

# **IEEP - EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI ) POLICY**

*(for both IEEP AISBL and IEEP London entities)*

Board Approved on 13 December 2021

On behalf of IEEP London and IEEP AISBL Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hans Wolters', with a horizontal line underneath.

Hans Wolters

Chairman

## 1. INTRODUCTION

IEEP is committed to championing the values expressed in this policy ensuring an inclusive workplace which celebrates diversity and creates equality of opportunity. This means treating people fairly, valuing differences and removing the barriers that prevent employees realising their full potential. As an organization we have worked extremely hard to reduce inequality, yet we know that some people still experience disadvantage and unfair treatment simply because of their personal characteristics or circumstances. This document sets out the main principles of the road towards making equality integral to the way we reach decisions, provide services, recruit and support our employees, work with other organisations and engage with third parties. Our aim is to make IEEP a fully accessible and inclusive organisation that welcomes and respects the diversity of its employees, partners, and its audience.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all who represent IEEP in any capacity including employees, volunteers, associates, and consultants. The policy also applies to suppliers, sub-contractors and partners in any of our activities (projects). We all have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect. We are also responsible for ensuring that our own actions and behaviours are fair and that we respect the dignity of others.

## 3. DEFINITION

Equality is recognising that everyone is different, and that people's needs are met in different ways. We would define equality as essentially being about fairness and ensuring that we all have the best possible chance to succeed in life whatever our background or identity.

Diversity is about understanding that everyone is unique, recognising, respecting, and celebrating the added value that differences bring.

Inclusion is where difference is seen as a benefit and where perspectives and differences are shared, leading to better decisions. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels valued, that their contribution matters, and they can perform to their full potential, regardless of background, identity or circumstances. An inclusive workplace enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively.

## 4. LEGAL OBLIGATION

IEEP, as an employer with workforce across different jurisdictions, will meet all legal duties in respect of equality and diversity in all the countries of reference, namely EEA and United Kingdom. In different jurisdictions, key legislation is identified through legislative acts which protect people from discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion & belief, sex and sexual orientation. Under such legislation, IEEP must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Having due regard for advancing equality involves removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to protected characteristics, taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people, encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between different communities.

## 5. COMMITMENT

IEEP is committed to ensuring equality, fairness, inclusion and good relations are at the heart of everything we do - be it internal policy-making, project delivery or employment practice. To support our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, IEEP shall:

- a. Comply with and embrace equality laws and good practice, which includes carrying out all duties to promote equality
- b. Regularly monitor and assess the impact of our policies, activities and functions to ensure they are fair and reflect employee's different needs and opinions
- c. Use our influence with our partners and network to promote equality, diversion and inclusion standards
- d. Celebrate diversity and support campaigns for greater equality and awareness
- e. Make equality and consideration of diversity a part of our day-to-day activities. To do this we will expect all of our employees and contractors to: treat everyone with courtesy, dignity and respect at all times and consider the needs and opinions of all they engage with.
- f. Promoting diversity, preventing inequality, and tackling discrimination is not solely the responsibility of IEEP. We will also work with our wide partner network to promote an equal and inclusive approach across our projects and activities.

## 6. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE

Our employment practice is guided by the principles of equality and fairness. This includes recruitment, performance reviews, learning and development, promotions and exiting employment. All present and future HR policies help ensure that equality is an integral part of IEEP employment practices.

IEEP is committed to being a fair and supportive employer, developing the skills and talent within our workforce so that employees are able to reach their full potential.

To achieve this we will: carry out fair and transparent recruitment, provide training to employees so that this policy can be adequately implemented, treat all employees fairly, with dignity and respect at all times, tackle unacceptable behaviour in the workplace, provide employees with opportunities to influence the development of IEEPs policies and best practices, reward all employees fairly and provide employment conditions based on quality and experience criteria, promote good work -life balance and offer flexibility when required, support disabled employees and create a workplace that is disability friendly.

IEEP will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour in any form, and the Bullying and Harassment Policy sets out how individual members of staff should raise concerns they have about the workplace.

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Equality is the responsibility of every IEEP employee, and any other person or organisation IEEP engages with, including those employed through contractual, commissioning or grant-aided arrangements. IEEP will use all available routes to communicate and promote this policy:

- IEEP staff will role-model our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion in their day-to-day work
- Senior management will be responsible for overall management and direction of IEEP commitments towards inclusion, diversity, and equality
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Committee, comprising of cross unit staff members – led by the HR Officer, will oversee this policy and monitor the extent to which we are achieving our commitments
- Line Managers will make sure this policy is core to activity delivery and employee management
- Contractors, suppliers and potential suppliers will be advised of this policy through the tendering and contract review processes and will be expected to adhere to the policy

## 8. ANALYTICS – EQUALITY ASSURANCE

IEEP commits to using analytics as a tool to support fair, sound and transparent decisions that are based on a robust understanding of the needs and rights of individuals who may be affected. The assessment process ensures that equality analysis is exercised in such a way that influences the final decision. It will also be used to identify positive actions that will mitigate any negative effects of any decision or enhance any benefits for protected groups and others at risk of disadvantage.

## 9. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Whenever relevant and possible to do so IEEP will collate, analyse, interpret and publish information about equality and diversity in the workforce, project delivery and/ or else. This information will be used to:

- Influence planning, forecasting and decision making process,
- Understand the impact of policies, practices and decisions on people with different protected characteristics
- Help identify key equality, diversity and inclusion issues
- Develop and monitor our equality, diversity and inclusion objectives
- Demonstrate compliance with any relevant legislation (when requiring employees and/or consultants, associate or partners to provide information about their personal characteristics, this will only be done where the information is relevant to the aims of the equality duty – for example if there are known inequalities in relation to a particular outcome or activity. IEEP will always make it clear that disclosure of sensitive information (eg sexual orientation, gender orientation or religion or belief) **is optional and not compulsory.**

However, without gathering some form of evidence, it may be difficult to monitor the impact of policies and procedures on certain protected groups. IEEP will aim to overcome this by creating a culture of trust whereby individuals are comfortable disclosing such information. IEEP will uphold its responsibility to protect an individual's right to privacy as prescribed by GDPR and subsequent national legislative acts, and will not publish information that could identify an individual. Nor will the information be used to identify an individual or make a decision about them purely on the grounds of the information that has been provided in relation to their protected characteristics.

## 10. IMPLEMENTATION

By implementing this document IEEP recognises that leadership, ownership and commitment of both management and staff, with adequate resources allocated, are essential for this policy to be effective.

IEEP work will be guided by the codes of practice and guidance described through this policy. We will share best practice through internal skill-share and engaging across our networks; working externally through partnerships; and internally through the Equality Working Committee.

We understand that identifying and acting is a key to mainstreaming equality and we will therefore deliver our commitments through our different action plans.

The Equality Working Committee will monitor progress and the IEEP Board will review this policy on a regular annual basis, to ensure that it reflects the latest legalisation, best practice and other IEEP policies. It is essential that we monitor our performance against the objectives set out in this policy and continue to challenge progress over time. The Equality Working Committee will publish an annual report on our progress with a summary of what has been achieved on an annual basis, including any trainings held or analysis conducted.