

ARCHITECTS
BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY



**ARCHITECTS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY
DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

June 2022

DRAFT

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

Revision Log

Revision number	Revision Date	Nature of revision	Approved by	Effective from

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

PURPOSE

In line with our values (Appendix 4), Architects Benevolent Society (ABS) endorses the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and ensuring all people are treated with dignity and respect. We believe that these are essential attributes of any charity that seeks to promote valuable and lasting change in our society, and they support good governance and the delivery of the organisation's charitable purposes and public benefit.

DEFINITIONS

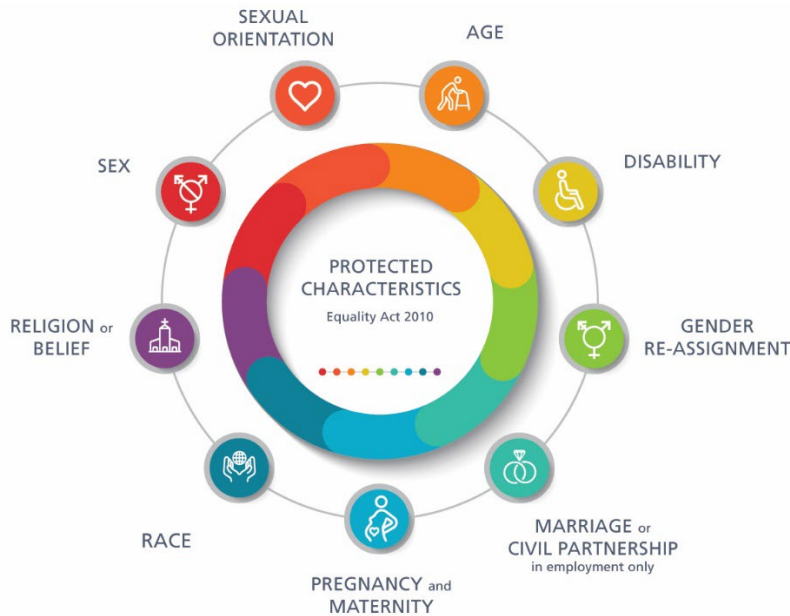
Diversity: means people's different experiences, identities and points of view. For the Society, our focus is the diverse characteristics and backgrounds of the architectural community. That includes legally protected characteristics and other factors which can affect people's life chances such as appearance, gender identity, caring responsibilities or social class.

Equity: means everyone, no matter their background or characteristics, getting fair treatment and access to opportunities. This means recognising that each person has different circumstances, and that some people experience inequality and injustice. So, for the Society, treating everyone the same ('equality') is not enough – we must strive to remove barriers people face.

Inclusion: means giving everyone equal access to opportunities and resources; removing barriers, discrimination and intolerance.

Protected characteristics are defined in the Equality Act 2010 as:

- age
- disability ('a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on your ability to do normal day-to-day activities')
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy or maternity
- race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief (including no religion)
- sex
- sexual orientation



Positive action in law means proportionate measures to help people with one or more protected characteristics to have the same chances as everyone else. This may include providing additional or targeted support to achieve equity, help address specific needs, overcome disadvantage linked to a protected characteristic or increase inclusion where there is under-representation.

Prejudice means an unjustified, usually negative, attitude towards a person or a group of people based on their different characteristics or background.

Discrimination means treating a person or a group of people unfairly because of their differences. The Equality Act specifically notes these different types of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
- **Indirect discrimination:** 'a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified'. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time is likely to indirectly adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified. Indirect discrimination also includes Associative and Perceptive Discrimination. **Associative Discrimination** is treating someone less favourably because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. E.g. not promoting someone because they are the carer for an elderly or disabled relative. **Perceptive Discrimination** is treating someone less favourably because they are perceived to possess a protected characteristic – even if they do not. E.g. harassing someone because they are believed to be gay, even if they are not.
- **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which 'has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity

or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment' for them. It is important to note that 'Harassment' is distinct from bullying in that the conduct relates to a Protected Characteristic.

