

Heads Together Productions Limited
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY &
ACTION PLAN

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Section 1 - Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Heads Together is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities and the combating of inequalities as an employer and as a provider of services. We value the cultural diversity that exists in British society today and will endeavour to respond positively and without prejudice in all areas of our work.

As individuals and as an organisation, Heads Together will act positively and with due respect for the faith, race, age, cultural heritage, gender, disability and sexual orientation of all those that we come into contact with.

Heads Together uses the arts to inspire a creative vision in individuals and communities in order to improve potential and achievement. This recognises that individuals will not be prejudiced against because of their faith, race or cultural heritage.

As with all aspects of its equal opportunity policies Heads Together aims to initiate and respond to needs without regard to age, ethnicity, background, economic status, or any other perceived barrier to inclusion. Heads Together will ensure equality of treatment throughout the delivery of its services. It accepts good practice and all statutory responsibilities that may be placed upon it from time to time e.g. Equal Pay Act (1970), Sex Discrimination Act (1975), Race Relations Act (1976) and Amendment (2001), Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the new legislation with regard to age discrimination (01 October 2006)

The Board of Directors, has the responsibility to ensure the implementation, promotion and monitoring of this policy.

Section 2 - Equality and Diversity Action Plan

Heads Together's programme of work best illustrates how our policies are delivered into action plans.

The best way to illustrate how Heads Together is translating policies into action plans is through presenting a summary of Heads Together's Artistic Activity Programme (**See Appendix 1**).

Our programmes of work are structured in such a way that Heads Together and its partner organisations develop creative programmes and audience participation that not only strive to explore diversity but also develop long-term relationships with diverse audiences who normally do not engage with the arts.

Heads Together's Community Radio programme of work, as outlined in **Appendix 2**, and related activity in East Leeds illustrates closely equality and diversity delivered in action plans.

Heads Together's Artistic Activity Programme until 2015 focuses on three main programmes of work:

- **ELFM – East Leeds FM internet community radio station**
- **Two Valleys Radio – based in Kirklees**
- **All In The Mind – based in psychiatric hospitals in Bradford**

Section 3 – Monitoring the Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan

Heads Together is a registered company limited by guarantee with a Board of Directors. It is also a regularly funded organisation of the Arts Council. This means that there is already a requirement for compliance with the Race Relations Act, (1976 and amended in 2001) the DDA (1995) Equal Pay Act (1970) and The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006. Heads Together undertakes to monitor its Governance and Employment structures as well as its Cultural Programmes, in relation to equality and diversity on an annual basis.

Internal monitoring:

- Ensuring that the Heads Together offices are in compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act reviewed by the Board annually through an Annual Report
- Ensuring that Heads Together's Artistic Activity Plan actively delivers against its Equality and Diversity Policy Statement through the external monitoring of the Artistic Activity Plan as laid out below

External monitoring of the Artistic Activity Plan

- Heads Together only works in partnership with organisations who have and actively implement an Equal Opportunities Policy. As a result, all of the partnership activity is subject to equal opportunities monitoring. Specific programmes of work, such as All In The Mind, will seek to measure to what degree these projects have succeeded in removing physical, intellectual and emotional responses to diversity.

Heads Together Board Profile

	Members		Disabled Members		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
White	3	4	1	1	7
Asian or British Asian					
Black or British Black					
Chinese					
Mixed Heritage					
Any other ethnic group					
Total	3	4	1	1	7

* Categories as drawn up by the Arts Council

Heads Together Staff Profile

	Managers		Other staff		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
White	1	1	3	1	6
Asian or British Asian					
Black or British Black					
Chinese					
Mixed Heritage					
Any other ethnic group					
Total	1	1	3	1	6

* Categories as drawn up by the Arts Council

Section 4 - Organisational and Operational Structures

Governance

The Board of Directors, has the responsibility to ensure the implementation, promotion and monitoring of this policy. The Development Director has ultimate responsibility for implementation of this policy

The policy applies to everybody connected to Heads Together. They should be aware of the policy and its implications for their work. The policy will be drawn to the attention of all new employees and a copy of the Equal Opportunities Statement and Race Equality Strategy will be included in the Staff Handbook. A master copy of this policy will be kept in an easily accessible location in the Heads Together office.

Heads Together expects all employees to play an active role in the implementation of this policy, and regards breaches of the policy as a disciplinary offence.

The policy will be reviewed regularly to assess its effectiveness and any need for amendment to reflect new legislation/good practice issues.

