



ANCHORING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (EDI) IN VOLUNTARY AND CHARITY ORGANISATIONS

Equality and Diversity UK

Introduction

This guidance is designed to support Trustees, staff, management, volunteers, and freelancers working within voluntary and charity organisations to actively embed EDI into the heart of what they do. EDI is not a one-off task or policy – it's a culture and commitment that shapes how we lead, recruit, deliver, and relate to the communities we serve.

Legal Framework at a glance

Under the Equality Act 2010, organisations must:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between different groups.

EDI Principles to anchor your organisation

- Embed EDI into your mission and values.
- Ensure it is visible in strategies, plans, and public messaging.
- Make EDI a standing item on board agendas and staff meetings.

Cultural Anchors: 5 Cs Approach

- Communication – inclusive language, accessible materials, open dialogue.
- Culture – safe, respectful, and brave spaces for difference.
- Challenge – call out inequity and bias, empower bystanders.
- Competence – train staff and volunteers in EDI regularly.
- Co-Production – design with, not for, communities.

Recruitment and Selection – Good Practice and Legal Tips

- Focus on essential skills; avoid jargon or unnecessary qualifications.
- Widen your reach – use diverse platforms and community networks.
- Offer multiple formats for applications.
- Use clear, structured scoring criteria and remove identifiers where possible.
- Use diverse interview panels and ask consistent, bias-free questions.
- Collect and review equality data to improve practice.

Delivering Inclusive Sessions to Community Groups

- Use accessible venues.
- Provide interpreters or translated materials.
- Use inclusive facilitation techniques.
- Respect cultural and religious practices.
- Offer safe spaces for marginalised voices.
- Evaluate who's missing and why.

Ensuring Equal Opportunities for all

- Provide equal access to progression and leadership roles.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.
- Value lived experience and non-traditional routes into roles.
- Include EDI objectives in appraisals and training plans.

Challenging Discrimination and Inequality

- Create clear reporting and whistleblowing procedures.
- Train people on how to challenge prejudice and bias.
- Use real examples in training.
- Encourage allyship.

Using an Equality Lens in all you do

- Who benefits from this?
- Who might be excluded?
- Are we replicating inequality?
- What can we do to remove barriers and increase inclusion?

Embedding and Sustaining EDI

- Appoint EDI Champions.
- Have a living action plan with accountability.
- Collect and use diversity data.
- Celebrate success stories and review progress annually.

Checklist Assessment for Trustees and Managers

Use the checklist below to self-assess how well your organisation is embedding EDI in its everyday practices. For each statement, score yourself:

1 = Not in place

2 = Partially in place / In progress

3 = Fully in place / Regularly reviewed

1	EDI is embedded in our mission and strategic plan	1	2	3
2	The board and staff reflect the communities we serve	1	2	3
3	All team members have received EDI training in the last 12 months	1	2	3
4	We use inclusive and accessible recruitment practices	1	2	3
5	Volunteers, freelancers, and community members are recruited equitably	1	2	3
6	We proactively challenge discrimination and create safe reporting channels	1	2	3
7	Service delivery is inclusive, accessible, and representative	1	2	3
8	We use an equality lens in decision-making, budgeting, and planning	1	2	3
9	Equality data is collected, monitored, and used to inform strategy	1	2	3
10	We regularly review and update our EDI commitments and practices	1	2	3

Total your score.

A score of 80% or more indicates good/outstanding practice. Below this suggests room for improvement. Scores below 60% indicate inadequate practice requiring urgent attention.