

## **SAVortex: Equal opportunities policy and statement of intent**

It is the policy of SAVortex Limited to treat all employees and job applicants fairly and equally regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disability or union membership status.

The organisation is mindful of its responsibilities to promote equality of opportunity and to avoid discrimination at all times.

The following statement outlines our policy and briefly explains how we are planning to achieve equality of opportunity within our organisation. This document should be read in conjunction with the diversity strategy.

### **The organisation's Policy statement is:**

1. To ensure that no person applying for a job or contractual work is treated less favourably than another because of their race, age, colour, ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability or sexual orientation.
2. To work towards staffing levels and management committee representation which, reflects the ethnic composition of the local population and the organisation's client group.
3. To abide by the Race, Disability and Gender Equality legislation and to implement the provisions of the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
4. To make clients, staff and Management Committee members fully aware of the above provisions and to make the Code of Practice available for inspection.
5. To review practices and policies to ensure that discrimination does not exist.

The organisation's Management Committee is responsible for monitoring work in this area and for establishing policy. Responsibility for implementing the policy in practical terms rests with the board and nominated manager.

### **Our action plan aims to:**

Take appropriate measures to overcome communication difficulties and to ensure that information about SAVortex Ltd. is available to the community as a whole.

Identify the needs of ethnic minority groups in relation to the work of SAVortex Ltd and to reflect these requirements in our development strategy. Maintain ethnic monitoring records and establish targets against which performance will be monitored.

Provide guidance and training to staff and members on equal opportunities issues.

Pursue appropriate employment section policies in line with the Code of Practice in Employment.

Review policies and procedures to ensure that discrimination is eliminated.

### **To implement this policy the organisation will:**

Regularly examine and review all existing procedures policies and criteria and change them where

they are found to be discriminatory.

Ensure that the policy is known to all staff members and take appropriate action in accordance with agreed procedures should a staff member be found to have infringed it.

Challenge all forms of discrimination and harassment where they occur and promote and foster an environment which makes this possible.

Review this policy on an ongoing basis to ensure its effectiveness within the organisation.

**The following behaviour will be considered inappropriate and unacceptable:**

Acting in an aggressive, angry or abusive manner against an individual or group solely because they are black, a woman, a man, a member of an ethnic or national minority, a lesbian woman or a gay man, bisexual or transgender, have a disability, a particular political or religious belief or because of age or class. Racist, sexist or otherwise insulting remarks, jokes, name-calling or innuendo.

Bringing onto the premises insignia, publications or pamphlets that in any way support racial or sexual discrimination, or seeking to promote a negative stereotyped image of an individual or group.

**If an incident of harassment or discrimination takes places within SAVortex Ltd:**

Support and counselling will be offered immediately for the victim. Where the perpetrator is a client or visitor to SAVortex Ltd, a member of staff will discuss the incident with the perpetrator, make available a copy of this document and either suspend them from the use of SAVortex Ltd's premises and services or negotiate a contract for further use of these within the terms of this policy. If suspension from the service occurs, the appropriate authorities or concerned professionals will be notified in writing.

Where the perpetrator is working on behalf of SAVortex Ltd – either as a member of staff, sessional worker or volunteer – infringement of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with THE SAVortex Ltd's disciplinary procedure (see document on disciplinary procedures).

In managing any such incident, staff will bear in mind at all times the needs and concerns of all the children and clients present, whether directly affected or not.

**Service Provision**

SAVortex Ltd will not operate services which discriminate against an individual or group solely because they are black, a woman, a man, a member of an ethnic or national minority, a lesbian woman or a gay man, bisexual or transgender, have a disability, a particular political or religious belief or because of age or class.

**Language Policy**

SAVortex Ltd's services must be available to all – regardless of the linguistic requirements of service users. This means endeavouring to recruit staff that are able to work in the languages of substantial service user communities and, where this is not possible, working with interpreters.

Materials relating to publicity, discussion or information should be made available in such a way that the contents are available to non-English-speaking communities and to those who are visually or hearing impaired. Staff are required to ensure that this policy is carried out to the maximum possible extent, sympathetically and imaginatively, bearing in mind the times and resources that are available.