The Board have their responsibility of monitoring and implementing this policy

(See Appendix 3 for a copy of the Memorandum and Articles).

Human Resources Policies

Heads Together and its staff are required to operate within a set of policies and procedures that are set out in this document. They address the following areas of its operations:

Employment

Heads Together strives to be an equal opportunities employer in recruitment and selection, induction, progress, training, conditions of service and personnel procedures.

Heads Together aims to maintain a team of staff capable of effectively and efficiently carrying out the work of the company and to create for them a setting for personal fulfilment, growth and progress.

Heads Together will ensure that no member of staff receives less favourable treatment than any other on grounds of race, cultural heritage or background, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, education or income.

Heads Together will ensure that all employees and trainees will not be discriminated against on grounds of age in any employment, training and retirement decisions taken and will receive equal rights relating to any training and promotion.

In parallel with the above Heads Together accepts all statutory responsibilities that may be placed upon it as a result of developments in legislation.

Recruitment & Selection

It is Heads Together's policy to follow the best current practices of local authorities and other responsible bodies, adapted, where necessary to reflect Heads Together's size.

Job descriptions and person specifications for each post in the organisation will not include anything which may discriminate by age. This will include a full statement of the job content, the skills, experience and personal attributes required to carry out tasks effectively.

Future vacancies within the organisation will be brought to the attention of serving employees, but will normally also be advertised publicly unless there are exceptional reasons for promoting an existing employee without public advertisement.

Information related to the selection and recruitment process will inform potential employees of the organisation's commitment to equal opportunities in order that the applicant understands the job responsibilities and can make a judgement about their own suitability.

All Heads Together job application forms will contain the phrase "*Heads Together is an Equal Opportunity Employer*".

Literature relating to recruitment and selection and/or promotion will not contain or imply preference to any one group of applicants unless genuine occupational qualifications have been agreed with the Directors. All literature will be aimed at as wide a group of suitably qualified and experienced people as possible.

Information provided or obtained about individuals during the course of selection and recruitment will be limited to what is relevant to the post and will be treated as confidential.

(See Appendix 4 for copies of templates of a Job Description, Personnel Specification, Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form, Contract of Employment and Appraisal Form).

Probationary Periods

A probationary period of six months (or as otherwise stated in the contract of employment) will be served by all new employees.

Around half way through the probationary period a progress meeting will be held with the Creative Director to discuss progress made and any problems experienced in fulfilling duties and responsibilities. Any formal concerns will be expressed by the Creative Director and the probationary period may be extended. Additional induction and training support may be identified and action taken as appropriate.

If the probationary period is extended clear targets for performance will be agreed with the employee and the Board. Any further induction needs will be identified and action taken. Performance will then be regularly monitored. One month before the end of the extended period the Creative Director will inform the member of staff whether the probationary period has been successfully completed. The decision and any course of action which results from it will be confirmed in writing by the Creative Director.

Heads Together will ensure that organisations with which it enters into partnership have appropriate equal opportunity policies in place and can demonstrate evidence of this.

All perceived cases of discrimination by staff or individuals or organisations contracted by the company must be reported immediately to the Chief Executive or Chair of the Board of the partner organisation as appropriate.

All staff will make every effort to ensure that Heads Together continues to develop equality of opportunity through its policies, practices and services.

All staff must act with fairness and justice in their treatment of others. Discrimination, either direct or indirect, harassment and victimisation of any sort will be dealt with by the Creative Director in the first instance, and then the Chair of the Board, in accordance with Heads Together's disciplinary procedure.

All staff will undergo appropriate training in equal opportunities practice and implementation.

Conditions of Service

Heads Together aims to follow appropriate, good current employment practice. Conditions of service have due regard to local authority agreements and then made particular to the company.

These conditions will be reviewed, normally annually, at the annual 'Away Days'.

All new staff will be fully informed of their conditions of service and given copies of all contracts and agreements in force.

Induction

All members of staff will be given a comprehensive introduction to their post and its responsibilities and to the work of Heads Together.

It is in the interests of Heads Together to ensure that comprehensive support is given to new members of staff to ensure they become committed to the company and become effective and efficient in their work as quickly as possible.

It is recognised that each person joining the staff comes with different backgrounds and experience and that there are varying requirements according to the post. Consideration of this will be taken into account in planning the induction process.

