



## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Last reviewed by the Trustees: September 2025

Next review: September 2027

### 1. Statement of Policy

- 1.1 We are committed to the fair and equitable treatment of all staff, volunteers, partners, and beneficiaries. We are proud to serve a vibrant and diverse community and understand their needs.
- 1.2 Level Trust recognises that societal structures do not afford every member of society equitable opportunities in education, work, receipt of services and participation in society. As a result that leads to poverty and poverty discrimination.
- 1.3 Level Trust is committed to the promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion within the organisation, all affiliated projects and all of society. We will do this by actively creating an environment and culture which is welcoming, inclusive recognises and celebrates diversity. We also create structures policies and procedures that allow equitable access and opportunity.
- 1.4 This policy aims to ensure that no person should suffer or experience less favourable treatment, discrimination, or lack of opportunities on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief sex and sexual orientation. In addition to the protected characteristics, we oppose discrimination on the grounds of trade union membership, class, responsibility for dependents, physical attributes, ex-offender status as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, lack of formal qualifications where such qualifications are not formally required, or any other grounds which cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of this policy.
- 1.5 This policy will influence and affect every aspect of activities carried out at Level Trust i.e., including but not limited to, projects, speaking engagements, fundraising events and other functions linked to the charity, as determined by the Board of Trustees. All team members will be encouraged to conduct Equality Impact Assessments where relevant to remove barriers and ensure equity from the outset. Information about Equality Impact Assessments can be found here: [Equality Impact Assessments](#)
- 1.6 In the provision of services and the employment of staff, Level Trust is committed to promoting equitable opportunities for everyone. Throughout its activities, Level Trust will treat all people equitably whether they are:
  - Seeking or using our services
  - Applying for a job or already employed by us
  - Trainee workers and students on work experience or placements

- Volunteer workers. □
- Partnerships and procurement

1.7 All staff, volunteers and trustees should understand their responsibilities with regards to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

## 2. How the policy will be implemented and who is responsible? □

Specific responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the CEO and the Chair of the Trustees. They will:

- Communicate the policy to staff, trustees, job applicants, volunteers, and relevant others
- Ask all staff and regular volunteers for their opinions on the policy
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy □into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff
- All who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion must be trained □in nondiscriminatory selection techniques
- Incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion notices into general communication practices
- Ensure that adequate resources that are proportional to the means of the charity are made available to fulfill the objectives of the policy. □

However, Level Trust also contracts HR support from Serena Bower [serena@bowerhr.co.uk](mailto:serena@bowerhr.co.uk) who provides specialist and expert HR guidance and support including policy and procedure writing.

## 3. Conduct and general standards of behaviour □

- 3.1 All staff and volunteers are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional and considerate manner, and in accordance with Level Trust policies and procedures. □
- 3.2 Level Trust will not tolerate behaviour at odds with our Code of Conduct. Where appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken.
- 3.3 Level Trust does not tolerate the exclusion or discrimination of any communities, the oppression of marginalised people, and the systems of oppression that leave communities in poverty.
- 3.4 Level Trust believe that, regardless of intent, the impact of behaviour is what counts. This informs our approach to addressing discrimination and preventing it from occurring. At times, it is the perpetrator who invalidates the feelings of the aggrieved or feels that the accusation of discrimination is a grievance itself. We are aware that when addressing or raising discrimination, the feelings of those who are discriminated against or marginalised can be invalidated. ‘Where discrimination has taken place, We are aware that often when addressing or raising discrimination, the feelings of those who are discriminated against or marginalised are invalidated. Level Trust’s concern will be supporting the person or group who has faced discrimination.

## 4. Complaints of discrimination □

- 4.1 Level Trust will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any forbidden grounds made by staff, trustees, volunteers, clients or other third parties and will act where appropriate. □
- 4.2 All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the organisation's grievance, complaints or disciplinary procedures, as appropriate, and the complainant will be informed of the outcome as set out within the relevant procedures. □
- 4.3 We will also monitor the number and outcomes of complaints of discrimination made by staff, trustees, volunteers, clients and other third parties. □
- 4.4 All managers and team leaders, CEO and Trustees will receive annual EDI training to ensure that they are able to understand the issues that affect others and can support them effectively. All managers and team leaders will ensure that all concerns are listened to and taken seriously. The CEO, Trustees and Line Managers will ensure they are fully trained to fulfill their legal obligations, to mitigate risks and to ensure all team members are adhering to legal requirements.
- 4.5 In the event that a concern is raised, where appropriate, the Line Manager will offer team members the opportunity to resolve misunderstandings informally. This is to give both parties the opportunity to express their side of the matter. A third person will always be present at such meetings.
- 4.6 Level Trust recognises that this may not always be the most appropriate solution; those affected by discrimination should not be expected to perform further emotional labour by having to relive or explain their experiences. Therefore, Level Trust will ensure that they offer the option of mediation. Mediation can be offered by any appropriate, impartial person, such as a discrimination coach.
- 4.7 Level Trust recognises that facing discrimination is an emotionally difficult experience and can affect the psychological safety and mental health of marginalised groups. Level Trust will explore the possibilities of team members accessing mentoring, counselling and/or an Employee Assistance Programme.

