

# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

## Our Commitment

A New Direction is committed to creating an inclusive working culture aligned with our values, where everyone who works for or with us is treated with dignity and respect.

This policy sets out our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and our ambition to go beyond our legal requirements for equality, equity, diversity and inclusion.

Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion drives everything we do. Our ambition is for A New Direction to be the most inclusive organisation we can be with:

- a workforce and Board that reflects the community we serve.
- a working culture where everyone feels included, a sense of belonging and able to be their whole selves at work.
- programming that's accessible and welcoming to all.

Everyone who works for or with A New Direction is expected to value each person as an individual, treat everyone with dignity and respect and support the implementation of this policy to work towards a truly inclusive and accessible environment where everyone is able to feel like they belong.

<b>Policy Owner(s):</b>	CEO & Senior People and Operations Manager		
<b>Version:</b>	3.0	<b>Approved:</b>	February 2026
<b>Last reviewed:</b>	February 2026		
<b>Next review due:</b>	February 2028		

## Contents

Our Commitment.....	1
1. Introduction .....	3
1.1 Purpose .....	3
1.2 Scope.....	3
1.3 Key terms and definitions .....	3
2. Our Values and EDI Principles .....	4
3. Roles and responsibilities .....	5
4. Understanding the Legal Framework: The Equality Act 2010.....	7
Equal Opportunities.....	7
Discrimination.....	7
Responsibilities under the Equality Act .....	7
5. Principles in practice .....	8
5.1 Our Team and Governance.....	8
Employment and Standard Working Practices.....	8
Recruitment.....	9
Training and Awareness.....	9
Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments.....	9
5.2 Our Programmes .....	10
5.3 Our Communications .....	10
5.4 Working in Partnership .....	11
5.5 Inclusive Behaviours (Everyday Actions) .....	11
5.6 Language .....	12
6. Implementation and Accountability .....	12
6.1 EDI Strategy and Action Plan.....	12
6.2 Monitoring and Reporting .....	12
6.3 Data Protection .....	13
6.4 Consequences of non-compliance .....	13

## I. Introduction

### I.1 Purpose

This policy outlines our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and the principles and actions we will take to embed and promote these values.

It aims to ensure that our commitment to EDI is upheld in every area of our work and encourages us to keep reflecting, learning, unlearning and improving as we work towards our ambition to be the most inclusive organisation we can be.

The policy includes:

- our commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion in all areas of our work.
- our expectations and the responsibilities of A New Direction, our team and the people we work with.
- an overview of our duties under the Equality Act 2010, as an employer and as individuals, and how we will ensure we meet these.
- what our commitment to EDI looks like in practice and the principles that guide our work to realise our ambition to be the most inclusive organisation we can be.
- how we monitor and hold ourselves accountable to our EDI commitments.

### I.2 Scope

This policy applies to everyone who works for or with A New Direction, including employees, trustees, volunteers, freelancers and contractors. It covers all aspects of our operations, from recruitment and employment practices to the delivery of our programmes and services.

### I.3 Key terms and definitions

**Equity:** Providing fair treatment and opportunities by addressing individual needs and removing barriers and ensuring everyone can succeed. We believe equity is essential to achieve **equality** and ensure everyone has the same opportunities and is treated fairly, regardless of their background or personal characteristics.

**Diversity:** Recognising, respecting, and valuing the differences between individuals, including race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and other attributes.

**Inclusion:** Creating an environment where everyone feels welcome, valued, and able to participate fully.

**EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion):** The collective term for the principles and practices that promote fairness, respect, and equal opportunities for all while valuing and embracing diversity.

**Accessibility:** Ensuring that our workplace, programmes, and services are accessible to all, including those with disabilities, by removing physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers.

**Belonging:** Fostering a sense of community where everyone feels heard, accepted, valued, and included, and can be their authentic selves.

