Rona Sailing Project Equality and Diversity Procedure

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This procedure explains what you need to do to apply our equality and diversity policy.

This procedure is for volunteers, trainee crew, trustees and staff.

All our volunteers and trustees need to follow our volunteer code of conduct and trainee crew the expectations laid out in the trainee handbook. Staff need to follow terms and conditions as set out in contracts on employment.

We should all provide a warm, friendly and inclusive environment for everyone you meet at the Rona Sailing Project. This means making all staff, trainees, trustees and volunteers feel welcome and free to be themselves.

Recognising differences, making changes and adjustments so the Rona Sailing Project is a welcoming and inclusive place for everyone is an important part of our equality and diversity policy. This is called equity. You won't always know that someone could benefit from being treated differently but you can create an environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their needs with you when the time is right for them.

To make the Rona Sailing Project a more inclusive space, we should all be open to learning, researching, listening and reflecting, even if you already feel well-informed. Remember that we all have different lived experiences and perspectives. Some information we come across may challenge our existing views but it's our responsibility to learn and grow, respect others' rights to individuality so we can have open and honest conversations.

It's also your responsibility to report any inappropriate behaviour which may breach our policy.

We must support volunteers, trainee crew, trustees, staff and parents/carers to raise concerns and challenge discrimination, whatever form it takes.

If you're not sure what someone's needs are, or what barriers they might be facing, it's always better to ask instead of assuming. Some examples of treating people differently to promote equity include:

- Making reasonable adjustments for someone with a health condition or disability so they can take part in sail training activities. An adjustment plan could be used so everyone is clear on challenges, required adjustment and expectations.
- Recognising that some trainee crew may behave in ways that are challenging for lots of reasons, like finding it difficult to communicate their needs. Simple changes, like using a communication plan or using more simple language can help members who may need extra support.
- Providing alternative options for meals for people with dietary requirements.
- Considering all faiths, practices and celebrations when we're planning voyages and, where practical, making changes so no one is excluded because of their religious background. For example, you could offer a space for prayer or meditation on a voyage or alter mealtimes if sailing during Ramadan.
- Where possible supporting trans crew or afterguard with sleeping arrangements on the vessels.
- Applying for the grants and bursaries which can be used to support trainee crew to attend sail training voyages or Trinity House grants to support afterguard training.

Being inclusive is something that can take time and practice. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to inclusion.

What happens if this policy is breached?

We don’t expect our staff, trustees or volunteers to be experts on different types of discrimination and we know you might not always be certain if someone’s behaviour has breached this policy.

If you’ve witnessed or experienced any discrimination or have any concerns about a trainee crew member or volunteer and cannot resolve the issue locally you must speak with the designated safeguarding lead, Project Director or one of the Trustees. They will provide support so that an informal resolution can be reached. If this isn’t appropriate, a formal investigation may be needed.

No incident is too minor to report to our safeguarding lead or Project Director. Even something that seems small can have a negative impact on the people involved. We’ll support anyone who raises a concern and anyone who promotes equality or challenges discrimination won’t be treated negatively.

We take every breach of our equality and diversity policy seriously, particularly as some breaches may break the law.

If a staff member’s behaviour breaches our equality and diversity policy, we’ll take this seriously and will manage this appropriately.

The most important thing is to never ignore any inappropriate behaviour. If you notice inappropriate behaviour from anyone involved within the Rona Sailing Project, you have a responsibility to act. This is the case no matter what policy they may be breaching.