## 5. **Legal Obligations** □

### *Equality Act 2010.* □

- 5.1 The new Equality Act came into force in October 2010 and replaces all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales – namely the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, The Civil Partnership Act 2004, the Employment Equality Regulations 2003 (religions and belief and sexual orientation). □
- 5.2 The Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics are: □age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. □In valuing diversity, Level Trust is committed to go beyond the legal minimum regarding equality. □The Equality Act 2010 harmonises, strengthens, and replaces most previous equality legislation. The following legislation is still relevant:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Work and Families Act 2006
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended)

5.3 Level Trust has an obligation to be up to date and adhere to legislation as it comes into being. Level Trust is also obliged to ensure all team members are aware of their legal obligations and rights.

## **6. Recruitment and Selection**

6.1 The recruitment and selection process is crucial to any Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

6.2 Level Trust is committed to diversifying the channels of recruitment. This includes advertising posts in a range of settings to actively reach underrepresented groups.

6.3 Level Trust will carry out a review of every stage of the recruitment process to ensure that it is as accessible as possible.

6.4 Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications. Level Trust will include an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion statement on all Job Descriptions and volunteer role descriptions to communicate our commitment to this policy. We will adopt a consistent approach to advertising vacancies.

6.5 Level Trust will include Positive Action (see 6.11) Statements on Job Descriptions. An example statement may read: "We particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are underrepresented within Level Trust at this level".

6.6 All members of the interviewing panel will have received recent diversity and/or managing and mitigating bias training.

6.7 All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do their job.

6.8 Level Trust always uses application forms which clearly lay out our expectations from candidates to give them the best possible chance of demonstrating their skills and experience.

6.9 Shortlisting and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person, where possible. When shortlisting, applications will, where practical, be anonymised by the shortlisting panel.

6.10 Level Trust recognizes that many capable candidates will not have had the opportunities in life to express themselves or "sell" themselves. Where appropriate to the role, Level Trust adjust their recruitment process to give all shortlisted candidates the interview questions ahead of time. In doing so, Level Trust hopes to even the playing field and give every candidate the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and experience. The Personal Specification will drive what we need to test and underpins what we are looking for. The Personal Specification should always be agreed by more than one member of the team.

- 6.11 Level Trust will provide the option of an electronic application pack and a paper application pack to ensure accessibility. Level Trust will also make all reasonable adjustment to application packs, such as offering large print.
- 6.12 Level Trust is committed to mitigating bias; as such we will ensure that all identifying information will be removed from application forms prior to shortlisting.
- 6.13 Level Trust is committed to increasing opportunities for underrepresented and marginalized communities through Positive Action. [Positive Action is allowed under sections 158-159 of the Equalities Act. where members of protected groups have been underrepresented within the workforce or in a particular work group in the preceding 12 months. These are lawful measures designed to redress imbalances and counteract the effects of past discrimination.] (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment-positive-action-statements>)
- 6.14 Level Trust will recruit to add to and enhance culture, not solely to fit culture. When recruiting, we are looking to grow diversity of thought, experience, and skill.

## **Training and Development**

- 7.1 Promotion and advancement will be based on performance and performance reviews and within the overall framework and principles of this policy.
- 7.2 Level Trust will consider representation when selecting candidates for senior roles, including but not limited to members of the Board of Trustees, Leadership Team, and Volunteers.
- 7.3 Line Managers will discuss talent development with all members of their team and ensure that they offer the equal access to appropriate development opportunities to everyone in similar roles.

## **8. Monitoring**

- 8.1 We will maintain and review the employment records of all employees to monitor the progress of this policy.
- 8.2 Monitoring may involve:
- The collection, classification and reporting of information regarding the nine protected characteristics.
  - Recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions. □
- 8.3 The results of any monitoring procedures will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equity of opportunities to all applicants and staff.
- 8.4 Level Trust will conduct monitoring of beneficiaries across projects to inform our reach across all communities. This will be done in line with Level Trust's GDPR policies. Data will not be held longer than

required, will be held securely (either on our secure servers or password protected devices) and will only be monitored by those with a legitimate business reason for doing so.