

Co-op Culture Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

Co-op Culture exists to provide support and advice to sustainable co-operative enterprise. As a specialist co-operative development body we ascribe to, and promote, the Co-operative Principles, Values and Ethics including equity and equality.

Co-op Culture celebrates the diverse cultures, communities and environments that make up our society and the multitude of dimensions which characterise our diversity - including race, ability, sexuality, gender, age, religion and other beliefs.

Co-op Culture aims to encourage equality of opportunity and improve diversity in the co-operative sector and in the way it delivers its work.

Co-op Culture's members believe:

That all people have a right to social justice, to participate in decisions that affect their lives and effect control over the economies in which they live.

That the role of Co-op Culture members is to support and encourage all people to play an active part in their community and economy both individually and collectively.

That priority should be given to working with people and communities whose full participation in society is limited by disadvantage and discrimination.

That sustainable co-operative endeavour provides an effective means for individuals and communities to work towards an ethical, sustainable, equitable and socially just society.

Co-op Culture will take positive action to challenge disadvantage and discrimination and to promote diversity and full access to opportunity in all areas of its work and structures. By 'positive action' we mean measures undertaken with the purpose of achieving full access to opportunity for people and groups that face the consequences of past or present discrimination or disadvantage.

In doing so Co-op Culture members will strive to:

- promote social justice and full access to opportunities through all its activities and programmes;
- ensure all activities and programmes are fully accessible and promote awareness of the rights and needs of different groups of people;
- challenge practices, legislation and institutions that deny the rights of individuals or groups experiencing disadvantage and discrimination;
- have a positive and inclusive workplace culture and environment with a membership that broadly reflects the area in which it operates and in particular, Co-op Culture will provide opportunities for our clients to contribute to and participate in peer to peer mentoring and support for other enterprises.;

- share its experiences and promote good practice in the area of equality and diversity throughout its members and beyond;
- identify and find ways of tackling new and emerging problems affecting groups facing disadvantage and discrimination;
- increase its involvement and collaboration with other organisations that promote equality and diversity;
- influence funders to recognise the resource implications of this statement.

Policy adopted January 2016