

# GROUNDWORK

## CHANGING PLACES

## CHANGING LIVES



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## Equality & Diversity Policy

Reviewed by the Groundwork UK Committee: February 2020

Next Review Date: February 2023

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all Groundwork UK employees, trustees and other stakeholders

## 1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The success of Groundwork depends on our people, our partners and our suppliers. The way we deliver our services is strengthened by capitalising on what is unique about individuals, drawing on their different perspectives and experiences, and by accessing the strengths and expertise of a diverse range of partners and suppliers.
- 1.2 Groundwork UK will constantly strive to create productive environments, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed. Our contracts, projects and programmes will be designed to ensure that everyone is equally able to access interventions and that diversity is encouraged and celebrated.
- 1.3 To achieve this, we need to make sure that Groundwork UK puts equality and diversity practices into effect in both employment and service delivery.

- 1.4 Groundwork UK's commitment to equality and diversity is more than promoting equal opportunities and eradicating discrimination, bullying, victimisation and harassment. We are actively committed to implementing the Equality Act 2010, encouraging and promoting the positive contribution of our staff, diverse Federation members, partners and suppliers. We will ensure that this is reflected in our practices, policies and services provided.
- 1.5 This policy describes the role of Groundwork UK in promoting equality and diversity across its operations, programmes, and supply chains. Commitment to this policy is required by all Groundwork UK employees and trustees, subcontractors, delivery partners, customers and service beneficiaries, referred to collectively as the 'stakeholders'.

## 2. Equality, Diversity and the Groundwork Business

2.1 Working alongside communities, public bodies, private companies and voluntary sector organisations, Groundwork develops and delivers initiatives which cut across economics, social issues and the environment. To create real change that means carrying out work that:

- builds people's skills and improves [job prospects](#)
- redesigns our neglected [open spaces](#) for twenty-first century use
- helps people [make their own decisions](#) about their area
- motivates and develops [young people](#)
- promotes [greener ways](#) of living and working

To achieve our vision of sustainable vibrant, healthy and safe communities, Groundwork UK must work inclusively as an employer, as a prime contractor, and as a supplier or part of the supply chain with innovative parts of the private sector. This policy applies to all these Groundwork UK roles.

## 3. The Nature of Discrimination

3.1 This policy refers to several forms of discrimination. These are explained below:

- *Direct Discrimination* results from treating a person less favourably on the grounds of a relevant protected characteristic.
- *Associative Discrimination* is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

- Perceptive Discrimination 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 is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied which is such that it would be to the detriment of a considerably larger proportion of the relevant group with a particular protected characteristic to which the individual belongs, than to others, which is not objectively justifiable and which is to the individual's detriment.
- Victimisation occurs if someone is given less favourable treatment than others because they have exercised their rights under the policy, or the relevant legislation, or brought to the attention of others, acts of discrimination (e.g. by making a complaint or providing information on discrimination).
- Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct related to one of the protected characteristics which has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, or is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his or her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him or her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where arrangements disadvantage an individual because of a disability and reasonable adjustments are not made to overcome the disadvantage
- Discrimination arising from a disability is where a person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified.

## 4 Groundwork UK as an Employer

### 4.1 Groundwork UK is committed to:

- welcoming and valuing diversity amongst our staff, trustees and partners for the range of skills, experience and perspectives it brings
- building our reputation as an ethical and truly inclusive organisation where people want to work
- providing an excellent service to all our stakeholders by working in partnership and understanding their needs.

- meeting our organisational goals by encouraging and enabling all to fulfill their potential
- recognising we can always do more to become truly inclusive, and committing to regular self-assessment and improvement.
- working towards the elimination of discrimination (whether direct, indirect, associative, perceptive or harassment)
- creating positive cultures throughout where equality, diversity and respect are core values and at the centre of all our activities
- encouraging positive action to overcome disadvantage and discrimination and to enable people to achieve their full potential
- enabling the highest possible standards to be achieved in delivery of our services and employment practices and the promotion of equality and diversity through our work internally and externally

