

Promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in Groundwork



Our Federation commitment

Groundwork is committed to being an inclusive organisation – operating transparently and with integrity and seeking out a diversity of viewpoints, both in the work we do and the people we employ.

Our collectively agreed strategy commits us to working towards a society where no-one is held back by their background or circumstances. We recognise the people we work with have different needs and starting points and will give them the support they need to overcome the barriers they face in improving their prospects. This brings with it a responsibility to listen to the voices of those who are marginalised and who have least power and to work to overcome injustice by removing structural barriers in our own organisation and in wider society.

Delivering against this commitment means embedding the principles of equity and inclusion in:

The work we do

- delivering projects, programmes and services that tackle injustice and promote understanding and equity in communities as an integral part of our mission
- enabling those we work with and support to participate in the way we design and develop our services, drawing on their personal experience
- helping to sustain a vibrant voluntary and community sector by providing platforms for others with greater expertise and sharing resources where this will better serve our mission

The way we work

- providing a positive working environment with a culture that welcomes, values and respects the talents and contributions of everyone engaged with our organisation
- ensuring there are no barriers to recruitment and progression and that our employees are knowledgeable about and reflect the communities we serve
- recognising our duty to provide specific support to individuals and groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

Our leadership and decision-making

- ensuring our senior leaders act as role models, visibly demonstrating our commitment and providing space and time for others to be heard
- embedding the principles and practice of equity, diversity and inclusion into our internal agreements and standards
- expecting and supporting everyone involved with Groundwork, or speaking on our behalf, to reflect our values and our commitment

Our learning and reporting

- embracing open dialogue, learning from others with more insight and experience, and responding constructively to feedback
- committing to continuous improvement and building on our strengths by identifying and replicating inclusive practice, while being honest about and addressing our weaknesses
- capturing data to track progress and producing action plans to bring about improvements.

What we know

In 2021 all parts of Groundwork undertook surveys to understand the diversity of the organisation and the extent to which we are creating an inclusive culture.

The results of the survey showed that:

- The diversity of Groundwork's staff team is broadly in line with UK averages – though individual Trusts agreed the need to benchmark diversity against their local populations.
 - *Groundwork employs more women (60%) than men (36%). 4% identified as non-binary, other or prefer not to say.*
 - *18% of respondents identified as Black, Asian, mixed or another ethnic or national identity other than white.*
 - *18% of respondents reported having a disability or health condition. The most prevalent condition was a diagnosed mental health condition.*
 - *9% of respondents identified as having a sexual orientation other than heterosexual, while 13% preferred not to say.*
 - *Female colleagues were overwhelmingly more likely to declare caring responsibilities than their male counterparts.*
- Groundwork is a more diverse organisation than many others in the 'environment sector' (4.8% of environment professionals identify as Black, Asian or minority ethnic, compared with a 12.6% average across all professions according to a new study *).
- The diversity of Groundwork's staff team diminishes with seniority.
- The vast majority of Groundwork employees (92%) feel the organisation has an inclusive and supportive culture.
- 4% of those responding say they have experienced barriers to progression because of their background or characteristics.
- Some staff (7%) are unsure about the contribution Groundwork makes through its projects and services to tackling injustice and promoting EDI.

* [New research prompts initiative to accelerate diversity of environmental sector - News | SOS-UK](#)

Priority actions

We have agreed a federation-wide action plan for 2022/23 aimed at embedding good practice in our governance, people management, communications and delivery.

Standards and systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add completion of an EDI self-assessment into the Groundwork Quality Standards framework• Build better tools and approaches for capturing data about the people and communities Groundwork serves into a new Groundwork Impact Framework• Embed EDI commitments and actions into the development of Office 365 collaboration tools
Communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the federation EDI commitment and relevant policies are visible on the Groundwork website• Update the 'work with us' section of the website to reflect our collective values and commitments• Make more use of social media channels and technology to capture beneficiary feedback and support dialogue between beneficiaries and boards• Create a process that can be used to agree if and how Groundwork should make public statements on societal issues
Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt a balanced scorecard approach to board reporting to support reflection and challenge around EDI• Commission EDI training for Groundwork board members to help them reflect on their role and responsibilities as individuals and as a collective• Share board member profiles online in a way that highlights their diversity (not all diversity is visible)• Take positive action to recruit for diversity when board vacancies arise• Consider Trust representation on the Federation Board to maximise diversity
HR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a recruitment toolkit with template resources for adverts and job descriptions, equalities monitoring forms, exit interview proformas and guidance on attracting diverse candidates• Take positive action to recruit colleagues with 'lived' experience of the issues Groundwork is seeking to address through its work• Create shared resources reflecting our commitment to EDI for embedding in induction process• Explore and share new approaches to colleague training including training for recruiting managers to ensure appointments are made without bias• Create a toolkit for data collection and monitoring and commit to updating and reporting diversity data on a regular basis• Engage proactively with the RACE report as it works to promote greater diversity and transparency in the environmental sector
Colleague engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain a Federation EDI Group to help share good practice and oversee progress against priority actions• Assess appetite and provide a space for staff from across the federation to connect and collaborate through communities of interest or staff network groups