

Equal Opportunities Policy

Statement

The Bond Board acknowledges that everyone should have equal access to its services and employment. The Bond Board is committed to equal opportunities for all and acknowledges the differences that exist within the community. The Bond Board will ensure that our services and employment practices do not disadvantage any groups or individuals, so that everyone has equality of opportunity through a fair and consistent approach to the application of rules, policies and procedures. This commitment is relevant to all we do, how we manage ourselves and how we deliver our services.

The Bond Board prides itself on inclusivity and is committed to the Equality Act 2010. The Bond Board aims to ensure that activities which it is involved in do not discriminate, exclude or alienate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, cultural background, gender, gender reassignment, sexuality, disability, marital/civil partnership status, domestic circumstances, pregnancy, illness, HIV status, age, membership of trade unions or criminal record unconnected to service. The Bond Board also acknowledges that some people experience more than one form of discrimination. Further information about The Bond Board's approach to discrimination can be found within our Dignity at Work Policy, Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Diversity Policy.

Employees, members of the Board of Trustees, volunteers, students, contractors and users of The Bond Board services are required to respect this policy and the principles behind it. All people responsible for service delivery will actively promote equal opportunities in every area of their work.

Overall responsibility for implementing this policy lies with the Chief Officer.

Policy

This is The Bond Board's policy for achieving equality of opportunity in all its services and employment practices. The Equal Opportunities Statement forms an integral part of this policy. This policy is central to all the work The Bond Board carries out. This is not an add-on policy but is built into every area of practice.

Key pieces of legislation that influence The Bond Board's Equal Opportunities Policy are:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998

The Bond Board acknowledges that the legal obligations contained in these Acts are the minimum required by law. The Bond Board also recognises that people are discriminated against for reasons not specified in the above legislation, for example, because of their offending histories or lifestyle choices and that homeless people often experience discrimination. The Bond

Board aims to be positive about the lifestyle choices people make. The aim is to promote equality to everyone involved with The Bond Board.

Myths, stereotypes and false assumptions lead to discrimination. It is extremely common in society. It is founded on the notion that one group of people has more or less right to services or employment opportunities than another group. The Bond Board will positively challenge such myths and assumptions and take action to promote equality in all areas within its sphere of influence. Discrimination is an abuse of advantage and power that The Bond Board aims to challenge.

The Bond Board is opposed to all forms of discrimination and will take positive steps to ensure that it has a representative workforce and that all service users receive the same level of provision. The Bond Board will take action to ensure that its services and employment practices do not discriminate against any groups within the community. This action will involve regular monitoring leading to targeted activity.

The Scope of the Policy

The Bond Board's Equal Opportunities Policy will be applied consistently to the following:

- The Provision of Services
- Recruitment and Selection
- Employment Terms and Conditions
- Training and Career development
- The Use of Contractors and Sub Contractors
- The Selection of Board of Trustee members
- Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Volunteers
- Monitoring

Policy Areas

Service Provision

Ability to access Bond Board services will be restricted solely around the areas of eligibility criteria. These criteria are in place to meet local need, the charitable objectives of the organisation and the specifications of funders.

Access to any area of service will not be restricted due to any factor unjustifiable within The Bond Board's Policies and Procedures. There may be times when the service offered is affected by Health and Safety concerns. The reasons for this must be justifiable and will be communicated to the

service user. The service user has the right to make a complaint about any exclusion from service provision or any other aspect of the service they have received and should be encouraged to use The Bond Board's Complaints and Appeals Procedure to have their situation considered at a higher level.

Harassment and discrimination of staff, volunteers and students will not be tolerated, nor will the harassment of service users at the offices of The Bond Board and outreach locations. Services may be withdrawn from service users who harass staff, volunteers, Board of Trustee members or other service users. For further guidance, see The Bond Board's Dignity at Work Policy and Prevention of Violence-Safe Working Policy.

Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

The Bond Board is committed to the Equality Act 2010. The Bond Board will ensure that Job Criteria and Selection Practices do not unlawfully discriminate directly or indirectly against any candidate and that no job applicant will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, cultural background, gender, gender reassignment, sexuality, disability, marital/civil partnership status, domestic circumstances, illness HIV status, age, membership of trade unions, or criminal record unconnected to the service.

The Bond Board will ensure that no job applicant or employee is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

The Bond Board will positively encourage applications from all sections of the community and make reasonable adjustments to ensure the recruitment process is accessible and responsive to individual needs.

The Bond Board is bound by our legal obligations, specifically those as stated under the:

- Equality Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018

The Bond Board will periodically review all recruitment methods to ensure people are short listed, interviewed and appointed fairly, consistently and solely on the requirements of the job.

The Bond Board will ensure that everyone who feels they have been treated unfairly has an immediate response followed by a thorough investigation. All complaints from external candidates will be dealt with by following The Bond Board's Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

Internal candidates should refer to The Bond Board's Grievance Procedure.

The Bond Board's Recruitment Procedure will be followed for every recruitment process undertaken by the organisation and should be referred to in addition to this policy.

Terms and Conditions

The Management Committee will review current conditions of employment in line with this policy to actively encourage equality of opportunity for target groups and to prevent discrimination against other groups named in this policy.

The Bond Board acknowledges that it has a legal duty of care for all employees and is accountable for taking all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to cases of harassment, bullying, unlawful discrimination and victimisation. Consequently, The Bond Board actively encourages its members of staff to raise issues of inequality where these are experienced. Issues should be raised through The Bond Board's Grievance Procedure and with reference to the Bond Board's Dignity at Work Policy.