- **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

- **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability. A '**reasonable adjustment**' is a change an employer or provider of a service or activity must make to reduce a substantial disadvantage for a disabled person. Whether a proposed adjustment counts as reasonable depends on things like how far it would remove or reduce the disadvantage, and whether it's practical and affordable.

Unconscious bias is where, without actively intending to, people act upon subconscious, deeply ingrained biases, stereotypes and attitudes which are formed from their own experiences, upbringing and environment – in simple terms, people favour others who are most like them, which can increase barriers for people from diverse backgrounds.

POLICY

ABS will work to ensure that all our Trustees, employees, volunteers and others who work for and with us, including beneficiaries, partner organisations, suppliers and all others with whom we have contact, are treated with dignity and respect and benefit from equality of opportunity in respect of employment and service delivery.

Our intention is to ensure that anyone who has contact with us in the course of our work, whether in person, virtually or through our website, our publications or as a recipient of any service that we provide, receives fair and equal treatment.

ABS is also committed to building a diverse workforce where we seek to realise everyone's potential by harnessing these differences and creating a productive environment in which all are valued. This commitment applies equally to all positions at the ABS, including our trustees, staff and volunteers. Recognising and countering any imbalances in power, perspectives and opportunities in the charity, and in the attitudes and behaviour of trustees, staff and volunteers, helps to make sure that the charity achieves its aims.

We are committed to preventing unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

ABS will apply this policy consistently and will not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, colour, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief / lack of religion or belief, or sexual orientation. Nor will we discriminate on the grounds of contractual status (fixed term / full or part time).

These aims apply to all those who work or wish to work for ABS as a paid employee or as a volunteer, as well as to our interaction with beneficiaries and all other stakeholders.

IMPLEMENTING OUR POLICY

We implement our policy by:

1. ensuring the Trustees are representative of the people with whom the ABS works. The appointment of new Trustees to the Board should recognise the aims and aspirations of this policy by striving to be inclusive in achieving balance whilst maintaining the appropriate skills and expertise;
2. maintaining employment policies and procedures that are fair and equal in their treatment of all employees, regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, colour, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief / lack of religion or belief, or sexual orientation
3. maintaining a culture of zero tolerance of bullying and harassment where allegations of such behaviour are fully and frankly investigated, and necessary and appropriate action is taken;
4. following recruitment procedures that are fair and open, and prevent discrimination, whilst also helping to create a workforce that reflects the diversity of our society;
5. having policies, procedures and practices that support employee wellbeing by encouraging a positive and healthy work life balance and ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made to support staff with special requirements in order for them to fully and effectively participate in the workplace;

6. ensuring that the risk of impacts on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are considered in new projects and services which are delivered by the Charity, and that identifying and addressing these risks becomes a 'normal' part of our work;
7. ensuring that communications and engagement, both within ABS and with outside organisations and members of the public, are considerate of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and follow best practice in terms of the language used, and the means employed to communicate;
8. operating policies and procedures for the recruitment, management and involvement of volunteers and supporters that encourage diversity, support inclusion, and prevent discrimination;
9. ensuring that the Charity's pay and benefits meet the requirements of Equal Pay legislation, including any obligations to publish details of the organisation's gender pay gap;
10. ensuring that policies and procedures for the management of reward are fair, open and transparent;
11. ensuring that opportunities for personal development, career progression and promotion are transparent fair, and open to all, and that efforts towards talent management are exercised in full compliance with the commitment set out in this policy;
12. ensuring that obstacles to participation at all levels are reduced, with the Charity's work designed and open for everyone included within its charitable purposes;
13. collecting and monitoring data on diversity, equity and inclusion on an annual basis to enable the Executive Team and the trustees to confirm whether the Charity is complying with this policy;
14. complying with recommended diversity, equity and inclusion practice as detailed in section 6 of the Charity Governance Code.

