



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Policy Owner

People Director

Version number

2

Policy Contact

People Director

Owning Department

People

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Applicability

All RNLI volunteers, employees and any others working with or on behalf of the RNLI in the United Kingdom (“UK”), Ireland (“IRE”), Channel Islands (“CHI”) and Isle of Man (IOM). This Policy is non contractual.

Background of Policy

The RNLI saves lives at sea without prejudice. We aspire to be a fully inclusive organisation where all individuals and groups are valued no matter who they are or their background recognising that diversity of thought, ideas, backgrounds, experience, and ways of working is an important contributor to organisational success. We aim to reflect all the communities we serve across the UK, IRE, CHI and IOM

It is the policy of the RNLI to treat all employees, volunteers and all that support or partner with the organisation, fairly and equitably. We do not discriminate against an individual or group because of a protected or any other characteristic.

The RNLI is committed to being an equal opportunities organisation with respect for differences and diversity. The RNLI seeks to ensure no person is victimised or harassed or bullied or subjected to discrimination and that all colleagues feel secure, and content and that the workplace is free from intimidation.

All associated with the RNLI are expected to be champions of equity, diversity, and inclusion (“EDI”) because we believe that it’s the right thing to do; treating all as they expect to be treated, in a fair and respectful manner.

What does the RNLI mean by ‘equity’?

Fairness and impartiality for everyone recognising that different groups or individuals may have different needs and circumstances. The RNLI recognises that equity will not necessarily be achieved by treating everyone in the same way. It will be achieved by treating everyone according to their own and sometimes unique situation.

What does the RNLI mean by 'diversity'?

Diversity is the range of visible and non-visible differences such as, but not limited to, sex, age, background, race, disability, sexual orientation personality and work style, which when added together create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, where their talents are being fully utilised and in which, the RNLI's goals are met.

What does the RNLI mean by 'inclusion'?

Inclusion is about ensuring that the organisation is a place where people thrive because they feel valued and accepted without having to conform.

Commitments

At the RNLI we:

- Recognise that it is in the interests of everyone for the principles of EDI to be valued and embraced.
 - Value the diversity brought to our workforce by individuals and believe that the RNLI will benefit from engaging people from a variety of backgrounds.
 - Treat everyone with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working/volunteering environment free from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
 - Seek a working/volunteering environment based on positive relations between individuals.
 - Provide learning and on-going development for employees and volunteers to support them in their role and in developing an inclusive organisation.
 - Consult with employees and volunteers about their experience of the RNLI and the internal environment, and act where improvements are necessary.
 - Ensure that any material produced for internal or external audiences is appropriate to the needs of those audiences and reflects the diversity of the community we serve.
 - Ensure that recruitment, selection, development, and progression opportunities are equitable, transparent and competency based, accessible to all. Removing barriers to progression and proactively widen diversity across senior leadership.
 - Are committed to keeping our policies, procedures, and practices under regular review.
 - Leaders understand and role model RNLI EDI.
 - Collect and analyse employee data and report annually to the RNLI Board of Trustees including legislative developments.
 - Maintain a clear 'roadmap' to promote EDI at the RNLI with actions that are measured and reported on.
 - Take action to prevent or address any breaches of this policy quickly.
 - Support the ongoing development of RNLI Networks.
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Responsibilities

RNLI

All RNLI people have a responsibility to ensure that the terms and spirit of this policy are observed and to understand clearly that any behaviour, action or language inconsistent with an inclusive culture is not welcome and will not be supported by the RNLI and could face disciplinary action. Any queries on the application or interpretation of this policy are to be addressed to a RNLI Manager or a member of the People Department.

Everyone

- Recognise the impact that our behaviour and language can have on others and ensure a consistent approach with this policy at all times.
- Recognise the impact that the behaviour and language of others can have and take steps to resolve if you see or hear anything that is inconsistent with an inclusive culture.
- Ensure all our people are aware of this policy and provide or direct them to any necessary on-going training to them to enable them to understand and meet their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.
- Seek help from others including Line Manager or a member of the People Department if you require any support in fulfilling your responsibilities as identified in this policy.
- Ensure that nobody is victimised or treated unfairly for seeking to pursue an inclusive culture.
- Undergo EDI training, and champion EDI as a part of your role.
- Ensure that you treat all people fairly, with dignity and respect at all times.