**Dignity:** Treating everyone with respect, recognising each other's humanity and valuing their worth, ensuring that their rights are upheld.

**Respect:** Showing consideration and appreciation for others, valuing their perspectives, and treating them with kindness and fairness.

**Kindness:** Acting with empathy, compassion, and understanding towards others, creating a supportive and positive environment.

**Living Our Values:** Demonstrating our commitment to our core values through our actions and behaviours, ensuring that our values and principles guide our decisions and interactions.

**'Whole selves':** People feeling comfortable and confident to be their authentic selves and express their true identities without fear of judgment or discrimination.

## 2. Our Values and EDI Principles

Our ambition is to be the most inclusive organisation we can be. At A New Direction, being truly inclusive means creating a working culture and environment that is equitable, accessible and welcoming to all.

Our approach to equity, diversity and inclusion is grounded in our values. These principles guide how we work, make decisions and interact with everyone who works with or for A New Direction.

**Equity:** We commit to removing barriers and providing fair opportunities tailored to individual needs. Equity means recognising that people start from different places and taking steps to ensure everyone can thrive.

### **This means we:**

- Treat everyone fairly, recognising and responding to individual need and removing barriers.
- Create and follow policies and practices that consider different needs and circumstances.
- Ensure our workplace, programmes and practices are accessible to all and removing barriers to engagement, particularly for people who are Deaf, disabled and neurodiverse.
- Acknowledge and work to address structural inequalities that affect our community and workforce.
- Regularly review how our opportunities and resources are distributed to ensure fairness.
- Use data and feedback to identify and address barriers to participation.

**Connectivity:** We build meaningful relationships across communities and sectors, ensuring diverse voices are heard and included in shaping our work. We believe inclusion is strengthened through collaboration and shared learning.

### **This means we:**

- Create opportunities for our team to connect and share experiences, knowledge and skills
- Build partnerships with organisations that share our EDI commitments.

- Actively seek input from a wide range of stakeholders when developing programmes.
- Share learning and resources to strengthen inclusion across the sector.
- Prioritise collaboration with people and groups with a wide range of lived experiences
- Create opportunities for co-creation with our partners and stakeholders.
- Actively participate in and convene networks that promote equity and representation.

**Trust & Respect:** We treat everyone with dignity, respect and fairness. We create spaces where people feel safe to contribute and confident that their voices matter.

**This means we:**

- Apply policies and processes consistently and transparently.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to concerns about discrimination or exclusion.
- Value and include different perspectives in decision-making.
- Use inclusive, unbiased language and avoid stereotypes in all communications.
- Protect confidentiality when handling sensitive issues.

**Kindness:** We act with empathy and compassion, understanding that inclusion is not just about policies but about how we care for and support each other every day.

**This means we:**

- Foster an environment where everyone feels valued and included.
- Offer help and check in on colleagues' wellbeing regularly.
- Listen actively and make space for all voices in meetings and discussions.
- Challenge exclusionary behaviour constructively and support colleagues.
- Recognise and celebrate contributions from across the team.
- Model and promote behaviours that promote inclusion.

**Creative Culture:** We embrace creativity as a tool for inclusion, challenging assumptions, amplifying marginalised voices, and ensuring our programmes and communications reflect London's diversity.

**This means we:**

- Ensure our programmes and communications reflect and celebrate diverse identities.
- Consult with our stakeholders to inform programme design and delivery.
- Co-design programmes and opportunities with stakeholders
- Use creative approaches to remove barriers and increase participation.
- Share stories that highlight diverse voices and perspectives.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

**Everyone who works for or with A New Direction:**

- Treat everyone with dignity, kindness and respect
- Contribute to an inclusive environment by demonstrating inclusive behaviours (see the 'Inclusive Behaviours' section later in this policy for more guidance on what this means at A New Direction)

- Report any incidents of discrimination or harassment.