Appendix 1

RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THIS POLICY (Who does it)

Trustee Board

Is responsible for agreeing a clear and effective approach to supporting diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the organisation and in its own practice. This Policy shall be reviewed periodically by the Board in line with the Policy Schedule.

Chief Executive

Is accountable to the Trustee Board for the implementation of this policy, and for ensuring that the commitments that it makes are reflected in all areas of the charity in both policy and practice.

Executive Team

Act as DEI role models and have responsibility for the implementation of the DEI policy in their areas of responsibility. Collectively they encourage a culture of respect, tolerance and inclusiveness within the Charity as a whole.

Accountability for specific areas of policy and practice are distributed amongst appropriate members of the Executive Team (see DEI procedure and practice at Appendix 2 below).

All staff and volunteers of the Charity

Have a personal responsibility for ensuring that they act appropriately and in accordance with the policy and associated procedures at all times.

Appendix 2

DEI PROCEDURE AND PRACTICE (How we do it)

There are eight areas of procedure and practice which define or influence the way in which ABS' staff and volunteers carry out their duties in line with the commitment outlined in the DEI policy. Each area is assigned to an appropriate manager or managers. These are:

1. HR Policies and Procedures (Nominations and Remuneration Committee/Chief Executive/Operations Manager)

1.1 The Nominations and Remuneration Committee is responsible for ensuring the continuous review and improvement of ABS' employment policies so that they reflect changes to employment law and comply fully with the Society's policy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Key policy documents include, but are not limited to:

- Anti-Bullying and Harassment
- Recruitment (including equal opportunities)
- Redundancy
- Grievance
- Disciplinary
- Performance Management
- Absence Management
- Flexible working

1.2 The Chief Executive and Operations Manager will be responsible for developing systems and processes for ensuring that all employees have equal access to opportunities for promotion, career progression and personal development. This will include ensuring that any talent management and staff development plans are compliant with this policy and its commitment.

2. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Monitoring (Chief Executive and Operations Manager)

2.1 The Chief Executive and Operations Manager are responsible for ensuring that there are effective systems for collecting and monitoring data on the diversity of the ABS Trustee Board, staff team and beneficiaries and for setting the standards by which similar data can be collected and monitored in other areas such as volunteering (Ambassador network).

2.2 The data collected will be reviewed annually to determine whether it is fit for purpose, and to ensure that records are kept accurate and up to date. A framework for reporting data to the Trustee Board will be put in place to provide sufficient information to enable them to enact the Society's policy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

2.3 At all times ABS will comply with its obligations for ensuring data is collected and held confidentially and in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

3. Employee Wellbeing (Operations Manager)

The Operations Manager is responsible for developing policies, processes, benefits and services that support employee wellbeing within ABS. This will include, but not be limited to, provision for flexible working, effective support for employees who require reasonable adjustments, occupational health support, and initiatives such as support and promotion of healthy working.

4. Beneficiaries and support services (Operations Manager)

ABS believes that the services it delivers should not discriminate against or exclude people. Consequently, the Charity is committed to ensuring that in all the work it undertakes, the impact on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is carefully considered. To this end, the Operations Manager will have responsibility for ensuring that there are procedures in place so that DEI impacts are considered as a key part of planning new projects or delivering services, and that actions are taken in response to any identified risks to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

5. Volunteer Management (Development Manager)

ABS values its volunteers and supporters, who make an essential contribution to the work of the charity. The Development Manager will be responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures governing the recruitment, management and involvement of volunteers are clearly documented and reflect the principles and commitment outlined in this policy.

6. Pay and Reward (Chief Executive/Nominations and Remuneration Committee)

ABS is committed to operating a clear and transparent pay structure which uses job evaluation to ensure that all roles within the Society are rewarded on the basis of equal pay for work of equal value. The Nominations and Remuneration Committee is responsible for ensuring that pay structures and policies are fit for purpose, The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that decisions on pay and recruitment are auditable, and for investigating issues of potential pay inequality and taking appropriate action to eliminate these if they are identified.