- 4.1 Groundwork UK will ensure that it actively promotes equality to job applicants, persons under contract personally to do work, apprentices, employees and ex-employees on the grounds of the protected characteristics, people resident in areas of deprivation and where relevant, other disadvantaged groups not protected in law.
- 4.2 Groundwork UK will ensure that no job applicant, person under contract personally to do work, apprentice, employee, or ex-employee experiences discrimination or harassment due to a relevant protected characteristic, another's perception of their possessing a particular relevant protected characteristic, or due to their association with another person possessing a particular relevant protected characteristic.
- 4.3 Groundwork UK will ensure that an individual will not be victimised if they carry out one of the following protected acts:
- bringing proceedings under the Equality Act 2010;
  - giving evidence or information in connection with such proceedings;
  - doing anything which is related to provisions of the Equality Act 2010;
  - making an allegation that someone else has done something in breach of the Equality Act 2010;
  - or having a "relevant pay discussion" with a colleague or former colleague.
- 4.4 Other policies and decisions relating to Groundwork UK terms and conditions of work, pay and benefits, leave and flexible working arrangements, access to facilities, pensions, dress codes, appraisals and performance management, promotion and transfer, handling of grievance and disciplinary, procurement of equipment, IT systems, software, and websites, evacuation procedures, and treatment of employees when their employment ends, are reviewed against this policy in order to ensure a consistent approach to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring anti-discriminatory practice.

- 4.5 Groundwork UK will not lawfully discriminate in the selection of employees for recruitment or promotion.
- 4.6 Groundwork UK may use appropriate lawful methods, including lawful positive action, to address the under-representation of any group which Groundwork UK identifies as being underrepresented in particular types of job.
- 4.7 Employees should report any bullying or harassment by customers, suppliers, visitors or others, whether or not it is directed at them, to their manager who will take appropriate action and begin relevant investigations as detailed in the Grievance policy (HR 03).
- 4.9 The diversity of the communities we serve is reflected at all levels within our workforce through:

### **Sex**

Women and men are fully and properly represented and rewarded for their contribution throughout all levels of the organisation through:

- challenging gender stereotypes
- supporting employees in balancing their life at work and at home

### **Gender reassignment**

Employees who plan to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone gender re-assignment are protected against all forms of discrimination and harassment.

Groundwork UK will take positive steps to support a transgender person and ensure they are treated with dignity and respect.

### **Marriage and Civil Partnership**

Employees are treated fairly and equally in the workplace irrespective of their marital, civil partnership or family status

### **Race**

The racial and cultural diversity of our communities is represented at all levels of the organisation through:

- challenging racial stereotypes
- understanding, respecting and valuing racial and cultural difference and perspectives
- encouraging and enabling members of minority ethnic groups to volunteer or work for Groundwork at all levels

### **Disability**

The abilities of disabled people are recognised and valued at all levels of the organisation through:

- focussing on what employees can do rather than on what they cannot
- challenging stereotypes about people with disabilities and in particular, not making false assumptions that disabled people are unable to do certain things
- making appropriate adjustments in the workplace so that all employees can reach their full potential regardless of any disability

### **Age**

Age diversity within the workforce is promoted and valued through:

- challenging age stereotyping, recognising that the new ideas and fresh approaches can come from anyone irrespective of their age recognising the benefits of a mixed-age workforce

### **Religion or Belief**

Employees are treated fairly in the workplace irrespective of their beliefs, religious beliefs or faith. Employees are also expected to recognise the individual freedom of belief and right to protection from intolerance and persecution of other individuals and groups.

Note: The expression of beliefs and opinions should not contravene Groundwork's values or its capability to carry out its work.

### **Sexual orientation**

People are treated fairly in the workplace irrespective of their sexuality through:

- respecting the rights of everyone irrespective of whether or not they are open about their sexuality
- respecting different lifestyles even if someone's lifestyle conflicts with one's own beliefs
- challenging negative stereotypical views

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

Groundworks UK will never unfairly treat a pregnant woman in the work place because they are pregnant are breast feeding or have recently had a baby and will never suffer a disadvantage or be treated unfavourably example of these include:

- Never being subjected to unfair treatment because of pregnancy or maternity.
- Suffering a disadvantage because of pregnancy or maternity through Groundworks Policies or procedures, rules or practices.
- Or suffering unwanted behaviour because of pregnancy or maternity.

## 5 Groundwork UK and its Suppliers

- 5.1 Groundwork UK and its suppliers shall continue to actively work towards positively promoting equality and eliminating discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity status, marital or civil partnership status, referred to collectively as the 'protected characteristics'.
- 5.2 Groundwork UK and its suppliers must promote a culture where discriminatory behaviour by its employees, volunteers, trustees and other stakeholders are routinely challenged in a polite and constructive manner so the person making them has a chance to correct their behaviour. If they are unwilling to change their behaviour, then disciplinary action should result and/or their continued engagement with Groundwork UK should be considered as set out in section 10 of this policy.
- 5.3 All complaints of discrimination will be sensitively investigated and, if proven, will result in appropriate action for the perpetrator. Any employees or other stakeholders that are found to breach this policy could be subject to disciplinary procedures as set out in their terms of employment, service contract or partnership agreement and/or their continued engagement with Groundwork should be considered. Any Federation Trust members or suppliers that are found to breach this policy could be subject to disciplinary measures as outlined in the Groundwork UK disciplinary procedures for employees and sub-contractors.

