



# Kent Refugee Action Network

## Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Policy

### VERSION CONTROL

<i>Version</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Date</i>	<i>15 May 2023</i>
<i>Status</i>	<i>Final</i>
<i>Drafted by</i>	<i>DCEO/LPM</i>
<i>Approved by</i>	<i>Board of Trustees</i>
<i>Approved date:</i>	<i>31 May 2023</i>
<i>Review frequency:</i>	<i>Every 2 years</i>
<i>Next review date:</i>	<i>31 May 2025</i>

## Statement of Intent and sign-off

KRAN's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) policy lays out our principles, standards, and the moral and ethical expectations that employees, volunteers and third parties are held to as they interact with us. At its core, this policy aims to prevent unjustified discrimination in all its forms and promote equity.

The policy applies to:

- Staff and volunteers
- Service users
- Third parties

It relates to all areas of business including (but not limited to):

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

and it relates to our provision of services for refugees and asylum seekers.

Staff and volunteers are required to comply with the policy in all circumstances.

Service Users are required to abide by the relevant EDI guidelines that reflect the principles of this policy.

This EDI policy should be consulted in conjunction with our policies on whistleblowing, dignity at work, communications, discipline and grievances, and our Code of Conduct.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 27/07/23

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 27/7/23

CEO

## Principles

Equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to our work. As a result:

1) As a minimum, we comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the nine protected characteristics it covers:

- *age;*
- *disability (including HIV/AIDS status);*
- *gender reassignment<sup>1</sup>;*
- *marriage and civil partnership;*
- *pregnancy and maternity;*
- *race;*
- *religion or belief;*
- *sex; and*
- *sexual orientation*

We do this by:

- i) Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- ii) Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- iii) Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic

2) We also go beyond the legal minimum and make efforts to:

- i) Eliminate direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on other characteristics/circumstances that may be relevant to the experience of the RAS service user audiences we support, including but not limited to:
  - (a) lived-experience (included experience and impact of potentially traumatic situations),
  - (b) socioeconomic circumstances/background,
  - (c) level of education,
  - (d) language and communication ability in English,
  - (e) UK cultural acclimatisation/competence & intercultural skills

3) In all that we do, we strive to become a role model in the field of EDI through our commitment to the principles described above and also by :

- a) proactively responding to - and where possible contributing to - emerging EDI themes and responses to other forms of inequality and unjustified or unfair discrimination, including for example, but not limited to:
  - Menopause
  - Period poverty
- b) Routinely confirming that potential suppliers, providers, contractors and other stakeholders have appropriate EDI policies and procedures in place, and taking their response into consideration as part of our business decision-making processes.

4) In recognition of the fact that disadvantage or oppression can rarely be reduced to only one part of an identity, we adopt an intersectional lens to EDI to try to understand the unique experiences, opportunities, and barriers for each person and adjust our offer and ways of working in light of this.

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<sup>1</sup> Including gender identity

## KRAN's EDI commitments

KRAN commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as this is good practice and makes good business sense.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued. As a learning organisation we recognise that is an ongoing, cyclical process.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, service users, suppliers and the public.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
  - a. Internally such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.
  - b. In the case of external bodies, any such complaints will be considered grounds to terminate the working relationship unless an acceptable remedy is agreed.

Further, 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.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
7. Assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issue.