

Five Talents | Policy

Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Five Talents is committed to equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion and will ensure that all employees and service users, both actual and potential, are treated equally and as individuals regardless of age, disability, ethnic or national origin, nationality, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, political belief, race, religion or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics).

The aim is for our workforce to be representative of all sections of society and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation is also committed to preventing unlawful discrimination against supporters and programme members.

In implementing this policy Five Talents will take account of all relevant law including:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Civil Partnership Act 2004
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Equality Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010

This equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion policy will be implemented across all aspects of the organisation's work: the appointment of members to its Trustee Board; the appointment of staff, their conditions of service and employment procedures; all dealings with beneficiaries.

This policy covers all employees, officers, trustees, consultants, contractors, volunteers and interns.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and Five Talents may amend it at any time.

Trustee Board and Senior Executive Team

In the UK, the Trustee Board and Senior Executive Team will be responsible for ensuring that the equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion policy is properly implemented, monitored and reviewed.

Staffing and Volunteering

Five Talents aims to provide a working environment free from harassment, bullying and discrimination. Five Talents is committed to undertaking open recruitment and selection procedures and wherever possible all vacancies will be advertised and fair and equitable shortlisting and interview processes will be followed. Employees of, and volunteers working with the organisation will be informed of the equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion policy and receive training on equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion issues as appropriate. Five Talents will also ensure that the changing and developing needs of staff and volunteers are recognised and appropriate adjustments made to working conditions and/or training provided. Behaviour or actions against the spirit and /or letter of the equal opportunity laws, on which this policy is based, will be considered serious disciplinary matters.



Five Talents Beneficiaries

Five Talents aims to make its services accessible to some of the most vulnerable financially excluded communities in rural eastern Africa and beyond. In order to achieve this, Five Talents will take steps to remove barriers which prevent potential beneficiaries from having equal access to our programme partners' activities. This will include: ensuring that beneficiaries with disabilities are able to participate and working with the local community so that socially excluded members of society (eg. ethnic minorities and women) are able to fully participate. Five Talents will aim to ensure that our local programme partner staff are representative of the community and users which they serve.

Forms of discrimination

The following are examples of discrimination which are against Five Talents' policy:

- (A) Direct discrimination, where a person is less favourably treated because of a protected characteristic.
Examples:
 - (1) A woman with young children fails to obtain a job because it is feared that she might be an unreliable member of staff.
 - (2) A Sikh applicant for a senior post is not appointed because he might not "fit in" with the existing (all white) team.

- (B) Indirect discrimination, where a provision, criterion or practice which applies (or would apply) to everyone puts people with a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared with people who do not have that characteristic and which cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For these purposes, the particular characteristics protected are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Example:
A requirement for GCSE English as a selection criterion. This would have a disproportionately adverse impact on people educated overseas and may not be justified if all that is needed is to demonstrate a reasonable level of literacy.

- (C) Victimisation, where a person is subject to a detriment because they have, in good faith, taken action in relation to discrimination, either for themselves or to assist a colleague, for example brought a grievance or claim, given evidence or information in relation to a grievance or claim or otherwise alleged (expressly or otherwise) that anyone has committed an act which could constitute unlawful discrimination.

- (D) Harassment, where a person is subject to unwanted conduct related to a protected ground which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Discrimination includes discrimination by association or perception. For example, employees must not treat colleagues less favourably because they perceive them to be disabled (even if they are not) or because they are associated with a person who has a particular characteristic (e.g. a partner with a different nationality).

Recruitment, promotion and terms and conditions of employment

Five Talents will take reasonable steps to ensure that there are equal opportunities at all stages of the employment lifecycle. This includes encouraging applications, selecting applicants and promoting employees without regard to the



protected characteristics (except in circumstances where certain protected characteristics may be positively and lawfully considered) and based on individual merit.

Our terms and conditions of employment, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Five Talents will make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Five Talents will make all decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

We will monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Disciplinary and grievance procedures

Acts of discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics by any employee of Five Talents, or a failure by any of the Five Talents' employees to comply with this policy may constitute a disciplinary offence leading to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal under the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure. Depending on the seriousness of the offence it may be considered as gross misconduct under the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure. In addition, employees can be personally liable for acts of discrimination.

When any employee of Five Talents has a grievance as a result of discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics, this should be raised under the Five Talents' Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure. Five Talents will treat this seriously and take action.

Victimisation

Five Talents will not tolerate intimidation, victimisation or unfair discrimination against an employee who makes a complaint of harassment or discrimination or who assists in an investigation of alleged harassment or discrimination. Retaliation against an employee who complains of harassment or discrimination can be expected to lead to disciplinary action, including, in appropriate cases, dismissal.

Responsibility of managers

All managers and others in charge of groups of staff are responsible for ensuring that discrimination (including harassment) does not occur in their work area. In particular, they must ensure that:

- (A) they fully understand the Five Talent's equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion policy and are able to offer advice on them and on Five Talent's Disciplinary Procedure as it relates to a complaint of harassment or discrimination when required to do so;



- (B) they advise and inform their team to increase awareness and understanding of Five Talent's equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion policy;
- (C) their work environment is free of visual harassment such as inappropriate screensavers or greetings cards;
- (D) they are alert to physical and verbal harassment or discrimination in their work area and deal with it immediately, whether or not it is brought formally to their attention;
- (E) they are supportive of individuals who state that they have been harassed or discriminated against and take full account of their feelings in handling any complaint;
- (F) they raise any possible incidents of discrimination (including harassment) the Trustee Board and/or Senior Executive Team without delay;
- (G) they maintain complete confidentiality relating to all aspects of cases of harassment or discrimination at all times and do not mention or discuss the case unnecessarily with any person not involved with its investigation;
- (H) following an allegation of harassment or discrimination, they ensure that there is no further harassment or victimisation; and
- (I) they attend any training session which may be arranged to increase their awareness of the issues involved in harassment or discrimination.

Responsibilities of employees

All employees have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is properly observed and fully complied with. All employees must take reasonable steps to ensure that discrimination and harassment does not occur and must notify their manager of any incidents of which they become aware.