## 6. Groundwork UK as Prime Contractor and its Supply Chain

### 6.1 Equality

Groundwork UK is committed to ensuring that its subcontractors and delivery partners, whether Groundwork Trusts or other partner organisations, promote equality within their own workforces and deliver services that are accessible and inclusive to people from all backgrounds in particular those within the protected characteristics. Groundwork UK will therefore ensure that its subcontractors and delivery partners:

- provide policies that reflect the same equality and diversity standards as Groundwork UK
- provide evidence of plans for promoting equality
- provide evidence of processes for implementation of such equality plans
- monitor and report on levels of beneficiary access, positive outcomes, progression etc by sex; religion, belief; disability; race; and age

- demonstrate that they provide assessment of need and individually tailored support to enable their beneficiaries and employees to achieve their potential and to access to the full range of services

## 6.2 **Diversity**

Groundwork UK is committed to proactively encouraging diversity across all its key activities, including the sourcing and management of supply chains. This means Groundwork UK will actively encourage a diverse range of suppliers to provide goods and services needed to run the business. Groundwork UK seeks to provide a level playing field for all potential suppliers irrespective of:

- Size – Groundwork UK encourages small and medium enterprise (SME) suppliers
- Ethnicity – Groundwork UK encourages suppliers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic enterprises (BAMEs)
- Ownership - Groundwork UK encourages suppliers from public, private and third sector organisations
- Location – Groundwork UK encourages all potential suppliers, wherever they are based

## 6.3 **Groundwork UK procurement processes**

While proportionate to the value involved, the Groundwork UK's procurement processes will be transparent, objective and non-discriminatory. In addition Groundwork UK will encourage its direct supply chain to use a diverse range of suppliers themselves.

## 6.4 **Groundwork UK suppliers promotion of diversity**

All Groundwork UK suppliers are expected to promote diversity across their organisations. This includes their workforce, their clients and their own supply chains. Groundwork UK requires suppliers to submit a copy of their diversity plan as part of our assessment of their tenders. Groundwork UK may require specific improvements before awarding contracts and monitoring work in this area will form part of the overall monitoring of their performance

## 6.5 **Monitoring Progress**

Progress will be monitored against key diversity targets set as relevant by Groundwork UK for all major contracts. Groundwork UK will monitor progress against these targets on a quarterly basis, and where major problems are identified, we will produce an action plan and monitor its progress on a monthly basis. Delivery partners will be expected to analyse the demographics of project participants and compare with local population demographics, to help ensure that interventions are inclusive and addressing local need.

## 6.6 **Equality and Diversity Plan**



An Equality and Diversity plan forms part of Groundwork UK's Quality Management System (QMS), driving continual improvement to ensure that our programmes promote equality and inclusivity. The plan is reviewed and refreshed annually.

## 7. The Role of Groundwork UK within the Groundwork Federation

Groundwork UK manages the agreements, systems and networks that supports the Groundwork Federation. Core functions in relation to equality and diversity include:

**Leadership** involves articulating a federal vision that is grounded in equality and inclusivity, for example:

- ensuring that the behaviour and activities of Groundwork UK employees and trustees comply with the Policy.
- keeping open all channels of communication for employees, suppliers, funders, partners and customers and continuously review and develop our communications practices.
- maintaining our accreditation to the Investors in People standard
- maintain Groundwork's 'positive about disability' status

**Membership liaison** involves facilitating the development of Federation-wide commitments:

- continuously developing our approach to equality to help people access Groundwork services.
- enshrining a Federation-wide commitment to equal opportunities within the Federation Membership Agreement

**Brand development** involves sharing good practice across the Federation and promoting it externally.

- Investigating and dealing with any complaints fairly and efficiently

**National programme development and management** involves securing business opportunities on the strength of a reputation for good quality delivery rooted in equality and inclusivity.

- Undertaking due diligence with delivery partners to be assured of their commitment to equality and diversity
- Ensuring that local project staff analyse the levels of participation on programmes compared to local demographics, and make plans to address any significant discrepancies.

