them feel that NCCH is 'not for them'.
- 2.6.** Be open to feedback and challenge and continually examine our work and organisation culture in order to understand where we need to make changes.

We will ensure:

- Equality, fairness and respect for all staff and associated personnel and encourage equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation.
- No unlawful discrimination in relation to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- No unlawful discrimination with regard to pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

- Staff, associated personnel and trustees understand their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff, associated personnel and trustees helping the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and preventing bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.
- Complaints are dealt with under the organisation's grievance and disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action is taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal or the requirement to step down from duties without notice.
- Staff, associated personnel, and trustees understand that sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.
- Opportunities for training, development and progress are available to all staff, associated personnel and trustees, so that they are encouraged to develop their full potential and their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Decisions concerning staff, associated personnel, and trustees are based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Employment practices and procedures are reviewed and updated to take account of changes in the law.
- The organisation is monitored regarding protected characteristics to encourage equality, diversity and inclusion. Monitoring will also include assessing how the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and any supporting actions, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and taking action to address any issues.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is fully supported by Senior Management and the Board of Trustees.

This core policy sits alongside NCCH's Code of Conduct Policy, Grievance and Disciplinary Policies.

Use of the organisation's Grievance and/or Disciplinary Policies and procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

3. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CHALLENGES

- 3.1.** Ensuring that our core activities, meetings, events and resources are informed by issues around diversity and inclusion. For instance, considering topics and speakers at our conferences that resonate with, are relevant to, and represent people from different socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, sexual orientations, genders, abilities and ages.
- 3.2.** Ensuring that our core activities, meetings, events and resources are accessible to those with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, mobility and sensory problems, Deaf people and BSL speakers, and people with mental health issues.
- 3.3.** Ensuring that the culture of our organisation, both in day-to-day working situations and at board meetings, is an accessible environment that can accommodate and respond to the needs of people from diverse backgrounds and living situations.
- 3.4.** Ensuring we consider digital exclusion in a time of increasing digital interaction, and aim to make our core activities, meetings, events and resources accessible in non-digital ways where possible.

4. LANGUAGE

The term 'Creative Health' is not a familiar category such as 'arts' or 'culture'. We believe everyone has creative potential. We want to encourage creativity in all its forms and believe this will lead to healthier lives and communities. How we define and understand culture is bound up with barriers to accessing cultural and creative opportunities.

Labels and words can make people feel boxed in and discriminated against. Jargon can be a barrier. We will avoid acronyms and endeavour to use plain English and seek to be neutral in terms of identifiers in all our communications and take into consideration the following definitions:

- 4.1.1. **Equality** means ensuring every individual has equal opportunities. NCCH will take a proactive approach to making reasonable adjustments that address the visible and invisible barriers people face.
- 4.1.2. **Equity** means treating people in ways that make sure they are not unfairly prevented from accessing resources and opportunities. Providing the same opportunities to everyone does not ensure equality of outcomes. Where possible we will translate documents and resources.
- 4.1.3. **Diversity** recognises we are all different in many ways. NCCH will take a proactive approach to diversity and focus on how NCCH can be reflective of the society we live in and the communities we serve.
- 4.1.4. **Inclusion** means being proactive to make sure people of different backgrounds, experiences and identities feel welcomed, respected and fully able to participate.

5. HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Health inequalities are a key priority for the NCCH, reflecting the wider policy environment within which we work. The increasing gap in inequalities was evidenced in [Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On](#), published in February 2020, and the additional report [Build Back Fairer: The COVID-19 Marmot Review](#), published in December 2020 as part of the Health Foundation's COVID-19 impact inquiry.

Lack of access to cultural and creative opportunities too often mirrors other inequalities. Educational opportunities, quality of housing, employment and economic security, health and social care services, access to green spaces, and access to cultural and creative opportunities are all interconnected.

Working with communities, developing co-production methods with people who use services and developing culturally specific activities and opportunities are key to challenging inequalities in the arts and culture.

6. ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH AND ACTIVITIES

6.1. Board of Trustees

On a yearly basis, the trustees will identify a range of skills and areas of knowledge that they consider important for delivering the charity objects and programme of work in regard to equality, diversity and inclusion.

When recruiting and advertising for new trustees, NCCH aims to recruit trustees who meet the needs of the charity in terms of skills and knowledge as well as representing diverse voices and identities.

6.2. Staff & Recruitment

NCCH's advertising and recruitment process will adhere to this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and will proactively encourage inclusivity by encouraging people to apply from diverse backgrounds and identities.

6.3. Advisory Group

The NCCH Advisory Group is made up of people who were involved in the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry and helped us shape the plans for the NCCH. When new people join this group it is an opportunity to ensure we are inclusive and diverse.

6.4. Creative Health Champions

Creative Health Champions are a group of individuals who have come together in response to recommendation 3 in the [Creative Health Report](#), which calls on all NHS Trusts, Local Authorities, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Clinical Commissioning Groups, to identify an individual at board level to take responsibility for institutional policy on arts and health. We will monitor this group with regard to diverse representation.

6.5. GP Special Interest Group

We are developing a GP Special Interest Group and will monitor membership with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion. We will discuss with the Chair of the GP SIG how the SIG can promote equality, diversity and inclusion in its programme of activities and in recruitment of members.

