

Equal Opportunity Policy

Policy

Introduction

The object of Slow The Flow is to advance the education of the public in Natural Flood Management, Sustainable Drainage Systems and other renewable methods of managing the environment, including the exploration of alternative practices which safeguard the natural environment and its resources in a manner which best fits the specifics of a local geography.

Statement of Purpose

Slow The Flow is committed to meeting the needs and aspirations of individuals and communities it deals with in a fair, respectful, and proportionate manner. Our approach to diversity and equality is to promote inclusiveness by recognising that anyone, can make a positive difference in the achievement of the organisation's objectives and in the wider society.

The policy is linked to our Constitution, Core Objectives and Operational Plans. Strategies and action plans will be used to realise and deliver our policy aims. This is our framework of continuous improvement and learning.

Equality Act 2010

The Act brought together into one piece of legislation and replaced all previous discrimination legislation. It provides that a person shall not be discriminated against, i.e., treated less favourably, on grounds of nine protected characteristics. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation

1. Our Approach

- i. The policy applies to everyone the organisation serves, who works for it, applies for work or who provides services to it. Diversity and equality are integral to all aspects of our work.
- ii. We will comply with best practice from legal, regulatory and inspection requirements. Codes of Practice and other guidance will be used appropriately to ensure progress on diversity.
- iii. Slow The Flow will not discriminate against, bully or victimise any person or organisation on grounds of, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants or any other protected characteristics under the 2010 Equality Act or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

2. Principles

- i. To demonstrate our commitment to diversity and equality, working to eliminating all forms of discrimination whether covered in law or not.
- ii. To raise awareness, recognise and celebrate our successes, forming a platform for continuous learning and improvement.

- iii. To have a greater and deeper understanding of our communities, enabling them to influence services.
- iv. To have a proportionate number of outcomes and goals for the size of the organisation to ensure all stated outcomes are delivered without exception.
- v. To listen to Trustees and volunteers and community groups/individuals through a range of mechanisms to assess satisfaction levels to ensure parity of outcomes.
- vi. To have Trustees and volunteers that reflect the makeup of the communities we serve.
- vii. To work in inclusive ways in developing an organisational culture that proactively promotes diversity and equality.
- viii. To ensure the Trustees and volunteers are supported and trained in knowledge and skills to deliver our policy on diversity and equality.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- i. Anyone representing Slow the Flow, the Trustees, must abide by all policies and procedures of the organisation.
- ii. The Trustees' leadership role will ensure the policy is successful. Trustees will have professional, individual, and collective responsibility to implement the policy. Contractors, consultants, and partner organisations are required to demonstrate their commitment and action to share our policy objectives on diversity.

4. Implementation, Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

- i. Performance indicators will provide a formal measure of progress and will form part of Annual General Meeting reports.
- ii. The Trustees will monitor progress on this policy, providing a focus internally for Trustees and externally for communities we serve.
- iii. Annual reviews will build on previous performance. The overall impact of the policy will be evaluated at the end of the 3-year cycle to make further continuous improvements.
- iv. Given that only Trustees will be 'members' of Slow The Flow, the diversity data for the Trustees will be that reported on.

5. Procedure for Dealing with Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy, intended or accidental, is not acceptable. Infringements of this policy will be dealt with seriously as disciplinary matter under Slow the Flow normal disciplinary procedures and may involve either informal or formal action depending on the seriousness of the case.

6. Equality and Diversity

We aim to be an organisation that values, recognises, and responds to the diverse needs of Trustees and volunteers and those we serve. We adhere to the Equality Act 2010 and will not discriminate against any person or other organisation with reference to the protected characteristics.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Trustees will regularly review the operation of this policy.

Appendix 1

Slow the Flow is committed to equal opportunities. It is an integral part of our work and of our overall growth and development. Therefore, before any action is taken, it must be measured against this policy and the equal opportunities implications.

Trustees

- Steps should be taken to ensure a wide mix of people on the Trustees
- People from ethnic minority groups should be encouraged to stand
- People with disabilities should be encouraged to stand
- Meetings must always be held in rooms that are accessible to people with a wide range of different abilities
- Timing of meetings should not exclude certain groups of people from being able to participate
- Obvious gaps in our group should be filled, if possible, by co-option in compliance with the responsibilities as a Trustee of a CIO

Volunteers

Slow the Flow recognises that everyone has the right to be a volunteer but not necessarily the right to do every sort of voluntary work.

- Volunteers working directly for Slow The Flow should understand their role and know to whom they are responsible
- Volunteers should have the right to receive training
- They should not be expected to volunteer outside the hours they have agreed
- Volunteers should never be out of pocket because of their voluntary work and all agreed expenses should be refunded swiftly
- Volunteers must be protected by insurance

Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
27/5/2020	WG	Approved by Trustees
8/5/2021	WG	Reviewed – no material changes in the legislation found and next review 8/5/2022