Training and Career Development

The Bond Board is committed to maximizing the skills and potential of all staff. To achieve this The Bond Board will provide a mechanism within the supervision structure and opportunities for performance review via annual appraisals, continuous learning and development. This will be achieved by developing flexible working practices and policies.

The Bond Board will provide resources for the provision of training and development opportunities and will ensure that training is provided on an equitable basis to all employees.

All new members of staff will be inducted into their new post. Supervision will play a major part in discussing and identifying training needs. Managers are responsible for working with staff to identify training needs. Staff are encouraged to proactively consider what training would assist them in their work and to discuss possible training options with their line manager.

Training needs can be met in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- Induction.
- Enhanced task/responsibility.
- Supervised on-the-job learning.
- Short courses.
- Mentoring.
- Courses with qualifications.
- Online courses and Webinars.
- Time set aside to gather information.

- Shadowing.
- Visiting other projects.

While all staff are encouraged to make training requests in consultation with their managers, budgetary and time constraints mean that not all requests can be met. Decisions on requests for training will be made considering whether:

- The training is relevant to the role.
- The training will help the member of staff gain skills required for the job.
- Will support the personal development of the individual.
- The training is affordable.
- There is time available to undertake the training.
- The training is available within a realistic time frame.

Further information can be found in The Bond Board Training Policy.

Contracts

The Bond Board is committed to equality of opportunity and expects those it works with to share and understand this commitment. Suppliers and contributors to The Bond Board will be asked to demonstrate their understanding and commitment through past workings, working practice or formal equal opportunities policy.

The Bond Board will not tolerate harassment or discrimination from anyone carrying out work for the organisation. Contractors and sub contractors will need to work within the bounds of this policy and the Bond Board's Dignity at Work Policy. This will need to be a condition of any contract or service level agreement signed. Contractors will be expected to work to the CAPITA and NAPIT competencies and guidelines to work safely, legally and to a high standard. Contractors should hold relevant professional certification, be accredited, hold Liability Insurance, as well as treat our clients and staff with respect and inclusivity.

The Selection of Board of Trustee members

The Board of Trustees will strive to recruit its membership from a broad social spread and will strive to represent the community as a whole. Those applying for membership will not be discriminated against, excluded or alienated on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, cultural background, gender, gender reassignment, sexuality, disability, marital/civil partnership status, domestic circumstances, pregnancy, illness, HIV status, age, membership of trade unions, or criminal record unconnected to service.

Disciplinary

The dual purpose of the Disciplinary Procedure is to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain the desired standards of conduct and job performance whilst also ensuring consistency and fairness in the treatment of all employees.

The Bond Board's Disciplinary Procedure is a set of procedures which must be followed by both line managers and employees. The procedure encourages the resolution of matters informally, where appropriate.

Grievance

The aim of the Grievance Procedure is to ensure consistency and fairness in the treatment of all employees and volunteers. It enables employees/volunteers to raise a matter or complaint without fear of discrimination or reprisal and allows them to be protected from victimisation after raising a grievance.

Dignity at Work (new policy replaces Harassment Policy).

The purpose of the Dignity at Work Policy is to ensure a working environment at The Bond Board in which all staff members/volunteers/students can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment, discrimination, bullying and victimisation of any kind is unacceptable and will not be condoned within or outside of the workplace if it has a bearing on the working relationships of staff members. Allegations of harassment, discrimination, bullying and victimisation will be investigated fully and where substantiated, disciplinary action will be taken in line with The Bond Board's Disciplinary Procedure.

Volunteers

In line with its commitment to equality of opportunity, The Bond Board will ensure that opportunities for Volunteers are advertised as widely as possible and aim to ensure that the Volunteer Team reflects the make up of the community The Bond Board serves.

The Bond Board will also take positive steps to attract volunteers from groups normally excluded from the volunteering process such as single parents, the unemployed, people who have experienced homelessness, returners to work, people with disabilities, those from minority ethnic communities, previous asylum seekers and refugees, older people and people from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community.

The Bond Board undertakes to provide appropriate induction, training and support for each volunteer irrespective of their role within the organisation. The Bond Board aims to ensure that no volunteer receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, cultural background, gender, gender reassignment, sexuality, disability, marital/civil

partnership status, class, domestic circumstances, pregnancy, illness, HIV status, age, membership of trade unions, or criminal record unconnected to service.

Volunteers will have recourse to The Bond Board's Grievance Procedure wherever they feel that the organisational commitment to equality of opportunity as set out above has not been observed.

Monitoring

The identification of need, and ability to measure change, are vital to the effectiveness of this policy. The Bond Board will use a monitoring system which is manageable and acceptable to staff and funders. Monitoring will apply to service provision and recruitment and selection. An individual's equality data will not be used to unlawfully discriminate against them and will be used in line with the Bond Board's Data Protection Policy and with reference to The Bond Board's Confidentiality Policy.

Baseline monitoring will be based on age, gender, ethnic origin and whether or not the candidate considers themselves to have a disability. Monitoring may ask if the candidate has caring responsibilities and how they define their sexuality. Additional monitoring maybe undertaken, for example, if lawful and required by a particular funder.

This data will be used to assess progress on the policy at least every twelve months. This will be used to highlight procedural issues, to consider the causes of any disparities and to inform The Bond Board of any changes or positive action required to ensure Equality of Opportunity.