



Equality, diversity and inclusion policy

Version Number:	Draft V0.01
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Date Approved:	13 June 2023
Date ratified at Board:	13 June 2023
Next Review Date:	13 June 2026

Document Change History:			
<i>Version number/name of procedural document this supersedes</i>	<i>Type of Change, i.e. review / legislation</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Details of change and approving group or Trustee lead</i>

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Abortion Talk is committed to creating an inclusive charity, where we benefit from a variety of perspectives and better reflect the needs of all people who seek and provide abortion care. In fighting abortion stigma, we will make sure that everyone - including our volunteers and staff, service users and the wider public - feels heard, valued and able to access the support they want and need. We are a trans inclusive organisation and use language that reflects the fact that cisgender women are not the only people who need access to free, safe, legal and local abortion care.

We do not tolerate discrimination on any grounds, including class, economic status, religious belief, nationality, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, pregnancy or maternity, marital status, parenthood, age and/or disability. We recognise that discrimination can be direct or indirect and does not require intent. We're here to support everyone affected by abortion stigma. We recognise that, to do this, we need to challenge oppressive practices and champion equality.

This policy applies to all Abortion Talk trustees, directors, contractors, staff and volunteers.

What we mean by equality, diversity and inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are not identical, but they are reliant on one other to tackle discrimination. We use the following definitions:

- **Equality:** ensuring people are not treated unfairly on the grounds of class, economic status, religious belief, nationality, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, pregnancy or maternity, marital status, parenthood, age and/or disability.
- **Diversity:** recognising and valuing the benefits of different perspectives, backgrounds and experiences.
- **Inclusion:** actively embracing people with diverse perspectives, backgrounds and experiences and creating an environment that enables us all to feel a sense of belonging, and where we can achieve together.

Why we have a policy

We have an ethical and legal responsibility to champion equality, diversity and inclusion. It is only through embracing equality and diversity and challenging oppression that we can truly achieve our goal of ending abortion stigma, while creating a compassionate and courageous charity. This policy reflects that we see equality, diversity and inclusion as an integral part of Abortion Talk. It sets out how we will treat all volunteers, employees, contractors, Talkline users, workshop attendees, and other stakeholders with dignity, fairness and respect. This is regardless of class, economic status, religious belief, nationality, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, pregnancy or maternity, marital status, parenthood, age and/or disability.

This policy's purpose is to set our our commitment to:

- Create a charity that is free from discrimination and that supports our trustees, directors, contractors, staff and volunteers to challenge prejudice if they encounter it.
- Treat all people, regardless of their background, with dignity and respect – this includes: our trustees, directors, contractors, staff and volunteers; those with whom we interact (e.g. Talkline users and workshop attendees); and other stakeholders.
- Comply with UK equalities legislation (such as the Equality Act 2010) and our other external obligations including: equality standards set by contracts, regulatory requirements, accreditations and good practice schemes.
- Uphold our inclusive organisational values.
- Make our trustees, directors, contractors, staff and volunteers aware of their responsibilities, and know how and where to seek support to actively uphold and champion equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Ensure that we attract and retain trustees, volunteers, contractors and staff from the widest possible diversity of backgrounds and experiences.
- Actively promote our Talkline and training to a wide range of diverse communities, to make sure we're able to support as many people as possible.

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- Ensure that we collect diversity-related data, so that we can be held accountable against this policy and any related action plans.

Our standards

- No unlawful discrimination shall occur in the support and management of our people, contractors or volunteers and delivery of our services, and all decisions shall be objective and fair with individual circumstances taken into account.
- We will create a working culture that values difference and is free from prohibited discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment. Any individual who experiences or witnesses discrimination or harassment is encouraged to report it through our complaints procedure. All complaints will be taken seriously, promptly and thoroughly investigated, and dealt with in a sensitive and effective manner. Further details are set out in our Comments and Complaints policy.
- Our Talkline and training will take a person-centred approach, and diversity considerations will be incorporated into processes and delivery to ensure that all our services are accessible to all; we prevent discrimination and we protect the dignity of our Talkline users and workshop attendees.
- We expect all our people will use appropriately inclusive language and behave in a way that will uphold the dignity of colleagues, service users, and stakeholders.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate our trustees, directors, staff, contractors, volunteers and service users. We will not use premises that don't meet our accessibility standards or cannot be adapted to do so.
- All of our written and digital communications will follow digital accessibility guidelines and communication accessibility standards, and be available in alternative formats on request.
- The portrayal of under-represented groups within our information and materials should be balanced, and not reinforce stereotypes.
- We will ensure that fundraising practices do not put pressure on, or take advantage of people in vulnerable circumstances.
- We will monitor the make-up of our Board of Trustees, staff, contractors, volunteers and workshop attendees regarding information such as class or economic status, age, sex, ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability (see Annex 1 for an example monitoring form). We will use this information to make sure that our people and service users reflect the community that we're here to support. Monitoring will also include assessing how this policy and related action plans are working in practice, reviewing them annually and taking action to address any issues.
- With any new and reviewed policies, programmes, decisions that will affect our people or stakeholders must also be assessed against our commitment to equality. This is to ensure that any negative impact on those with protected characteristics is mitigated wherever possible at all levels of the organisation and in all of our activities (see Annex 2 for an example Equalities Impact Assessment).