- Providing Groundwork beneficiaries and partners with opportunities to provide feedback.
- Reporting programme demographic/ E&D data to a committee of the Board at least every 6 months

Groundwork UK's role is to facilitate and enable staff and partners at all levels from trustees to frontline practitioners to develop, assess and share policies and practices that:

- actively promote equality
- prevent and tackle prejudice-driven bullying
- ensure opportunities and choices are available consistently to all sections of the communities they serve
- ensuring the service provision is to all sections of the communities they serve
- ensuring service users are not treated differently or unfairly because of assumptions or stereotypes
- proactively engage under-represented groups

## **8. Individual Responsibilities**

- 8.1 Every employee, trustee, subcontractor, supplier and beneficiary and is required to assist Groundwork UK meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment, service provision and procurement and to avoid unlawful discrimination.
- 8.2 Groundwork UK's management team will be responsible for ensuring that managers monitor the implementation of this policy by their staff and subcontractors
- 8.3 Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees, trustees, sub contractors, suppliers or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under Groundwork UK's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal, termination of contract or withdrawal of services.
- 8.4 Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, Groundwork UK for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit acts of harassment are committing a criminal offence and will be reported to the Police for investigation

## **9. Training and Dissemination**

- 9.1 Groundwork UK will provide training to all existing and new employees and others engaged to work at Groundwork UK to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the equal opportunities policy and what they can do to help create

an environment free of bullying and harassment for employees, trustees, contractors, beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

- 9.2 Groundwork UK will publish this policy on its website. It will make the policy available at tender and contracting stage as well as during the induction of new employees and trustees and within the employee handbook. The policy will also be communicated at staff meetings.

## **10. Grievances and Complaints**

### **10.1 Employees**

Employees who consider that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, bullied or harassed may use Groundwork UK's Grievance policy to make a complaint. Groundwork UK will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. Employees will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if the grievance is not upheld, unless the complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

### **10.2 Subcontractors and Suppliers**

Subcontractors or suppliers who consider that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, bullied or harassed should use Groundwork UK's complaints process to make a complaint.

### **10.3 Customers**

Customers who consider that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, bullied or harassed may use Groundwork UK's Complaint's policy to make a complaint. Groundwork UK has a responsibility on behalf of The Federation of Groundwork Trusts to seek to ensure the highest possible standards of service to partners, funders, beneficiaries and all those with whom Groundwork has dealings in line with the Federation's purpose and core values, limited only by available funding and staffing resources.

- 10.4 Use of Groundwork UK's Complaints' policy does not affect any statutory rights.

## **11. Monitoring and Review**

- 11.1 This policy will be monitored by reviewed by our management team and the Groundwork UK Committee of the Federation Board every 3 years to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law, in response to employer, subcontractor and beneficiary feedback.

- 11.2 Groundwork UK will monitor the ethnicity, sex, age and disability status of the existing workforce, of job applicants (including promotion), and of beneficiaries, and will review its equality and diversity plan in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, Groundwork UK will implement them.
- 11.3 For contracted provision, Groundwork UK will ensure that data collection methodologies are in place as contractual requirements, enabling equality and diversity data to be monitored on an at least annual basis.
- 11.4 Information provided by job applicants, employees, contractors and beneficiaries for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation



## **Addendum 1**

The Equality and Diversity Policy is applicable to subcontractors, grantees and participants on the Community Grants programme. The Community Grants programme is funded by the European Social Fund and the Education & Skills Funding Agency, and managed by Groundwork UK, and is a grants programme open to small and voluntary organisations to fund projects that help unemployed and economically inactive people move into or towards employment, training or education. This addendum applies to this policy for the duration of the programme – from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Any changes to the policies for the purposes of this programme are detailed below.

- 1.4 Groundwork UK's commitment to equality and diversity is more than promoting equal opportunities and eradicating discrimination, bullying, victimisation and harassment. We are actively committed to implementing the Equality Act 2010, encouraging and promoting the positive contribution of our staff, diverse Federation members, partners and suppliers, as well as acting in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. We will ensure that this is reflected in our practices, policies and services provided.
- 4.9 The diversity of the communities we serve is reflected at all levels within our workforce through:

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- And will never suffer a disadvantage or be treated unfavourably for example will never be subjected to unfair treatment.
- Suffer any type of disadvantage through Groundworks policies and procedure, rules or practices.
- Or suffer unwanted behaviour because of pregnancy