**All team members (employees):**

- Read and adhere to this policy
- Understand and follow the Equality Act 2010 and this policy.
- Foster an inclusive working culture by modelling respectful and inclusive behaviours
- Actively participate in EDI training
- Engage in initiatives to promote and improve EDI at A New Direction
- Collaborate with colleagues to ensure that our working language, culture, programmes and services are accessible and welcoming to all

**Senior Managers:**

- Lead by example in promoting and upholding the principles of EDI and A New Direction's values
- Support team members to understand and comply with this policy and the Equality Act 2010
- Take prompt and appropriate action in response to any reports of discrimination, following relevant A New Direction policies and procedures.

**Directors**

- Champion EDI at a strategic level, ensuring it remains integrated in A New Direction's strategic aims.
- Lead by example in promoting inclusive behaviours in decision-making.
- Ensure that this policy is effectively communicated, implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Oversee the development and implementation of strategies to promote an equitable, diverse and inclusive working culture and practices, including ensuring appropriate budgets are approved for EDI initiatives, training and accessibility.
- Monitor progress against EDI targets, report to the board and take corrective action where any gaps or barriers are identified.

**Trustees:**

- Provide governance and oversight to ensure that A New Direction remains committed to its EDI principles.
- Lead by example in promoting inclusive leadership and modelling inclusive behaviour at Board meetings and other A New Direction events and activities.
- Ensure A New Direction complies with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation, and ensure the charity identifies and mitigates risks related to the Equality Act and other relevant legislation.
- Monitor the organisation's progress towards its EDI goals and hold the leadership team accountable.

## 4. Understanding the Legal Framework: The Equality Act 2010

The UK has laws that aim to ensure everyone is treated fairly, protect people from discrimination and promote equal opportunities. Both employers and individuals have obligations under these laws.

While A New Direction's commitment to EDI aims to go beyond our legal obligations, it is important that everyone understands the legal framework, A New Direction's responsibilities as an employer and your responsibilities as an individual.

The **Equality Act 2010** is the main law that protects people from discrimination. It protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society and sets out the personal characteristics that are protected by the law and the behaviour that is unlawful.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

### Equal Opportunities

Under the Equality Act, everyone has the right to equal opportunities in the workplace and wider society. This means that everyone should have the same chances to participate and succeed regardless of their background or personal characteristics. Employers must provide equal access to jobs, training, and promotions, ensuring that their policies and practices do not disadvantage any groups.

### Discrimination

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or less favourably because of a protected characteristic. The Equality Act makes it illegal to discriminate in areas like employment, education, access to goods and services, housing, and public functions.

Types of discrimination include:

- **Direct Discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably due to a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect Discrimination:** Policies that disadvantage certain groups.
- **Harassment:** Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic.
- **Victimisation:** Unfair treatment for complaining about discrimination.

### Responsibilities under the Equality Act

To comply with the Equality Act, employers must ensure their policies and practices do not discriminate, provide equal opportunities, and should make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities.

A New Direction is committed to providing equal opportunities and avoiding unlawful discrimination for everyone who works for or with us. We do not tolerate any form of discrimination.

We aim to prevent discrimination and promote equality and diversity based on the protected characteristics. We also recognise the barriers that arise from class and socio-economic status and will seek to go beyond our legal duty to further protect people from discrimination and promote equality and diversity based on socio-economic status.

Individuals are responsible for treating others fairly and not engaging in discriminatory behaviour.

Our [Dignity at Work Policy](#) provides guidance on what to do if you witness or experience discrimination, harassment, bullying or other unwanted behaviour in the workplace.

Discrimination of any kind is a disciplinary offence and will be dealt with under our [Disciplinary Policy](#). Any reports will be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

## 5. Principles in practice

This section aims to demonstrate how our EDI principles and values translate into everyday practice. It sets out what A New Direction commits to as an organisation and what individuals can do to help create an inclusive culture.

You can also use this section as a practical guide, whether you're making decisions, planning work, or reflecting on your own behaviours.