## **Contracts Compliance**

SAVortex Ltd will endeavour to ensure that contracts of all forms are within the spirit of this anti-discriminatory practice policy. This will entail ensuring that anyone entering into any partnership agreement with us is also operating an equal opportunities policy concordant with ours. In cases where such policies are not upheld by our partners SAVortex Ltd may terminate the partnership.

## **Staffing**

SAVortex Ltd is committed to being an equal opportunities employer.

SAVortex Ltd is committed to a recruitment process that actively encourages people from all communities to apply for posts.

### **Advertising for posts will:**

State the basic minimum requirements both in terms of qualifications and experience.

Indicate that the organisation will treat all applications equally.

Be placed where it is felt that the maximum numbers of interested people will be reached.

Be accessible and welcoming to those from minority groups – this may include placing advertisements in specific publications / places.

## **Job descriptions**

All the organisation's job descriptions will incorporate the following clause:

*'Workers will be expected to evaluate their work to ensure that it is in keeping with our commitment to anti-discriminatory practice and contact their line manager or another member of staff if they have any cause for concern'*

## **Applications, short listing and interview procedures**

SAVortex Ltd will value all relevant experience and skills including those which are non-traditional or non-academic.

Where possible, SAVortex Ltd's short listing and interview panels will include a broad mix of people.

SAVortex Ltd may invite an external consultant to advise on recruitment issues and/or sit on an interview panel.

SAVortex Ltd will conduct an equal opportunities interview – asking all interviewees the same questions and scoring their responses against pre-arranged criteria.

SAVortex Ltd will appoint the person who has demonstrated that they are the best candidate for the job.

## **Monitoring**

SAVortex Ltd will regularly monitor its recruitment procedures to ensure equality of opportunity. For each recruitment, the organisation will:

- Record where adverts are placed
- Issue all applicants with equal opportunities monitoring forms which state that SAVortex Ltd is committed to offering equal employment opportunities. SAVortex Ltd N will ask all candidates

to complete this form. The information on the form will be used solely to review SAVortex Ltd's advertising and recruitment processes. It will be made clear that SAVortex Ltd will separate this form from the rest of the job application upon receipt.

- Only use the monitoring forms as described above
- Keep records of the returned monitoring forms
- Record who sits on the interview panel

### **Staff training and development**

All staff need training to help them to develop their full potential and to equip them with the necessary skills to do their jobs. SAVortex Ltd will:

- Discuss training and development in every line management session
- Allocate the training budget in a fair and transparent way
- Record all training received and review this on an annual basis to ensure equality of opportunity
- Encourage all staff to share the skills and experiences they have with other members of staff, through both formal and informal training

This organisation recognises that the commitment we make to being an equal opportunity employer does not stop at the appointment of a worker. These commitments should follow through the entire relationship between the employer and employee; they should relate to the way that the employment comes about, the position of the employee in relation to the management, colleagues, to service users and the job itself.

### **Volunteers**

All volunteers will be recruited and trained within the spirit of this equal opportunities policy. SAVortex Ltd recognises and values the experiences of people from all communities within SAVortex Ltd's area of operation. This includes a commitment to encouraging the active involvement of those who have been discriminated against and traditionally excluded from positions of power and influence. All volunteers are required to abide by this equal opportunities policy.

### **Representation**

SAVortex Ltd will ensure that the organisation's Management Committee, sub-committees and working parties recognise the experience of the whole community within the project's area of operation. SAVortex Ltd is committed to encouraging the active involvement at all levels of the organisation of those who are under-represented and/or who have been discriminated against through their exclusion from positions of power and influence. SAVortex Ltd will make positive efforts to recruit to Management Committee posts by targeting persons from Black and Minority Ethnic groups and from people with disabilities.

### **Monitoring and review of this policy**

In order to keep the focus of equal opportunities and maintain updates, will adopt the following procedures:

- All major items for discussion or implementation by the Management Committee or working parties will, whenever appropriate, include a minuted consideration of the implications for equal opportunity of that particular item and suggested recommendations.

## **Complainants**

We will ensure that all SAVortex Ltd's users and referrers are aware that we have an anti-discriminatory practice policy which they can see upon request.

This policy is in accordance with the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976, which make it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, sex, race, national or ethnic origin, or marital status.

Any act of discrimination by employees or any failure to comply with the terms of the policy will result in disciplinary action.