



Diversifying Your Volunteer Base

1. Introduction

The world is a full of diverse people and good volunteering welcomes everyone. All organisations need to treat everyone equally and be respectful and follow the 2010 Equality Act. This act lists protected characteristics or the types of discrimination which must be avoided:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

This may be a challenge if someone's particular needs are not understood or there is a lack confidence in how to approach people. These are some tips:

1. Before any meetings ask if people need any additional support
2. Add a message onto the end of emails asking people to let you know if there are any reasonable adjustments that can be made.
3. Make sure your promotional material is representative of all people.
4. Give people choice to promote independence
5. Don't be afraid to ask the person questions, but be respectful and kind
6. Be a good ally

2. How to be a good ally

It can be difficult to fully be yourself at work, at home, or in your local communities. That's why we all need allies. Being a good ally is about being an active friend or support to someone else. To live in a world where all people are accepted without exception, we all need to be part of the solution. There are lots of opportunities to change the hearts and minds of people around us.

Educate and empower yourself

Do some research, read up online and learn. Confront your own assumptions, prejudices, and biases.

Listen

As allies to each other, we have to be able to listen, ask how someone is doing and be aware that other people's lives and experiences will be completely different to our own, especially in terms of discrimination and prejudice. Be respectful of each other and enjoy learning about all the differences and diversity in the communities around us.

How to challenge

When you hear people making negative comments or using hurtful or abusive language towards others, challenge it, if safe to do so. If it's online, report it. You might not always have all the answers or know exactly what to say and that's OK. Here are some tips to think about challenging:

- Make sure you stay safe and don't put yourself in danger
- Check the person is OK
- Encourage them to report it
- Keep calm and explain why the language is wrong
- Try saying something like, *Stop, this is wrong* and explain why.

There is a difference between someone saying the wrong thing and using the wrong language because they do not understand or have never been educated about the correct words to use, and someone harassing or bullying an individual in a discriminatory way.

Disability

The legal definition of disability is:

A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Equality versus Equity

Treating everyone the same does not mean that they have the same experiences or that they can reach the same goals. Choice is independence, for example, giving

people choice over their how they get to where they need to be, what they use to get there and even where they want to go is important.

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY



In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.



In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.



In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

3. Glossary of terms

Accessible - If a place or building is accessible to people, it is easy for them to reach it or get into it. If an object is accessible, it is easy to reach

BAME or BME – Black and Minority Ethnic

Equality - the same status, rights, and responsibilities for all the members of a society, group, or family

Equity - being fair and reasonable in a way that gives equal treatment to everyone

Discrimination - the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex

Diversity - the inclusion of people of different races, genders, religions, etc. in a group

Harassment - behaviour which is intended to trouble or annoy someone, for example repeated attacks on them or attempts to cause them problems.

Inclusion - the act of making a person or thing part of a group or collection

Inclusivity - the fact or policy of not excluding members or participants on the grounds of gender, race, class, sexuality, disability, etc

Prejudice - an unreasonable dislike of a particular group of people or things, or a preference for one group of people or things over another

Gender, identity and sexuality

Gender - Often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, gender is largely culturally determined and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth

Non binary – Refers to someone who does not identify as exclusively male or female

Pronouns

Gender-neutral pronouns are defined by [the LGBT Resource Centre](#) as providing an identity for a singular person who does not identify as he/him or she/her.

The word "they" is used as a gender-neutral singular pronoun.

It is important to ask how someone likes to be referred to, for example She/Her, as not everyone identifies with He/Him She/Her. Some people prefer to use gender-neutral pronouns They/Them.

Some people put pronouns on your workplace signature or name badge, this invites those that use They/Them to know that they can introduce the use of their preferred pronouns in their volunteer placement.

He/Him She/Her They/Theirs

The LGBTQ+ Alphabet LGBTQIADP

Lesbian - a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women

Gay - a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality, some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian

Bisexual - an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender

Trans - Term used to describe a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with their birth sex. The opposite of this is cisgender which refers to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

Queer - used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community who have embraced it.

Questioning - process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity

Intersex - used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female. Intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary.

Asexual – a person without sexual feelings or associations. Asexual individuals may still experience attraction but this attraction doesn't need to be realised.

Demi sexual - a person who does not experience sexual attraction unless they form a strong emotional connection with someone.

Pan sexual - a person whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex or gender

References

<https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights>

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/volunteers/recruiting/equality-and-diversity>

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy/research/time-well-spent>

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

<https://lgbt.foundation/>

<https://www.mypronouns.org/>

<http://www.transstudent.org/gender>

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/>

<https://www.scope.org.uk/>

<http://inclusioninthearts.org/faqs/the-language-of-disability-dos-and-donts/>

<https://www.iwill.org.uk/>

<https://www.nyy.org.uk/>

Unit A | Tower House | Askham Fields Lane | Askham Bryan | York | YO23 3FS
01904 704177 | info@communityfirstyorkshire.org.uk | www.communityfirstyorkshire.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 515538 | Company No: 1839458 | VAT No: 500834776



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