

Alzheimer's Society

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Policy

Policy and procedure apply to:		Employees: All	Volunteers: All
		Contractors: n/a	Other: non defined
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1. What you need to know

At the Society, we're building a place where everyone belongs. We are committed to creating a diverse, inclusive and accessible place for people to work and volunteer. We know the benefit that comes from a variety of perspectives and lived experiences, especially those that reflect the communities we provide services for. Our differences allow us to do great things together.

This policy explains what we're doing, and what you need to do to play your part in making Alzheimer's Society a place where everyone feels welcome, respected and valued. And while we hope it doesn't happen, we also explain what to do when things aren't quite right, and how we can help get everything back on track.

2. How we work here

At the Society, it's important to us that everyone feels like they belong and are treated fairly and with respect. It's about what we do, and critically it is about how we do what we do. We want an environment where everyone feels safe and supported in sharing thoughts and opinions in a professional manner, and where people can ask questions to keep learning and to understand one another better.

Our strategy

We continue to update our EDIB strategy, ensuring that it supports everyone at the Society in being better together and achieving our organisational objectives. This will continue to evolve and update, and you can find the latest about our future vision and action plans on our Arena pages. When it comes to what this means for you day to day, we'll share that below.

We're proud to keep making things more inclusive for our employees, volunteers and service users and we're always looking to challenge ourselves on how we can do better. We've got some details below on how you can get involved and share your views on this, and what to do if you have questions, concerns or any issues relating to EDIB, and what we can do to help.

We will not tolerate any form of discrimination*, harassment, victimisation or bullying on any grounds, or to anyone. We won't accept this for any reason, including the characteristics that are protected in law. These protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sex (biological sex at birth)
- Sexual orientation

*We will not tolerate positive discrimination either which, despite the word choice, is also unlawful. This is often misunderstood. An example of positive discrimination would be employing someone who performs less well in a job interview than someone else, because they possess a certain protected characteristic. This is only lawful when there is a reason that this must be the case e.g. firefighters must possess certain physical attributes to safely do their job. No such examples exist at the Society.

Positive discrimination is different to positive action. Positive action is encouraged as it enables us to lessen any disadvantage, or remove barriers or obstacles, that we reasonably believe are faced by people from protected characteristic groups. This could include things like additional advertising in targeted places to encourage more applications from people with a particular background, to better represent the communities we serve.

EDIB governance and involvement

We want to make sure that EDIB is on the agenda throughout the Society. It is critical that this is championed by our Executive Leadership team – that they support and sponsor EDIB initiatives and activity and lead by example.

Our EDIB strategy group devise our plans that support employees, volunteers, and service users and we link in with our Employee Forum to make sure employee's voices are heard and included, and we are aligned.

Each of our directorates has an EDIB working group, who provide insights and feedback about what is going on across the Society and where anyone can get in touch about ideas or ways that we can be more inclusive in what we do.

We have a number of Lived Experience Networks, chaired by our people and sponsored by leaders within the Society. They provide safe spaces, support and awareness raising to encourage allyship and understanding. The chairs of these networks also come together regularly to discuss shared agendas and thinking.

Your role in EDIB

We all have a part to play in building an inclusive culture where everyone feels they can belong. There are three broad areas you need to focus on to ensure you're doing your bit:

- 1) **Make sure you're being inclusive in how you do things.** For example, this could be when you're talking to people, email or messaging online or arranging and running meetings (see our [inclusive meetings guidance](#) for advice on this). It's all about mutual respect. You need be aware of how your behaviour and what you say affects people, even if it's not directed at them. So, if you're having a joke, make sure it's not at the expense of others.

- 2) **Make sure that what you do is always with EDIB in mind.** For example, this would involve following this policy, our guidance on making reasonable adjustments for people with additional needs, or completing Equality Impact Assessments if you're involved in something new or a significant change – more on this and other practical steps to take below.
- 3) **Don't accept the unacceptable.** If you experience something that's not right or offensive, the most important thing is to stop it, and prevent it happening again. It might simply be about pointing out to someone how their behaviour is affecting you directly or someone else and asking them to stop. If you aren't sure what to do, speak to your manager or our People Partnering Team for advice. If you need to raise a concern formally, you can find out how to do this in section 3 of this policy.

Want to get more involved?