### 5.1 Our Team and Governance

#### Employment and Standard Working Practices

##### What AND does:

- Applies consistent and transparent processes for pay, benefits, and progression.
- Reviews policies regularly to ensure they remain inclusive and equitable.
- Monitors workforce and Board diversity to identify gaps and work towards our ambition of having a team and board that reflect London's diversity.
- Publishes some of our key policies online for transparency.
- Creates regular anonymised staff surveys and exit interviews to gather and act on feedback from our team

##### What individuals can do:

Inclusive Practice Do's	Inclusive Practice Don'ts
→ Treat colleagues with dignity and respect in all interactions.	⊗ Don't allow personal bias to influence decisions.
→ Raise concerns about inequities through appropriate channels.	⊗ Don't make assumptions about colleagues' needs or circumstances.
→ Give feedback based on clear criteria.	⊗ Don't ignore feedback about barriers or exclusion.

You can find all of our policies and procedures on [SharePoint here](#).

## Recruitment

### What AND does:

- Writes job descriptions and person specifications based only on essential requirements.
- Avoids gendered or biased language in recruitment materials.
- Advertises roles widely, including platforms that target groups underrepresented in our workforce and sector.
- Uses structured shortlisting and interview approaches.
- Offers reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process.
- Monitors diversity of applicants and hires to assess reach and impact.

### What individuals can do:

Inclusive Practice Do's	Inclusive Practice Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Share job adverts within diverse networks.</li> <li>→ Ensure interview questions are consistent and fair.</li> <li>→ Think about the diversity of who is on interview panels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Don't include unnecessary criteria in person specs that could exclude candidates.</li> <li>⊗ Don't make assumptions about candidates' identity or needs.</li> </ul>

Please see our [Recruitment Policy](#) for more information.

## Training and Awareness

### What AND does:

- Provides EDI training for all staff during induction and throughout employment.
- Creates regular opportunities for the team to connect and reflect on living our values, including how we put our EDI principles into practice.
- Offers additional training for managers on inclusive people management.

### What individuals can do:

Inclusive Practice Do's	Inclusive Practice Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Complete all required EDI training and apply learning in daily work.</li> <li>→ Seek out additional resources to deepen understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Don't dismiss feedback about your behaviour or language.</li> <li>⊗ Don't disengage with EDI training that you feel isn't relevant to you.</li> </ul>

Please visit the [Learning & Development section on the Intranet](#) for more information.

## Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

### What AND does:

- Provides accessible formats for documents and events.
- Makes reasonable adjustments for staff and participants.
- Reviews spaces and processes to remove barriers proactively.
- Promotes mental health and wellbeing through flexible working and access to support services.
- Encourages open conversations about wellbeing and workload.

**What individuals can do:**

Inclusive Practice Do's	Inclusive Practice Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Ask about accessibility needs when planning meetings or events.</li> <li>→ Respect colleagues' boundaries</li> <li>→ Signpost to support services when needed.</li> <li>→ Use internal tools such as Working Well With Me guides or Wellness Action Plans to have constructive conversations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Don't assume everyone's needs are the same.</li> <li>⊗ Don't ignore signs of stress or exclusion.</li> <li>⊗ Don't assume that all accessibility needs are visible</li> </ul>

Please visit the [Accessibility section on the Intranet](#) for more information.

**5.2 Our Programmes**

**What AND does:**

- Designs programmes informed by consultation with underrepresented groups.
- Ensures venues and activities are physically and digitally accessible.
- Provides multiple ways for people to engage and give feedback.
- Monitors participation data to identify and address gaps in access.

**What individuals can do:**

Inclusive Practice Do's	Inclusive Practice Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Consider accessibility and representation when planning activities.</li> <li>→ Gather and act on feedback from participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Don't assume programmes are accessible without checking.</li> </ul>

**5.3 Our Communications**

**What AND does:**

- Uses clear, inclusive and accessible language that avoids jargon and stereotypes.
- Ensures imagery and content represent the diversity of our communities.

