



**Project Part-Financed
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**CDFI FINANCE for SMEs & SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
ERDF PROJECT 904555**

**DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY POLICY
CHAMBER ACORN FUND (HUMBER)
March 2014**

1. Introduction

The Delivery Partners of the CDFI Consortium providing loans to SMEs and Social Enterprises under ERDF Project 904555, including the Chamber Acorn Fund (Humber) – Acorn, support wholeheartedly the principle of equality of opportunity and oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination arising from a protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are recognised as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Consortium Delivery Partners will observe the relevant legislation.

The Project Delivery Partners value and welcome diversity and believe that it is in the best interests of their joint project activity and those who work in it to ensure that the human resources, talents and skills available throughout the community are considered when employment opportunities arise. A commitment has been adopted, within the framework of the law and wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce that broadly reflects the community in which it operates.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion and career management are based solely on objective and job related criteria. Equal opportunities will be embedded in all relevant policies.

2. Commitment

2.1 The following steps will be taken to make the policy known:

- a copy will be made available to all employees
- the main theme of the policy will be used in advertising vacancies and other marketing material
- A copy will be made available to all job applicants.

2.2 Information and publicity will, whenever possible:

- Contain positive images (ie those that challenge stereotypes).
- Be widely distributed and accessible.
- Be written in plain language without jargon.
- Contain clear information about all aspects of the organisations work, particularly how decisions are made, by whom, and to be made available to all those involved.

2.3 Key decision makers such as managers and the Board and those involved in personnel and management practices will be (or have been) provided with training and guidance.

3. Discrimination

A commitment is made to the immediate investigation of any claims of discrimination through the Grievance procedure.

Any employee (no matter what level) found guilty of discrimination will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. Any person found to be guilty of discrimination will be required to make appropriate restitution in a manner deemed appropriate to the nature and level of the offence.

4. Monitoring & Managing Diversity

We will:

- monitor the workforce and new applicants for vacancies to ensure that the staff profile reflects the local community as far as possible
- examine and review procedures for recruitment, selection, promotion and training to make sure that all the processes are fair and open and do not pose barriers to any groups in the community
- develop mechanisms for resolving grievances about unfair discrimination victimisation and harassment
- identify any scope for using lawful positive action, training and encouragement and then put the necessary arrangements in hand
- Contribute to a review of the policy on a regular basis and consequently develop both Action Plans (as required) and an appropriate monitoring system To ensure compliance

5. Race; Gender; Disability; Sexuality; Age; Religion and Belief; Employment issues

Whilst recognising that individuals may experience disadvantage on more than one level we will:

- Offer services fairly to all people, ensuring that anyone in contact with the organisation is treated with respect, making provision for those groups within the community whose needs and expectations are less well provided for
- Comply with all legislation dealing with discrimination and the promotion of equality and diversity
- Ensure all employment policies procedures, guidelines and information reflect and reinforce the commitment to equality and diversity

- Ensure mechanisms are in place for responding to complaints of discrimination and harassment for employees, volunteers and members of the public
- Encourage disadvantaged groups and individuals to participate in the activities and in the community

6. Accessibility Guidelines

A commitment is made to ensuring that services must be accessible to and appropriate for all the members of the community who might wish or need to use them. In seeking to achieve this effort will be made to:

- Facilitate physical access into the building
- Use communication methods that are appropriate and sensitive
- Improve accessibility of employment arrangements or physical features of workplace to meet the needs of staff and applicants with disabilities and other needs
- Work with partner organisations to enhance services across the area for all community members

7. Employment training and organisational development

A commitment is made to ensuring that all employment policies, procedures, and guidelines will reflect and reinforce the commitment to equality and diversity by:

- Providing a prejudice free and supportive working environment
- Ensuring all employees are recruited and promoted on the basis of ability
- Ensuring job opportunities are communicated to all sections of the community
- Using appropriate legislation as a framework for action to support the recruitment process in a positive way
- Providing appropriate training for staff and volunteers in reaction to equality and diversity

8. Equal Opportunities Policy supporting statements

Race equality – a commitment to promoting a cohesive society and eliminating unlawful racial discrimination.

Disability Equality – an undertaking not to treat a person less favourable directly or indirectly on the basis of disability or arising from disability and will promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Gender Equality – an undertaking not to treat a person less favourably directly or indirectly due to gender or marital and civil partnership status or gender reassignment.

Age - an undertaking not to treat a person less favourably directly or indirectly due to their age

Sexual Orientation – an undertaking not to discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of sex or sexual orientation

Religion and Belief – an undertaking not to discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of religion or belief

Pregnancy and Maternity – an undertaking not to discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity.

Relevant Legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, 1994
- Data Protection Act 1988
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- National Minimum Wage Act 1998
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Fixed Term Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2001
- The Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004

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