Here are some other things you might want to do or get involved with:

Challenge yourself - Reflect on the last day, week or month. When you have completed work or gone about your day, have you included all the people you could have, or spoken to someone you don't usually speak to. Have you looked at things from a different perspective? Have you used inclusive language?

Join or feed into your directorate EDIB group - You might have seen us doing something that's not as inclusive as it could be, or you might have an idea on how to make sure things are better.

Share a story. You may have a personal story you are happy to share, to raise awareness and increase understanding of others. It could be about you, or something great that's going on in your team or local community – but remember, you'd need people's permission beforehand if you want to refer to them and their own unique characteristics.

Join one of our Lived Experience Networks – We have a number of networks in place that you can join based on your lived experience. Most networks are for people with lived experience, and there are separate updates for allies. You can find a full list of the networks and what they do [here](#).

Learn something new – Check out our [EDIB pages](#) on Arena a to understand more about our strategy, our networks, how to be more inclusive and more.

EDIB in practice

From the moment someone is looking to join the Society, EDIB is central to what we do and how we treat people – here we'll share some practical things we do to ensure an inclusive environment.

Recruitment

We will take reasonable steps to encourage diverse applications for employee and volunteering roles including those living with dementia. We want to be representative of the communities we serve. Our recruitment processes are constantly being reviewed and updated to be as inclusive as possible, for example ensuring that our job adverts have gender neutral language and ensuring we provide reasonable adjustments as needed.

Communications

Great communication will be made possible by listening to our employees, volunteers, stakeholders, and people in the communities we serve including those living with dementia. This allows us to make improvements everything we do and ensure all voices are heard and valued. We will continue to do this through a variety of channels including weekly emails, Society briefings, our intranet pages, Ask us Anything sessions, our Your Voice Surveys and more.

Our internal communications follow our Brand Guidelines with accessibility in mind. We also avoid things like metaphors to avoid any misunderstanding. Our externally published written and digital communications are [available in various alternative formats](#) and many of the most commonly spoken languages in the UK upon request.

Adjustments

Where you have a disability or health condition, we will support with reasonable adjustments to your role, there's lots of guidance on this topic on [Arena](#). There are a number of other reasons where you might need support too, whether temporary or ongoing. One example could be if you are a carer. You can speak to your manager about this, and you may find the [My Adjustments template and guidance](#) we've created helpful, to make sure you've covered all the things you need to.

Data

To create change and build meaningful EDIB action plans to support our strategy, we need to understand our diversity data. We actively encourage our people to share data about themselves to help us review our progress and make decisions using anonymised reporting. For example, we review our gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps to make improvements and seek to understand if some groups have different experiences to others as part of our Your Voice survey and take actions accordingly.

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

Whenever we do something new or make significant changes to services, activities, systems, events, processes, policies or projects, the person leading that work will undertake an EIA. This assessment will highlight any potential adverse impact on certain groups and allow us to identify opportunities to address this and remove, or at least reduce the impact of these barriers. There may be some times when you don't need to do a full EIA, and you can complete an initial screening instead. All the guidance and templates you need can be found [on Arena](#).

Learning and development

Our learning offer will be to deliver core training on EDIB as well as developing content on specific areas that represent our Society to educate and spread awareness, ensuring we continue to strive to be a learning-led organisation. Our learning will be delivered using a variety of platforms to complement learning styles wherever possible.

We're also dedicated to growing our apprenticeship, internships and coaching and mentoring opportunities, linking up with national schemes and initiatives to further diversify routes into working for the Society.

3. What to do if things go wrong

While we hope this does not happen, we want you to know that we will not condone any form of discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment. This will not be accepted for any reason, including those characteristics which are protected under law.

If you feel you have experienced this at the Society, we need you to let us know and we will address it and take steps to prevent any reoccurrence. We have clear, supportive and robust frameworks in place to investigate thoroughly, including our Grievance and Bullying and Harassment Policies. We also have our Resolving Concerns Guidance for our volunteers. If you are an employee, please speak to your manager, People Partnering Team representative for advice. Or if you are a volunteer, please speak to your role manager or our Volunteering Team.

There is a separate Whistleblowing Policy (link below) which explains clear steps on reporting any wrongdoing within the Society that is of public interest,

4. Supporting documents

[Grievance Policy](#)

[Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)

[Resolving Concerns Guidance for Role Managers](#)

[Sexual Harassment Guidance](#)

[Whistleblowing Policy](#)

Document details

Author/Owner:	Amy Flitney, People Policy Manager
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