

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

Comhlámh aims to create a working environment and a set of relationships with our 'Communities of Engagement' in which equity is promoted, diversity accommodated, and discrimination eliminated as a means of developing the full potential of everyone involved in the organisation and of stimulating productive and creative relationships. In this we are motivated by and give appropriate expression to our Code of Conduct, and our values as stipulated in our Strategic Plan, Global-Solidarity-in-Action.

The organisation and its staff members commit themselves to promoting the achievement of full equality in practice, reasonably accommodating diversity, and eliminating all forms of discrimination, particularly as defined under the terms of the Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 and the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015.

The aims of the Equal Opportunities Policy are:

- To ensure that no person is discriminated against, directly or indirectly on grounds of gender, marital status; disability; race; colour; ethnic or national origin; antibody status; sexual orientation; economic status; age; political or religious beliefs; or responsibility for dependants; or membership of the Traveller Community.
- To ensure a working environment and organisational culture that prizes the dignity and human worth of all employees and members of our 'Communities of Engagement', that harassment or sexual harassment is not tolerated and, where it happens is addressed expeditiously.
- To make adjustments to reasonably accommodate the diversity and resultant needs of staff members and members of our 'Communities of Engagement', with particular reference to people with disabilities.
- To promote the achievement of full equality in practice for our staff and in our relationships with our 'Communities of Engagement'.
- To prevent any form of discrimination whether direct or indirect against staff members or candidates for employment.
- To ensure that no job applicant or staff member receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This applies to recruitment and selection, training, promotion, pay and staff member benefits, processes and all terms and conditions.

### **Responsibilities**

Managers have particular responsibility to engender respect for difference and to accommodate diversity where appropriate. All staff have an important role to play in ensuring equality of opportunity throughout the organisation.

## **Recruitment and Selection**

Comhlámh will select those suitable for employment solely on the basis of merit. The objective is to target the widest possible pool of potential applicants and to ensure that all candidates have equal access to all job vacancies. We will ensure advertising affirms diversity and attracts the widest pool of candidates. Members of interview panels will conduct every interview and other stages of a recruitment procedure in a professional and non-discriminatory fashion and will not stereotype applicants. Relevant questions will be asked of all candidates and evaluated in the same way using pertinent questions relating to the post, interview templates etc. Selection will be on merit and those who are successful shall demonstrate their suitability for employment according to pre-determined job-related selection criteria which will be consistently applied throughout the recruitment process.

Importantly, recruitment will also be conducted in line with relevant organisational Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. Please refer to the 'Safeguarding: Recruitment and Selection Policy' in section 6.10.

## **Equal Pay**

Comhlámh will ensure equal pay for equal work and work of equal value and will determine pay levels with particular reference to work of equal value in line with organisational salary scales. Comhlámh holds to organisational pay scales and clear methodology of appointing people to these scales with reference to relevant prior experience and qualifications and equity with the existing staff. Appointment to the scale is undertaken in a manner which ensures equity and fairness in appointments. Comhlámh pay scales are transparent and known to staff and made clear when advertising job positions. Comhlámh adopts the Living Wage as the basis for the minimum rate of pay for any recruitment. This provision does not exclude Comhlámh engaging/recruiting staff through various government social employment schemes.

## **Images and Language**

Comhlámh will demonstrate its commitment to equal opportunities by using non-discriminatory images and language which does not stereotype groups or individuals in all material used in internal and external communications. Comhlámh is committed to the use of non-discriminatory language in all literature, documents and advertising produced by the organisation. Comhlámh's commitment to Global Citizenship methodologies and approaches underpins its communications strategy. Our use of images and language supports the achievement of our overall vision, and ensures that our values (respect, integrity, solidarity, ecological sustainability) are consistently reflected and expressed across our work. Comhlámh is a signatory to the Dóchas Guide to Ethical Communications, and this will be fully adhered to across all communications.

### **Staff Members with Disabilities**

Applicants with disabilities will be considered solely on their ability to do the job. Only where the disability constitutes a substantial risk to the safety of the applicant and/or other staff members should the disability be especially considered. In these circumstances the advice of the National Rehabilitation Board, or other appropriate body, will be sought prior to making any decision. Whenever possible, staff members who develop/suffer a disability will be retained in existing or suitable alternative employment. Staff members with disabilities will be offered the same opportunities for career development and promotion as all other staff members. The smooth integration of staff members with disabilities into work will be achieved through the involvement of staff in considering the right attitude and approach to be adopted and in consulting and informing them of any special arrangements which may be necessary. Those responsible for recruitment and employment matters will be fully briefed on Comhlámh's policy and their role regarding staff members with disabilities.

### **Complaints and Redress**

Any person who wishes to raise issues concerning alleged discrimination or unfairness should do so in the first instance by contacting their line manager or the CEO. Comhlámh is committed to ensuring that all issues concerning alleged breaches of this policy will be dealt with seriously, promptly and with appropriate regard for confidentiality.

### **Monitoring**

The Senior Management Team are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy within the organisation in order to:

- Assess whether the aims of the policy are being achieved.
- Measure the effect of action taken to promote and support that policy.
- Highlight areas where further action is required.