6.6. Partners

We will be open to working in partnership with a diverse range of organisations as the NCCH develops. We aim to work collaboratively and co-produce joint programmes with partner organisations.

6.7. Co-production

The NCCH aims to use and develop co-production methods in all their programmes and activities. People with lived experience of ill-health, who also have experienced the benefits of cultural and creative activities for their own health and wellbeing, can be invaluable allies and advocates in shifting the culture of mainstream health services. Their involvement in co-production can bring diverse and more representative voices, but it is important to work towards shared decision making and shifting the power balance as in the [Co-Production Ladder](#).

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The NCCH Director in conjunction with the Board of Trustees will review this policy on a yearly basis and make any necessary changes. All NCCH staff, trustees, and associated Personnel involved in recruitment and selection are required to familiarise themselves with this policy upon their appointment to NCCH, and the Policy Owner will provide additional advice and support on this policy if requested by staff, trustee, or associated personnel.

Policy Adopted: May 2022 Review Date: May 2023

Policy Owner: Director of NCCH

APPENDIX 1: ACTION PLAN 2022-2023

1. We will review website content and use of language to ensure we are communicating in plain English.
2. We will ensure that any events and new resources developed by NCCH or in partnership with others, are planned and reviewed against the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
3. When we recruit new staff we will ensure that we are acting on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy at every stage.
4. We will monitor equality, diversity and inclusion as we develop new groups such as the GP Special Interest Group and identify actions.
5. We will be exploring existing models for co-production and exploring new ones through our Huddles, and this work will provide valuable opportunities for co-production with diverse and more representative voices. We will ensure that planning for Huddles includes people with lived experience of ill-health from the outset.

APPENDIX 2: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION WEBSITE STATEMENT

(This will be made available on the 'Organisational Documents' page of the NCCH website)

The National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) is committed to promoting equality and diversity, providing an inclusive and co-operative environment in which all individuals working for and on behalf of the organisation feel respected and able to give of their best.

NCCH is committed to reflecting and representing the diversity of the UK and to equal opportunities in employment. The policies and practices of NCCH aim to promote an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination and values the diversity of all people. At the heart of everything we do, we seek to treat people fairly and with dignity and respect.

We will take every possible step to ensure that no person working at NCCH, seeking employment with us, or any member of associated personnel (trustee, and freelance, contracted workers, temporary staff, patrons and volunteers) will receive less favourable treatment (direct discrimination) or will be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions that cannot be shown to be justifiable (indirect discrimination) on the grounds of their:

- race,
- colour,
- nationality,
- ethnic origin,
- religious or political belief or affiliation,
- trade union membership,
- age,
- health,
- gender,
- gender reassignment,
- marital status,
- parental status,
- caring responsibilities,
- sexual orientation,
- disability,
- socio-economic background,
- educational background,
- ex-offender status,

- or any other inappropriate distinction.

As an employer, NCCH will:

- promote diversity and equality for persons working for and on behalf of NCCH and value input from individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and other distinctive backgrounds.
- promote fair and equal treatment for employees and associated personnel in fulfilling their potential, ensuring that no individuals or groups of people are afforded unfair privilege within the working environment.
- treat all members of staff and associated personnel fairly and equally, irrespective of their length of service, status and number of hours worked.
- challenge discriminatory practice and less favourable treatment, wherever this is identified.
- undertake positive action, wherever possible, to encourage greater participation of under-represented groups of people across the organisation.
- promote an environment free from discrimination, victimisation or bullying in any way or form in relation to all employees, associated personnel, and service users of the organisation.
- regard breaches of NCCH's Equality and Diversity Policy as misconduct which may lead to disciplinary action.
- keep under review all employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- take positive steps to ensure that the policy is known to all employees, associated personnel, and potential employees.
- ensure that equal opportunity is embedded in all our policies, procedures, day to day practices and external relationships.

Equal opportunities in employment

As an applicant, you can be assured that NCCH will take positive steps to ensure:

- Job descriptions and associated conditions relate to the particular job, define the qualifications, experience and other skills required in the post, and only

include those factors which are necessary and justifiable in terms of objective criteria for the satisfactory performance of the job.

- All applicants are treated equally and fairly throughout the recruitment and selection process.
- All decisions are made in line with NCCH's equal opportunities and safer recruitment policies and according to the job and skills requirements for the post.

Positive about disability

We value and encourage diversity in our workforce and are committed to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination.

As an employer, we are aware of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to offering support and making reasonable adjustments to allow full participation in the interview and recruitment process, and to adjust working conditions where required to support members of staff once they are employed.

It is important that you let NCCH Director, Alex Coulter, know of any requirements you have (alexandra@ncch.org.uk). NCCH will consider information you give us and work with you to develop reasonable adjustments. Examples include: changing the timing of interview, providing equipment or assistance throughout the process e.g. a reader or scribe.

Employment monitoring

We would like to encourage all applicants to complete our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion form at the start of a job application so that we can assess our performance.

Data submitted to this form is anonymous and will be kept confidential at all times and in accordance with GDPR. It will not be accessible to anyone outside of the NCCH staff team and will be used to monitor the effectiveness of our employment policies so that we can improve where required. This information will be used for statistical purposes only and applicants will not be identified in any way.