

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## 1. Introduction

Rites for Girls is committed to promoting equality and diversity in all areas of its operations. This policy outlines our commitment to ensuring a work environment free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation where every individual is treated with respect and dignity. Our goal is to create an inclusive culture that values diversity and provides equal opportunities for all, while recognizing specific operational requirements.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all board members, employees, facilitators, mentors, volunteers, and stakeholders associated with Rites for Girls. It covers all aspects of employment, including recruitment, promotion, training, and termination, as well as interactions with clients and external partners.

## 3. Policy Statement

Rites for Girls is dedicated to:

- **Promoting Equality:** Ensuring that no employee, job applicant, or stakeholder receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, except where a specific requirement is justified as an occupational requirement.
- **Valuing Diversity:** Recognizing and valuing the differences and unique contributions that each individual brings to the organisation.
- **Providing Equal Opportunities:** Ensuring fair and equal access to opportunities for development and advancement within the organisation, while adhering to justified occupational requirements.

## 4. Recruitment of Women as a Specific Operational Requirement

As a Community Interest Company dedicated to training and supporting women to facilitate programmes (in person or online) for girls and women, we reserve the right to recruit solely women for our programmes and staff positions. This is a specific operational requirement essential to fulfilling our organisational mission.

## 5. Legal Framework

This policy is in line with the relevant equality legislation, including but not limited to:

- The Equality Act 2010, particularly provisions regarding occupational requirements
- The Human Rights Act 1998

## 6. Responsibilities

### Management Responsibilities:

- Implementing and promoting this policy within their teams.
- Ensuring that all employees are aware of their responsibilities under this policy.
- Taking immediate and appropriate action in instances of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

### Employee Responsibilities:

- Treating colleagues, clients, and stakeholders with respect and dignity.
- Complying with the provisions of this policy.
- Reporting any instances of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

## 7. Implementation

### Recruitment and Selection:

- Ensuring that job advertisements, descriptions, and selection criteria are free from bias and do not discriminate, except where a specific occupational requirement is justified.
- Due to the nature of the work, we recruit women exclusively, which is justified under the Equality Act 2010 as a legitimate occupational requirement. This decision has been made based on the nature of the services we provide.
- Using objective criteria and fair assessment methods during recruitment and selection processes.

### Training and Development:

- Ensuring all employees, facilitators and mentors have read and adhere to our equality and diversity policy.
- Encouraging continuous professional development and equal access to training opportunities.

### Work Environment:

- Creating a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Promoting a culture of inclusion and respect through policies, practices, and behaviours.

## 8. Reporting and Complaints

Rites for Girls takes all complaints of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation seriously. Employees who believe they have been subjected to such treatment should report their concerns through the established grievance procedure. All complaints will be handled promptly,

fairly, and confidentially.

## **9. Communication**

This policy will be included in all training carried out by Rites for Girls and made available to all employees, facilitators and mentors via the shared drive.

## **10. Conclusion**

Rites for Girls is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse work environment. By implementing this policy, we aim to ensure that all individuals are treated equitably and with respect, contributing to a positive and productive workplace.

### **Approved by:**

Kim McCabe, Founder Director

### **This policy was last reviewed on:**

**21 August 2024**