

The Big House Equal Opportunities Policy

Reviewed: May 2016

Next review date: May 2017

This policy applies to all people who are associated with The Big House's activities including employees, members, trustees, contracted workers, volunteers and audiences. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it is appropriate and relevant.

General Statement

The Big House (TBH) is committed to combating discrimination through the promotion of equal opportunities in respect of:

- Provision of services
- Working practices of the organisation
- Employment and training

In respect of the above, TBH will not tolerate any person receiving less favourable treatment than others for unlawful or unfair reasons including:

- Gender including gender reassignment
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour or ethnic origins)
- Nationality
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Educational background
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Age
- Trade Union activity

PRACTICES AND COMMITMENTS

In order to ensure that TBH services are accessible to all, TBH will follow these principles:

- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect. Bullying and or harassment will not be tolerated.
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimization.
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice.
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies.

- Publicity materials, publications, advertisements, events, workshops and performances shall avoid language which presents a stereotyped, offensive or detrimental view of any group or individual's background on any of the above grounds. However, performances and workshops will necessarily need to present such language and views when tackling hard hitting issues. It should be made clear by leaders during workshops and performances the difference.
- TBH will make its services available to disabled people, including wheelchair users – by using premises that are wheelchair accessible for its activities whenever possible. TBH will discuss with parents, carers and young people how it can try to accommodate specific needs.
- TBH not allow its publicity, events, premises or facilities to be used for the expressions of views in conflict with this policy.
- Breaches of equal opportunities policy will be viewed as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings including removal from activities or termination of contracts.
- TBH values diversity and recognises the wealth of benefits diversity can bring to the organisation.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Trustees have collective overall responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. All contracted employees and volunteers have individual responsibility for implementation of this policy.

In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Ensure the policy is communicated to all employees, volunteers, board members, job applicants and relevant others (such as freelance artists).
- Provide/source training and guidance as appropriate for all staff.
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into appropriate communication practices.
- Obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organization.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to meet the policy's objectives.

COMPLAINTS

Any party who believes that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the complaints or grievances policy detailed in the TBH Policy and Procedures Manual. Please contact Hannah Hughes (email: hannah@thebighouse.uk.com) for a copy of this manual. If you would prefer to speak directly to The Big House's Chair of Trustees, please contact James Duke (james@thebighouse.uk.com). All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an industrial tribunal of the Employment Tribunal under anti-discrimination legislations.

However, parties wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will usually be expected to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedure in the first instance.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Regular monitoring of TBH services and participants takes place to ensure that the equal opportunities policy is implemented and effective. TBH is active in programming services and activities which target under represented groups in particular, whether they are participants, volunteers or staff.

- Reports are made to the Trustees detailing gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation and borough of participants, where appropriate, and targets are established to encourage the increased integration of disenfranchised young people. The data captured is used to monitor who we are working with and set targets to reflect the ethnic and gender mix of care leavers in London. In addition, we will make efforts to encourage those from under represented groups such as LGBT or faith groups.
- An induction programme for new participants, staff and volunteers incorporates the TBH Equal Opportunities Policy and emphasises the role and expectations upon all new individuals to assist in ensuring its implementation.
- Our volunteer policy will also support and include Equal Opportunities principles and practices which all volunteers sign an agreement.