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EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

The Otakar Kraus Music Trust (OKMT) positively welcomes and aims to support the growing diversity of the community we serve and the people we employ. Our diversity is our strength, and we are committed to providing services to our many different communities, by a workforce that reflects the diversity of society.

We also acknowledge that whilst we live in an unequal society in which many people face discrimination, The Otakar Kraus Music Trust believes that equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination are fundamental human rights. We actively oppose all forms of discrimination and are committed to the principle that no person shall face discrimination by being treated unfairly or being denied access to the Music Therapy services OKMT supplies or its employment opportunities.

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all our users and all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
 - age
 - disability (covering sensory and physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health status).
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline
 - dismissal
 - redundancy
 - leave for parents

- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Objectives

1. To have a workforce that represents and responds to the diversity of our clients and today's society.
2. Create a working environment free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
3. Ensure that all employees, freelance staff and volunteers are aware of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and provide any necessary ongoing training to enable them to meet their responsibilities under it.
4. All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, service users and the public.
5. We commit to take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, service users or the public in the course of the organisation's work activities.
6. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

7. Ensure that all applicants are treated fairly during recruitment processes and in accordance with legislation.

Recruitment and Selection

1. We commit to make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010).
2. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

3. We will:
 - Advertise all posts so that the widest possible pool of applicants is reached.
 - Ensure procedures and decisions are backed up with documentation based on job requirements.
 - Ensure that interviews and other selection methods are conducted fairly and consistently and that outcomes are recorded.
 - When assessing the suitability of an employee or freelance contractor for a particular post, no decision should be taken which cannot be objectively justified. All applicants will be treated equally.

Training and Development

1. Everyone must have access to learning and development opportunities, based on individual and organisational need.
2. Ensure all documentation is complete in regard to participation in learning activities.

Monitoring

1. We will monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
2. Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

When things go wrong

1. The Director, employees and freelance contractors need to be aware of the correct procedure for handling complaints associated with discrimination or harassment (as written in the staff agreements). In addition, there is a need to handle matters of this nature, which are frequently very sensitive, confidential, and sometimes difficult to substantiate.
2. It is also most important that all concerned appreciate the need to act quickly to deal with allegations of discrimination, harassment or bullying.
3. All cases of harassment will be monitored.
4. No colleague will be penalised for bringing a complaint of either unfair treatment or harassment.
5. If a complaint against an individual is proven, that person will be subject to disciplinary action.
6. Unfounded complaints, which are not upheld but made in good faith, will not be subject to disciplinary action or treated less favourably than others.

Harassment

- Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment having regard to all the circumstances and the perception of the victim.
- The Otakar Kraus Music Trust will take all reasonable steps to ensure that employees are protected against this. It is unlawful and a disciplinary offence to harass an employee or freelance worker.

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

OKMT's Grievance Policy is available to staff and freelance workers in their online policy folders. Our Disciplinary Policy and Procedure is available to staff. Use of the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Updated June 2025

To be Reviewed Annually