7. Communications and Supporter Engagement (Development Manager)

The Development Manager is responsible for ensuring that there is clear guidance on how to communicate effectively with supporters, including donors, in a way that is clear, transparent and does not discriminate, or encourage discrimination. The Development Manager will also ensure that policies and procedures that apply to the engagement and involvement of supporters fully meet the commitment laid out in this policy.

8. Buildings and Accessibility (Chief Executive)

The Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring that the Society's commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is reflected in the lease, purchase and maintenance of properties owned and occupied by the Society. This includes specifically the responsibility for ensuring that factors such as accessibility are considered.

Appendix 4

ABS VALUES



Responsive

We're passionate about helping people. Our flexible approach and dedicated team enables us to provide meaningful and dedicated support – often fast.



Compassionate

We value people and approach every person and situation with empathy, kindness and respect.



Improvement

We are driven to improve the lives of our community by continuing to learn from our collective experiences to grow, evolve and strive to do better.



Community focused

We are approachable and warm.
We encourage collaboration and engage with the architectural community.



Inclusive

We are actively inclusive within our objectives as a charity. We have an equitable, welcoming and ethical approach, and value each person's unique life experience.

Appendix 5 DEI ACTION PLAN 2022

Aim	Activity	Responsibility	Allocated to	Target completion date	Status	Notes
Increase diversity of ABS Board and committees	Positive action in recruitment of new trustees and committee members; advertising (in a range of places) encouraging applications from underrepresented groups diverse interview panels	N&R Committee	RB/KV	Jul-22	In progress	Data collection shows that groups currently underrepresented are those who are: from an ethnically diverse or other marginalised community, under 50 years of age, gender identity other than man, Landscape Architects, Architectural Technologists, other professionals working in the architectural community, living/working in East Mids, SW, SE England, Northern Ireland, those who have lived experience of financial hardship.
Recruitment and employment equality policies reflect DEI policy	Update policies and employee handbook to ensure they reflect DEI policy: Bullying and Harassment, Recruitment, Redundancy, Grievance, Disciplinary, Performance Management, Absence Management, Working hours and TOIL	N&R Committee	RB/KV	Oct-22	To start June - 22	Part of updating employee handbook - already started.

Increase knowledge and awareness of diversity and inclusion within ABS	Training for staff and trustees	N&R Committee	RB/KV	Sep-22	To start Jul-22	
Embed inclusive and healthy workplace culture at ABS	1. Formalise staff wellbeing initiatives in policy. 2. Update employee handbook 3. Staff refresher about what is available	N&R Committee	KV/SG	Aug-22	In progress	
Increase diversity of perspective and understanding of beneficiary needs in relation to DEI	1. Involve beneficiaries in new support service development, policy review and communications activities to test methods of engagement	ABS Board	KV	Jan-23	In progress	Part of beneficiary involvement work already started
	2. Develop beneficiary involvement strategy		KV	Feb-23		
Monitor DEI data as one measure of success in implementing DEI policy	1. Collect, analyse and review data 2. Develop reporting template for ABS Board	ABS Board	RB/KV	Annual	In progress	Data collection for trustees completed for this year. Data collection required for staff, ambassadors and Anxiety UK beneficiaries.
Volunteer policies reflect DEI policy	Update Ambassador handbook and induction workshop.	Development Committee	MT/JS	Oct-22	To start Jun-22	
Consider DEI impact of new support services (links in with social impact reporting)	Carry out DEI impact assessment	Welfare Committee	KV	Each time a new service is developed	Ongoing	
ABS policies reflect DEI commitment	Review ABS policies through DEI lens	ABS Board	Committees (allocated policies)	At each policy review	Ongoing	