

# **Greigarious Community Arts and Singing (GCAS)**

## **Equal opportunity and diversity policy**

This document may be requested, as required, in different formats such as in larger print, Braille or audio-format, as required; or in other languages, as appropriate

### **Section 1: Context**

#### **1.1. Strategic framework**

Greigarious Community Arts and Singing (GCAS) SCIO promotes equal opportunity and diversity commitments throughout all of its operations. This applies to employees, volunteers, trustees and organisations with which GCAS works in partnership. Through this approach we foster our commitments to promoting social justice; this is one of our core organisational values.

GCAS is referred to generally as “we” in this document; and the equal opportunity and diversity policy is referred to as “the policy.”

#### **1.2. Structure of the document**

The policy is divided into seven sections that can be easily updated as laws and guidance evolve. Section 1 outlines our strategic commitment to incorporating equality commitments throughout all organisational practices.

Section 2 sets out our policy objectives that are our organisational commitments regarding equal opportunity.

Section 3 describes briefly how we implement our equality and diversity commitments.

Section 4 explains how we manage our performance.

Section 5 describes positive action initiatives that we take to promote equality into practice.

Section 6 refers to our complaint system.

Section 7 explains how we review the policy.

### **Section 2: Policy statement**

This is the most important section of the policy as it sets out the principles that we are committed to implement into all organisational services.

#### **Principle 1: Law and guidance**

We ensure that our organisational practices and services meet all relevant law and good practice, as required.

#### **Principle 2: Equality information**

We process all personal data following the Data Protection Act 1998.

#### **Principle 3: Equality impact**

We evaluate all organisational policies and procedures to eliminate unlawful and unfair forms of discrimination and to promote equality commitments.

#### **Principle 4: Public information**

We publish information that is in plain language and accessible to individuals, if possible.

#### **Principle 5: Organisational partnerships**

We work with a wide range of organisations throughout Scotland and promote, through joint working arrangements, our equality and diversity commitments.

#### **Principle 6: Performance management**

We measure services on an ongoing basis to assess if our policy commitments are being achieved; this includes the elimination of unlawful and unfair forms of discrimination.

#### **Principle 7: Policy review**

We review this policy every three years, or sooner as required, for example, due to changes in law or good practice guidance.

### **Section 3: Implementing policy into practice**

We have established the regular review of the implementation and effectiveness of this policy through quarterly trustee board meetings and further with the establishment of 6 monthly team meetings facilitated by the volunteers.

#### **3.1. Promoting an organisational culture based on equality values**

We strive to develop a value system that includes: • making a difference through drawing on the talents and potential of all volunteers and trustees;

- being innovative, for instance, by encouraging creativity and new approaches to work;
- acting collaboratively with partner organisations;
- demonstrating respect for other people;
- ensuring public accountability and taking responsibility for its own actions so that GCAS is true to its values; and

- developing services that are cost-effective through making the best use of resources, including volunteers and trustees experience and knowledge.

### 3.2. Equality action plan

Our action plan is our method for ensuring that all organisational policies and practices include equality commitments. For instance, we incorporate equality issues into our recruitment of volunteers and partner organisations we provide volunteering services for, to eliminate unlawful and unfair forms of discrimination.

Activities that are covered in our action plan include:

providing quality services designed to meet a wide range of different needs and regularly review them; providing information in different formats and making reasonable adjustments, as appropriate, so as to meet legal duties in respect of disabled people; and equal access to services; providing and publicising clear information on how volunteers and partners can comment about the services they have received; consultation procedures with our volunteers; and using venues for external meetings and events that are accessible, whenever possible.

To sum up: we have established an organisational value system (a culture) that seeks to promote equality and diversity commitments. These commitments are implemented into practice at all levels of organisational practice.

## Section 4: Performance management

Our monitoring specifically covers all our volunteering services.

## Section 5: Positive action

### 5.1. Positive action

Positive action is covered in the Equality Act 2010 and related equality guidance. Positive action is used to address discrimination against certain groups that has occurred historically. Positive action aims to promote access to volunteering opportunities for people who have been traditionally underrepresented. Examples include women, people from black and minority ethnic groups, or disabled people.

To sum up: We support positive action programmes to promote volunteering opportunities for groups of people who have been historically disadvantaged in Scotland and the UK.

## Section 6: Complaints

We deal with complaints through our organisational complaint handling procedure. Complaints from volunteers excluding those relating to Disclosures are dealt with in the following way.

Should you feel that the matter necessitates a written complaint, or we have not resolved your issue without the need for a written complaint then the procedures outlined will be followed

- 1) Your complaint should be written, signed and dated and put in the comments and complaints box.
- 2) This will be logged and the musical director will look to resolve the matter. Further information may be asked for at this stage.
- 3) We will normally respond to you within 15 working days. However, where it is not possible to do this, we will advise you of progress and when a response is likely
- 4) If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you will have the right to take the matter directly to a trustee / trustees and or the quarterly trustees meetings held. The outcome of this will normally be communicated to you within 15 working days. Where this is not possible, we will advise you of progress and when the outcome is likely

The signed, dated and date for review copy can be seen within the Policy and Procedure Folder.

This Folder is managed by Mary Greig, Musical Director and all staff, trustees and volunteers can access this at any time.