- Provides content in accessible formats
- Reviews communications regularly to ensure accessibility and alignment with EDI principles.

**What individuals can do:**

Inclusive Practice Do's	Inclusive Practice Don'ts
→ Do check language for bias and avoid tokenism.	⊗ Don't use stereotypes or exclude voices in storytelling.

**5.4 Working in Partnership**

**What AND does:**

- Works with partners, suppliers and funders who share our commitment to EDI, and use our ethical decision-making framework to guide decisions about who we work with.
- Includes EDI expectations in partnership agreements and commissioning briefs.
- Prioritises collaboration with organisations led by or serving underrepresented communities.
- Reviews partnership practices to ensure they do not reinforce structural inequalities.

**What individuals can do:**

Inclusive Practice Do's	Inclusive Practice Don'ts
→ Consider EDI principles when selecting partners or suppliers. → Share AND's EDI commitments and principles with partners and relevant stakeholders	⊗ Don't overlook exclusionary practices in external collaborations.

**5.5 Inclusive Behaviours (Everyday Actions)**

Here are some everyday actions that you can take to behave more inclusively:

- Learn and use people's names and pronouns correctly and respectfully and ask if unsure.
- Avoid assumptions about identity, background, or needs.
- Share credit for ideas and contributions fairly.
- Prioritise active listening / listening to understand
- Embrace new and/or different ideas, welcome new approaches and stay open to different perspectives and input
- Reflect on your own unconscious biases
- Make space for all voices in meetings, invite quieter colleagues to contribute, and avoid interrupting others
- Share information and knowledge when you can and when it is suitable to do so.
- Check accessibility before sending documents or hosting events.

- Challenge exclusionary language or behaviour calmly and constructively.
- Offer support if you see someone you believe might be being excluded or marginalised.
- Keep learning and building self-awareness through team training and reflection.
- Seek feedback and resources to improve your inclusive practice.

## 5.6 Language

Language is powerful. It shapes how we see the world and how we interact with each other. Using inclusive language is important because:

- **Respect:** It shows respect for all individuals, acknowledging their identities and experiences.
- **Clarity:** Choosing inclusive language helps avoid misunderstandings and hurt feelings.
- **Impact:** Words can uplift and empower, or they can harm and exclude.
- **Belonging:** It helps create an environment where everyone feels they belong and are valued.

You can learn more about the importance of inclusive language, and some practical guidelines for communicating inclusively in our [Inclusive Language Guide](#). The AND team developed this guide in Q1 2025/26, this is a living document that will change and be refined over time.

## 6. Implementation and Accountability

### 6.1 EDI Strategy and Action Plan

Our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is embedded in our organisational strategy and supported by a dedicated EDI Strategy and Action Plan:

- The **EDI Strategy** sets out our long-term vision and priorities for creating an inclusive organisation.
- The **EDI Action Plan** translates this vision into practical steps, timelines, and measurable outcomes.

Both documents are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and ambitious, and progress is reported to the Board and shared with staff.

### 6.2 Monitoring and Reporting

We monitor and report on our EDI commitments to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

- Collect and analyse workforce and Board diversity data annually to identify gaps and trends.
- Review recruitment, progression, and participation data to assess impact and reach.
- Gather feedback from our team, partners, and programme participants to inform improvements.
- Report progress annually to Trustees and share a summary with our team and key stakeholders.

### **6.3 Data Protection**

We handle all diversity and inclusion data in line with UK GDPR and our Data Protection Policy.

### **6.4 Consequences of non-compliance**

We expect everyone who works for or with A New Direction to uphold this policy.

Breaches of this policy, including discriminatory behaviour or failure to act on concerns, will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action under our Dignity at Work and Disciplinary Policies.

For partners and contractors, failure to comply with EDI commitments may result in termination of agreements.