New members of staff will follow a programme of induction providing them with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the organisation's policies and practices related to equal opportunities and to their own areas of work. If appropriate this programme will be supported by a nominated member of staff and monitored by the Creative Director

The Development Director will be responsible for devising, planning and implementing induction programmes. The new member of staff will be given a copy of the induction programme on their arrival.

The various meetings and visits associated with induction will normally take place within the first and second months of employment.

Training and Development

It is Heads Together's policy to be committed to the continuing professional development of all its employees regardless of age, ethnicity, background, economic status, or any other perceived barrier to inclusion, in order to meet the present and future objectives of the organisation.

Employees will be made aware of their responsibilities under Heads Together's Diversity and Equality Policy and Heads Together's determination to follow good practice in this area.

No probationary period should be completed without due regard to this induction process.

Equality and diversity awareness and training for staff members will be developed after a review of training needs.

Reviews, Appraisals and Progress Monitoring

Employees have the right to meet with the Creative Director to discuss work and their own performance relating to their job descriptions, and agreed objectives and targets.

Reviews of work will be carried out quarterly in an formal context with the Creative Director. Issues relating to current and planned areas of work may be raised by either person.

Appraisals are conducted on a six monthly basis. Appraisals will consider performance related to agreed objectives and targets. Records of the discussion will be prepared by the Creative Director, discussed and amended as necessary and placed on personal files.

Personnel Issues

Heads Together has a number of routes through which personnel issues will be discussed as appropriate:

- Through the Creative Director
- Through the Development Director
- Through the Board of Directors
- Through the employee's trade union

All issues relating to discrimination, direct or indirect, harassment or victimisation or other grievance, must be reported to the Creative Director in the first instance, then passed to the Board of Directors if no solution can be found.

Heads Together will endeavour, through its policies and practices as an employer, to create a setting that is both positively challenging and fulfilling for its employees, and fully in accordance with its commitment to equal opportunities.

Heads Together will avoid redundancies wherever possible, including by means of retraining, redeployment, transfer, or any other measures appropriate to the particular situation.

Employment Procedure:

The following procedures will be used for recruitment and selection:

External advertisement:

This procedure, which will be the usual procedure, applies where the Creative Director, in consultation with the full staff team and Board of Directors, considers that both internal and external advertising is most likely to secure the best candidate for a post. Due regard will be paid to Heads Together's equal opportunities obligations and policies under current legislation and its own policies.

Internal Advertisement:

This exceptional procedure applies where the staff team and Board considers that there is more than one member of staff who could be appointed to a vacant post. In order to avoid raising false external expectations by advertising the vacancy, the Directors may decide to advertise the vacancy internally. Due regard will be paid to Heads Together's equal opportunities obligations and policies under current legislation and its own policies.

Promotion:

This procedure applies where the Directors consider that an existing member of staff is an ideal candidate for a vacant post. In order to avoid raising false external expectations by advertising the vacancy, the Board may decide to consider the promotion of the internal candidate to the vacant post. Due regard will be paid to Heads Together's equal opportunities obligations and policies under current legislation and its own policies.

The process for each procedure is as follows:

- The Board decide which appointment procedure is appropriate for the vacancy and arranges a timetable for the appointment procedure
- The outcome of the interview procedure will be notified to all staff and candidates as soon as possible

Pre-Interview Sessions:

Pre interview sessions will not be held for all appointments but may be arranged if the Board consider them appropriate to:

- Assist the candidates in understanding the nature of the post and how it relates to the work of Heads Together
- Give an opportunity for relevant members of staff to meet the short-listed candidates

If a pre-interview session takes place there will be an opportunity for members of staff to comment to the interview panel following the formal interview. The purpose of such a process is for staff to jointly assess particular skills which can be brought to the attention of the interview panel.

Candidates must be informed if a pre-interview session is deemed to be part of the formal interview process.

Formal Interview:

The panel will not normally consist of more than three people. Care will be taken to ensure balanced representation and expertise.

Heads Together will ensure that as many members of the interview panel as possible have undergone training in equal opportunities.

Applicants for appointment will be required to disclose any relationship to staff or members of the Board.

A statement of the main particulars of service with Heads Together will be issued within 13 weeks of appointment in accordance with the Contracts of Employment Act, 1972.

If, subsequent to obtaining an appointment with Heads Together, a member of staff is found to have misrepresented or withheld information, except as excluded by law, then the member of staff shall be liable to dismissal.

The conditions and allowances for new members of staff joining Heads Together will normally be stated in the letter of appointment and the contract of employment.

This policy will be reviewed from time to time by the Directors and the Board.