RNLI Line Manager:

- Be aware of the policy and attend training.
- Act in accordance with the values of the RNLI at all times.
- Act as a champion and to lead by example in ensuring an inclusive culture for all.
- Ensure that the standards within this policy are adhered to within your area of responsibility e.g. when recruiting new people or developing people.
- Take responsibility for monitoring individual behaviour and taking immediate action where there is evidence of discrimination, harassment, bullying or any other unacceptable conduct.
- Encourage and support all people to reach their full potential and remove any barriers you become aware of that may exist.
- Ensure that all candidates for employment, development, promotion, or volunteering roles will be fairly short listed and assessed objectively against the stated criteria.

People Department

The RNLI People Department has the responsibility of ensuring the maintenance, regular review and updating of this policy, in accordance with changes in the law. The Policy does not form part of an employee's terms and conditions and may be subject to change, revisions, and amendments. Alterations to the policy can only be implemented following the approval of the People Department.

Laws and Regulations

In valuing EDI, the RNLI is committed to complying with current equality legislation and associated codes of practice.

Any breach of this Policy by RNLI employees or volunteers will be promptly investigated through our Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure and the Volunteer Problem Policy respectfully.

Raising a concern

Any breaches of this Policy are taken seriously by the RNLI and we are committed to a zero-tolerance approach. Any volunteer or employee found to be in breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action or action through the Volunteer Problem Solving Policy.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against volunteers, employees, or any people associated with or who come into contact with the RNLI will be dealt with under the organisation's disciplinary procedure for employees and the problem-solving procedure for volunteers which can be found on Compass or Volunteer Zone.

RNLI Networks

People Networks at the RNLI are groups that we are proud of and bring together and support our diverse communities. Further information can be accessed through Compass.

Disability – aims to empower, enable, support and champion people affected by disability as well as provide a safe and confidential environment for issues to be raised and elevated.

Harbour – provides peer support for volunteers and staff. We are working to create a more welcoming, diverse, inclusive, and equal organisation for all by holding our leaders to account and by increasing representation and understanding of LGBT+ lives.

Race Equality – A space to connect, to share, to be seen and to be heard – safely no matter who you are, where you come from or what colour your skin is. The Race Equality Network is open to all. In addition to this, the Race Equality Network is our chance to create real change in our organisational policy and ensure that race equality is a focus throughout the business. We have the opportunity to amplify minority voices across the organisation and ensure we have a seat at the table when decisions are being made that affect the community.

Young People (“YPN”) – for anyone in the early years of their career or volunteering journey at the RNLI. The network was set up in 2017 to support across the organisation where the input from young people has been progressively valued. The network has since been involved in recruitment processes, a reverse mentoring scheme, career stories sessions and support for the organisation. The YPN allows a space for open conversation and projects which the whole network can get involved with and benefit from.

Women’s Community – Open to all RNLI women and anyone else who would like to get involved, regardless of gender, role or location. The community exists to represent women across the RNLI, and to improve their experience, but in order to achieve this, we will collaborate with all allies. Women’s issues are everyone’s issues. We cannot achieve

equality without everyone working together to create a workplace that is truly inclusive and supportive.

Related documents

- RNLI Whistle Blowing Policy
- RNLI Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Legislation
- Charity Commission Code of Conduct

Review information

Next review date

01/05/2027

Amendment history

Date	Version	Author/Contributor	Amendment details
21/3/2024	2	Caren Thomas	Identification of legal jurisdictions (Applicability) Equity replacing equality Definition of equity, diversity and inclusion Commitment to support RNLI Networks Commitment to develop an EDI Roadmap Commitment to identify EDI actions and monitoring 'Unwelcome/inconsistent' behaviours may be subject to disciplinary procedures Inclusion of Charity Commission Code of Practice in terms of supporting information

Review frequency

3 years