



Policy – Diversity and Inclusion

1. Aims and Purpose

The Guild of St George (the Guild) aims to build an inclusive culture that is intolerant of discrimination, bullying and harassment, one where Companions, directors, employees, volunteers, tenants, and participants in all organised activity and projects feel included, supported and treated fairly.

The Guild aims to promote a culture which actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and with different life experiences can bring added value to the way it delivers its charitable objectives. The Guild will focus on inclusion to build its culture and reputation as an organisation that attracts, develops, retains and fully engages the interests of under-represented groups.

The policy is grounded in John Ruskin's aim for the Guild to make lives better for people, and especially Ruskin's belief that "That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest numbers of noble and happy human beings; that man is the richest, who, having perfected the function of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both personal and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others."

2. Diversity and Inclusion - Key Objectives

The Guild will focus on:

1. Meeting statutory requirements and building a culture that champions diversity and inclusion;
2. Maintaining representation among Companions, directors and employees where performance is already satisfactory, and increasing representation in areas where there is room for improvement;
3. Learning how to take positive action by educating ourselves about Ruskin's attitudes to diversity and inclusion and engaging in public debate;
4. Creating an inclusive culture, one that values diversity and care in the way in which we treat one other and with those with whom we come into contact;
5. Ensuring that Diversity and Inclusion become a natural part of what the Guild does;
6. Work with specialists and trainers in diversity and inclusion to improve standards and challenge practice.

3. Statutory Requirements

The Guild will meet its statutory responsibilities by ensuring that it is compliant with the Equality Act. The Equality Act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The Guild does not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment in relation to the protected characteristics listed below:

- age

- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Guild will ensure that:

- its policies and procedures remain up to date, are compliant with the law and reflective of best practice;
- there are clear, well communicated procedures in place explaining how to raise concerns or complaints;
- equality duties specifically around protected characteristics and a wider commitment to equality and inclusion are given due weight in all policy development, activity, project, recruitment and strategic planning.

The Guild will have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out in the Equality Act, namely to:

- eliminate discrimination;
- advance equality of opportunity;
- foster good relations between different people.

4. Attracting Companions and Tenants and Recruiting Directors, Employees, Volunteers

Increasing representation from a diverse range of people is an indicator of how successfully the Guild will be in creating an inclusive culture. Diversity at all levels within the Guild will improve its effectiveness. A key objective in terms of attracting Companions and recruiting directors, employees and volunteers will be to be open and transparent, both about areas where it is doing well in and where it needs to improve. In trying to attract more Companions and in recruiting directors, employees and volunteers, the Guild will:

- recruit and promote talent from and opportunities to all sections of society to ensure that the Guild is open to all;
- develop, implement and update recruitment policies for Directors and staff to ensure diversity and inclusion are foremost considerations in the selection process;
- recognise and be mindful of the risks of unconscious bias (i.e. unintentional people preferences) influencing decisions on recruitment, sponsorship and partnership, on the allocation of work or resources and/or providing support or mentoring;
- not limit focus on diversity and inclusion to protected characteristics but also be mindful of social inclusion issues;
- ensure that recruitment is fair, open and inclusive;

- ensure all employees have equal opportunities for learning, training and professional development;
- ensure that the same principles outlined in this policy are applied to the letting of tenancies within the Guild's property portfolio. Applicants can expect the same consideration as all others who work for or come into contact with the Guild.

5. Creating an Inclusive Culture

Creating a culture of inclusion will be critical to improving and maintaining representation. The Guild recognises that an inclusive and diverse culture will improve creativity and innovation and develop greater organisational adaptability and loyalty.

The Guild will develop greater inclusivity in its culture by:

- ensuring that diversity and inclusion is a key objective in its strategic planning;
- raising awareness of protected characteristics, of responsibilities and the benefits of diverse and inclusive teams;
- nurturing positive behaviours by being alert to micro inequities and micro affirmations which may have small but cumulative impacts on minorities within and outside the organisation and potentially create a culture of 'insiders' and 'outsiders';
- ensuring that all colleagues have an equal voice at meetings and generally in the Guild's business;
- improving understanding of barriers faced by particular groups (for example, by improving the accessibility of documents);
- creating an environment that promotes disclosure of diversity characteristics and an understanding of why that is important;
- consistently demonstrating inclusive, nurturing leadership at all levels;
- taking seriously and acting upon allegations of inappropriate language, situations or practices;
- committing to getting the basics right – appropriate reasonable adjustments being consistently put in place for colleagues in a timely manner, with sufficient resources set aside to do so;
- promotion of mental health action so it is prioritised equally with physical health;
- promoting flexible working and job share to deliver working arrangements which meet business needs, whilst providing innovative and flexible solutions tailored to and supportive of individual needs and differences;
- promoting a commitment to Diversity and Inclusion throughout the procurement or commissioning process and in relationships with suppliers.

6. Governance & Responsibility

Fostering and maintaining Diversity and Inclusion is the responsibility of everyone who works for or represents the Guild but the Board of Directors will both be ultimately accountable for, and hold other staff to account for the delivery of the aims that are outlined within this policy.

The policy applies to all conduct in the workplace and also externally at meetings, social events, conferences etc. where the Guild is represented. The same provision applies to the use of digital technology and social media.

7. Review

The policy will be reviewed annually or on the occasion of any change in legislation or official guidance.

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