Responsibilities

The **Board of Trustees** are all responsible for championing equality, diversity and inclusion and ensuring that the policy is consistent with the fundamental principles and that resources, support and leadership is provided to ensure this policy can be meaningfully implemented. The **EDI trustee** is responsible for championing this policy on behalf of the Board of Trustees and ensuring compliance with policy and the effective development, implementation and monitoring of equality and diversity objectives and related action.

Our **staff, contractors and volunteers** are responsible for championing equality, diversity and inclusion, understanding how the policy relates to their role, and reporting cases of discrimination, harassment, and unfair treatment.



Appendix 1: equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring form

Abortion Talk wants to meet the aims and commitments set out in its equality policy. This includes not discriminating under the Equality Act 2010, and building an accurate picture of our trustees, volunteers, contractors and the people we work with.

We need your help and co-operation to enable it to do this, but filling in this form is voluntary. The information provided will be kept confidential and will be used for monitoring purposes.

If you have any questions about the form contact info@abortiontalk.com

Please return the completed form to info@abortiontalk.com.

Gender Male Female Non-binary Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use your own gender identity, please write in:

Is the gender you identify with the same as your gender registered at birth?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Age 16-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44 45-49 50-54 55-59 60-64 65+ Prefer not to say

Ethnicity

Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about the group to which you perceive you belong. Please tick the appropriate box.

Asian or Asian British

Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Chinese Prefer not to say

Any other Asian background, please write in:

Black, African, Caribbean or Black British

African Caribbean Prefer not to say

Any other Black, African or Caribbean background, please write in:

Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian Prefer not to say

Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background, please write in:

White

English Welsh Scottish Northern Irish Irish British Gypsy or Irish Traveller Prefer not to say

Any other White background, please write in:

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Other ethnic group

Arab Prefer not to say

Any other ethnic group, please write in:

Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health condition?

Yes No Prefer not to say

What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual Gay Lesbian Bisexual Asexual Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use your own identity, please write in:

What is your religion or belief?

No religion or belief Buddhist Christian Hindu Jewish Muslim Sikh Prefer not to say

If other religion or belief, please write in:

Do you have caring responsibilities? If yes, please tick all that apply

None

Primary carer of a child/children (under 18)

Primary carer of disabled child/children

Primary carer of disabled adult (18 and over)

Primary carer of older person

Secondary carer (another person carries out the main caring role)

Prefer not to say

Appendix 2: equalities impact assessment

An EqIA should be carried out whenever you are starting (and regularly reviewing) any major activity (e.g. a new programme or workshop).

Answer each of the questions and send the

Please return the completed form to info@abortiontalk.com.

A: What is the name and nature of the programme activity?

B: What is the reason for the equalities impact assessment?

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Please delete as appropriate:

- Proposed new programme/ activity
- Proposed change to an existing programme/ activity
- Undertaking a review of an existing programme/ activity
- Other (please state):

C: Who is the person responsible for the programme/activity?

D: Equality and diversity considerations

Describe the ways in which the groups below may be impacted by your activity. The impact may be negative or positive. There are some example questions below to aid your thinking (delete any that are not relevant):

- Age (e.g. are there ways older or younger people may find it difficult to engage in your project or process?)
- Disability (do you need to consider large print or easy read of any surveys /questionnaires?)
- Race (including ethnicity and nationality) (does your project take into account the needs of people from different groups, if not do you need to make any adjustments?)
- Religion or belief (do people from faith groups experience any specific disadvantage in relation to your research project)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation (is your language inclusive?)
- Trans and non-binary – is your language inclusive of trans and non-binary people?
- People experiencing multiple needs such as homelessness, mental health problems, being involved in the criminal justice system or substance misuse.
- Social deprivation- e.g. people who may be prohibited from attending your event due to the cost of travel
- Pregnancy and maternity

E: Evidencing impact

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. Is there any information available about the people who will be involved in or affected by your programme/ activity? (E.g. demographic info, scoping of need etc)
2. Are there any gaps in evidence/ insufficient information to properly assess the impact of your programme/ activity, and how will this be addressed? E.g. further research or working with a voluntary sector organisation?
3. Does your programme/ activity disproportionately affect any one group named above?
4. Will this programme/ activity lead to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, or less favourable treatment of people with protected characteristics?
5. Does your programme/ activity contribute to advancing equality of opportunity?[1]
6. Is there an opportunity for your programme/ activity to foster good relations between groups?
7. Do you need to make any reasonable adjustments to your programme/ activity to avoid discrimination or advance equality of opportunity? This may include adjusting interview questions so they are more accessible or making changes to the way events are managed.
8. How is the programme/ activity's communication made accessible to all groups?
9. How are you engaging people with a wide range of protected characteristics in the development, review and/or monitoring of the programme/ activity?

F: Outcome

Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development or review of the programme/ activity will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision. (Delete the options that do not apply):

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- Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the programme/ activity is/will be robust.
- Option 2: Adjust the programme/ activity – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.
- Option 3: Continue the programme/ activity despite the potential for adverse impact with mitigation in place
- Option 4: Stop the programme/ activity as there are adverse effects which cannot be prevented/mitigated.

G: Action and monitoring

Please specify the actions required to implement the findings of this assessment and how the programme/ activity's equality impact will be monitored in the future.

H: Date of next review

Date:

I: Assessment sign off

The EDI trustee should be the first person to review and sign-off on equalities impact assessments.