

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Updated: May 2023

Due for Review: May 2024

Inclusion, innovation and new voices have been at the very heart of Rural Media's work since its foundation thirty years ago. Being accessible, representative, and diversifying talent are core strategic aims, which are embedded in the ethos of the charity and led by its senior management team and board of trustees. Having been founded on equality, diversity and inclusion principles, our senior team, staff and trustees are determined over the long term to maintain and deepen the impact of these core principles.

All our policies and processes are driven by a commitment to create opportunity for disadvantaged communities, diverse talent, and to produce compelling content for diverse local, national and international audiences. This document outlines our guiding principles with regard to diversity and representation within and for Rural Media.

Diversity will continue to be a key consideration running throughout our artistic and organisational planning. All staff are required to take responsibility for furthering the aims outlined in this document within their areas of activity. We aim that our staff, trustees, participants, creative and cultural output encompass diversity in race, ethnicity, faith, disability, gender, class and economic disadvantage.

The Creative Case for Diversity

- Rural Media is outward looking, inclusive and development focused. We always seek to recruit, commission and support standout creative talent, drawn from the widest possible pool of those for whom the media might be a distant or inaccessible ambition.
- We test our decisions throughout creative and production processes to ask ourselves if we have made sufficient active choices and fulfilled every opportunity to be as inclusive, representative and open in selecting the talent with which we work.
- We regularly audit creative artists with whom we work and actively foster relationships with practitioners who can bring new perspectives and ways of working.
- A culture of learning and progression is supported by rigorous and constructive evaluation for all our major projects and creative programmes, together with an ongoing review process for our organizational and operational systems, which underpin our work.

In order to ensure we achieve our aspirations we have created an Equality Action Plan in consultation with staff, Board and key stakeholders, which will be reviewed regularly and shared with staff, trustees, freelance teams and volunteers. This is a live document, which is reviewed regularly and widely shared.

Our aim is to ensure that all employees, freelance workers, participants, volunteers and job applicants are given equal opportunities and that our organisation is representative of all sections of society.

Each member of the workforce* will be respected and valued and as such, we hope they will give their best as a result.

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all in our workforce. We will not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, or sex and sexual orientation.

We are against all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All employees, no matter whether they are part-time, full-time, or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. When selecting candidates for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit, it will be on the basis of their aptitude and ability.

All employees will be given help and encouragement to develop their full potential and utilise their unique talents as much as possible considering Rural Media's circumstances as a small charity with limited financial and other resources. In light of this though, it is even more critical that the skills and resources of our organisation are fully utilised. We are intent upon maximising the efficiency of our whole workforce.

Rural Media is committed to:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all team members and participants are recognised and valued.
- Creating a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for every employee and participant, including fully accessible offices and studios, and flexible working arrangements.
- Not tolerating any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and disciplining those that breach this policy.

- Ensuring that training, development and progression opportunities are available to all.
- Promoting equality in the workplace, which Rural Media believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- Encouraging anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns so we can apply corrective measures.
- Encouraging employees to treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Regularly reviewing all our employment practices and procedures so that fairness is maintained at all times.

Rural Media will inform all new employees and regularly remind existing employees that an equality and diversity policy is in operation and that they are obliged to comply with its requirements and promote fairness in the workplace.

We will also proactively promote this policy to funding agencies, corporate partners, our programme participants including charity beneficiaries and young people, job applicants and other stakeholders to the policy.

Rural Media's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is fully supported by our Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees and has been agreed with employee representatives.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that equality and diversity are continually promoted in the workplace.

Other key Rural Media policies <https://www.ruralmedia.co.uk/policies> complement and amplify our commitment to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

*includes employees, freelance workers, participants, volunteers and job applicants