



The Tarka Country Trust - Equal Opportunity Policy

The Tarka Country Trust is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst its trustees, volunteers, applicants and employees.

It should be noted that the Tarka Country Trust does not habitually employ any personnel directly. The trustees aim is that each trustee, employee volunteer or applicant feels respected and is valued based upon their skills, performance and commitment to their part of the project.

In the event that Tarka Country Trust does employ personnel the trust is committed to treating all employees fairly and with respect without regard to physical or mental disability or any other characteristic, which contributes to the individual's character, no employee will be treated less favourably due to their association with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (applies only to someone who actually personally has this characteristic)
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (including ethnic origin, colour, citizenship, nationality, and national origin)
- Religion or Belief
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation

The Trust is also conscious to ensure that where an employee has a combination of two protected characteristics this does not result in the employee receiving less favourable treatment compared to someone who does not share either of those characteristics.

It has always been the Trust's desire for trustees, volunteers, employees and applicants to be judged solely on merit.

Third Party Harassment

The Trust values all peoples equally and as such we take very seriously the harassment of any employees, applicants or volunteers by a third party during the course of employment or volunteer project activities. We are committed to taking such steps as is reasonably practicable to prevent third party harassment from occurring.



Fair Treatment

All trustees, employees, volunteers and applicants, whether full-time, part-time or temporary, are entitled to be treated fairly and with respect. This policy applies to all employment decisions, including those in connection with:

- Recruitment, selection, promotion and advertisement of jobs
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Training, career development and progression
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Relationships between members of staff.

Positive Action

The Trust may elect to utilise positive action where permitted by legislation. This may be general positive action, or it may be positive action in the area of the Trust's interactions with volunteers and applicants. The trust regard positive action as action an employer takes to achieve greater equality in its workforce or those it interacts with.

General Positive Action

General positive action may be taken to provide appropriate conditions and facilities to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups or to enable or encourage participation. It may include such action as adapting the volunteer working environment for disabled employees or mentoring or for example, providing free English lessons to non-English speaking volunteers.

General positive action may be taken where:

- The Trust reasonably thinks that where persons share a protected characteristic those persons suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic; or
- They have needs that are different from the needs of those that do not share that characteristic; or
- Where there is disproportionately low participation in an activity by persons who share a protected characteristic.

Positive Action in recruitment and promotion

Positive action is permitted/encouraged in certain circumstances to allow the Trust to recruit/promote appropriately qualified people, to cater for the special needs of particular groups. The Trust does not have a policy of treating those with a particular protected characteristic more favourably than those without it and each case will be considered on its own merits.



Positive action may be taken in the areas of recruitment and promotion where:

- The Trust reasonably thinks that persons who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected with this; or
- Where participation in a volunteer activity by persons who share a protected characteristic is disproportionately low.
- The Trust will only elect to utilise positive action where it is deemed appropriate as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Any action taken will be in accordance with legislation.

Enquiries about Disability and Health during Recruitment

As an equal opportunity's employer Tarka Country Trust will not ask about the health of an applicant whether volunteer or employee (including whether they are disabled) prior to either offering work to the applicant or prior to including the applicant in volunteer activities unless an exemption applies.

The only circumstances in which the Trust may make pre-employment health enquiries are:

- To establish whether the Organisation has a duty to make a reasonable adjustment in respect of an interview/assessment process.
- To establish whether the applicant will be able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned.
- Monitoring diversity of applicants
- Positive action in employment for disabled people
- Where having a particular disability is a requirement of the role
- National security vetting.
- Promotion of Equal Opportunities and Observance of the Policy

Each trustee, volunteer applicant or employee has an obligation to promote an equal opportunity environment within the trust's activities an employee, would also have a duty to observe and apply this policy at all times.

In particular any employee must not:

- Discriminate against or harass colleagues, volunteers, other employees or applicants.
- Induce, or attempt to induce, other employees to practise unlawful discrimination.
- Victimise individuals who have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or provided information about such discrimination.
- Violation of this policy is a serious offence and could result in disciplinary action and/or summary dismissal.

The designated trustee will, with the assistance and co-operation of the chair of trustees, take steps to ensure compliance with this policy at all times. This will include regular reviews of equality issues, monitoring activities and complaints, keep records of job applicants including sex, race and religion. Any employee of the Organisation will receive training on the correct operation of this policy.



Complaint Procedure:

If an employee or volunteer feel that they have been treated in a manner that is not in accordance with this policy, they should initially raise the matter in writing with the designated trustee. Tarka Country Trust takes such matters seriously and aims to resolve any complaints in accordance with its grievance procedure. If there is a good reason as to why an employee or volunteer are unable to raise this matter initially with the designated trustee, then they should address the matter directly to the chair of trustees.

Policy Review

Review Date	Reviewed by	Comments
14/09/20	Trustees	Policy reviewed and updated as necessary

Signed by: R Prowse Chair of Trustees