



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY

1. Statement of Intent

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd., a certified social enterprise, is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, celebrating diversity, and fostering an inclusive environment for all employees, volunteers, participants (including vulnerable adults), and stakeholders, particularly young people aged 11-18 engaged in our mentoring programmes. Valuing diversity, reducing inequality, and ensuring all individuals are treated with dignity and respect are fundamental to our mission as a social enterprise that reinvests surpluses to support young people's wellbeing and community benefit. We aim to create a focused, agile, and supportive workforce, properly skilled to deliver our priorities, enabling us to address the challenges faced by young people in today's society.

Our vision is a future where every young person can thrive, connect, and grow through safe, inclusive mentoring and community activities. We are dedicated to building an environment that celebrates diversity, tackles all forms of discrimination, and promotes equality of opportunity by understanding and addressing barriers to participation in our activities. This policy applies to all aspects of our organisation, and we expect everyone who works on behalf of, represents, or engages with Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. to adhere to its principles.

2. Policy

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. is committed to creating an inclusive environment where:

- Young people, parents/carers, vulnerable adults, employees, and volunteers are respected, supported, and empowered to feel safe, valued, and included in all activities.
- We ensure cultural safety for Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children, and provide a safe, accessible space for children with disabilities.
- We promote equality of opportunity, ensuring all individuals, irrespective of their protected characteristics—age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national



origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity—have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in our activities.

- We actively work to eliminate unlawful and unfair discrimination, valuing the differences a diverse community brings to our organisation.
- We address discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimisation, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, through appropriate disciplinary procedures.
- This policy underpins all recruitment practices, ensuring staff and volunteers are selected fairly and trained to promote inclusivity.
- We provide training to identify, challenge, and address discriminatory practices, ensuring all staff and volunteers can enact these commitments effectively.

3. Legal Requirements and Definitions

The commitments in this policy are underpinned by our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Care Act 2014. Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. takes all claims of inappropriate behaviour, bullying, harassment, or discrimination—whether direct or indirect—seriously, and these will be dealt with through appropriate disciplinary procedures. The following definitions apply:

- **Direct Discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic (e.g., refusing to include a young person in activities due to their disability).
- **Discrimination by Association:** Direct discrimination against someone associated with a person with a protected characteristic (e.g., excluding a volunteer who cares for a disabled family member).
- **Discrimination by Perception:** Direct discrimination based on a perceived characteristic (e.g., assuming a young person's sexual orientation and treating them differently).
- **Indirect Discrimination:** Applying a provision, criterion, or practice that disadvantages a group with a protected characteristic without objective justification (e.g., requiring all participants to use online polls during in-person events, which may exclude those without phones).



- Harassment: Unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment (e.g., making derogatory comments about a participant's cultural background).
- Victimisation: Treating someone less favourably for raising or supporting a discrimination complaint (e.g., excluding a volunteer who reported harassment).
- Bullying: Offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour intended to undermine, humiliate, or injure (e.g., using racist or transphobic language).

4. Expectations

As an Employer, Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. will:

- Create an environment where equality, diversity, and inclusion are valued, dignity and respect are promoted, and all forms of discrimination are challenged through disciplinary channels.
- Recognise that people may face multiple forms of marginalisation and support staff to increase understanding through lived experiences.
- Lead by example in the development and consideration of our people's diverse needs, ensuring fair recruitment and selection processes.
- Ensure selection for employment, volunteering, training, or other benefits is based on aptitude, eliminating bias.
- Empower staff and volunteers, ensuring pathways to leadership roles are open to all.
- Provide regular equality, diversity, and inclusion training for all staff and volunteers, with additional training for managers to recognise and address unlawful practices.
- Investigate complaints of discrimination in line with disciplinary procedures, treating such behaviour as a serious offence.

As an Organisation, Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. will:

- Create an environment where everyone is respected and valued for their diversity and individuality.
- Not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or bullying during



activities, and address such behaviour through investigation and disciplinary action.

- Reserve the right to withdraw services from partners (e.g., venues, suppliers) engaging in discriminatory behaviour, following a full investigation.
- Support employees and volunteers who report discriminatory behaviour they have witnessed or experienced.

We Expect Everyone Involved to:

- Adopt and embrace the ethos of equality, diversity, and inclusion as outlined in this policy.
- Respect individual differences and refrain from discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation.
- Act as role models, explain the policy to others (including young people), and challenge inappropriate behaviour.
- Report all forms of discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation to Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. by emailing bridgebuilderssafeguarding@gmail.com.
- Assist in investigations by providing accurate, unbiased information.

5. Breach of Policy

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. takes all cases of harassment, bullying, discrimination, and victimisation seriously. Any employee, volunteer, or contractor who displays behaviour contrary to this policy will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedure, which may result in dismissal without notice for gross misconduct. Individuals may raise complaints without fear of penalty, unless the complaint is unfounded and not made in good faith.

6. Monitoring and Review

Diversity monitoring is essential to identify patterns and address concerns. Information provided by job applicants, employees, volunteers, and participants for monitoring purposes will be kept confidential and compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, as outlined in our Data Protection Policy. Monitoring will include assessing the policy's effectiveness,



reviewing selection decisions, and addressing any issues through action plans. We may use lawful positive action to address under-representation of specific groups. This policy will be reviewed at least every year, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or organisational needs.

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