



**North East Museums**

**Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion  
Policy**

Name of governing body: North East Museums Strategic Board

Date of approval: 31 03 2023

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

**1.1** North East Museums is committed to ensuring, where practicable, that all aspects of its museum and archive activities are fully accessible to every sector of the community. This will be achieved by, where practicable, removing or reducing any physical, sensory, or intellectual barriers to access, and ensuring that no employee, volunteer, user, or other stakeholder is discriminated against for any reason. We will work to ensure that our collections, interpretations, and activities are representative, inclusive of and relevant to the communities we serve.

**1.2** North East Museums defines diversity as the complex mix of individuals and groups who together make up society. A variety of traditions, values, attitudes, and beliefs influence everyone's identity and the identity of society around them. These influences may relate to ethnicity, faith, gender, sexual orientation, and intellectual and physical ability, but might equally include health status, locality, educational, economic, and social background.

**1.3** Whilst North East Museums recognises the broadest definition of diversity, it will particularly prioritise improving its engagement with some of the groups referred to as having the "protected characteristics" detailed in the Equality Act 2010 (see appendix 1 point 15). These are:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity/parental leave
- disability
- race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief, or lack of religion/belief
- gender
- sexual orientation
- (in addition to the statutory protected characteristics) lower socioeconomic status - people who could experience discrimination due to their financial background. This is in line with Arts Council England's approach to equality and diversity.

## **2. NORTH EAST MUSEUMS' MISSION, VISION, COMMITMENT & BELIEFS**

### **2.1 Our mission is to welcome and connect people to the past, present, and future of the North East through stories, shared spaces, and experiences.**

We will help people understand and act on local and global challenges:

- **Equality** – we will provide a warm welcome to everyone, break down barriers caused by inequality and discrimination and share diverse stories.
- **Wellbeing** – we will use our spaces and services to support people's physical and mental health.
- **Social mobility** – we will deliver learning experiences, volunteering opportunities and pathways for personal development for people of all ages and backgrounds.
- **Climate** – we will raise awareness about the environment and encourage people to act for a sustainable future.
- **Place** – we will celebrate North East England, inspire local pride, and use our resources to support research, innovation, and economic regeneration.

### **2.2 North East Museums Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement for Visitors and Services Users**

**2.2.1** North East Museums exists for all people to visit, use, and enjoy its museums, galleries and archives, in-person or online. We provide appropriate provision and assistance to make sure that our activities, services, and opportunities are made available to everyone, wherever possible.

**2.2.2** We seek to provide a museum and archive visitor experience which is inclusive, secure and supports "equal access for all." We recognise that people have differing interests and requirements. We provide and promote equality of access to all our services and venues for staff, volunteers, visitors, and service users. We will plan and deliver services to ensure access for all.

**2.2.3** We will work to ensure that our collections, interpretations, and activities are representative, inclusive of and relevant to the communities we serve.

**2.2.4** North East Museums provides training for staff and volunteers to make sure we offer appropriate support and provision for all visitors. There are comments and complaints procedures which you can use to help us maintain and improve our services.

## **2.3 North East Museums Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for its Staff, Volunteers and People/Organisations We Work With**

**2.3.1** All staff working within North East Museums are retained by Newcastle City Council (NCC) and as such are required to comply with and support the NCC Equality Policy.

**2.3.2** It is North East Museums's aim that our processes and procedures do not reduce opportunity for anyone across the organisation regardless of their situation and provide equality of opportunity across the organisation. Everyone working within North East Museums on a paid or voluntary has a responsibility to apply this principle in practice.

## **3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY**

### **3.1 Aims**

**3.1.1** In fulfilling its mission and in taking forward its work with audiences and communities, North East Museums seeks to reflect the diversity of its communities and users through:

- collection and interpretation of objects, archives, and associated information (see appendix 1 point 8)
- diversity in its displays and exhibitions
- events, learning, outreach, and volunteering programmes
- online activities and digital opportunities
- diversity in our workforce, volunteers and board members
- Maintaining an active dialogue with diverse communities to inform the above

**3.2** The objectives of this policy are to:

- strive for excellence in the delivery of service to users from under-represented backgrounds and to become an exemplar of best practice
- ensure that North East Museums meets all its obligations under relevant Diversity, Equality & Access legislation
- actively encourage participation in the activities of North East Museums by people from under-represented backgrounds as service users, staff, and volunteers
- Meet, where possible, the communication needs of residents whose first language is not English or who require alternatively formatted materials, to ensure maximum participation in our programmes and use of our facilities
- ensure that all contractors, consultants and outside agencies working with, or within, North East Museums meet the same standards as we would expect to meet ourselves.

- provide all staff/volunteers with adequate guidelines, information, and training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively and with confidence
- develop collections, exhibitions, and activities to represent and appeal to the range of backgrounds and interests of people living in our communities today
- encourage dialogue between people of different ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds, to promote understanding of each other
- deliver the organisation's Mission, Vision, and Values in line with all North East Museums/NCC relevant policies, procedures, processes & guidelines

#### **4. HOW WILL NORTH EAST MUSEUMS IMPLEMENT THIS POLICY?**

##### **4.1 North East Museums will achieve its aims and objectives through:**

- implementing inclusive policies, practices, procedures, and guidelines which are regularly monitored, reviewed, and updated
- Ensuring our recruitment processes are truly inclusive
- provision of accessible formats and languages for the presentation and delivery of key information within our venues, and in our published and promotional material
- ensuring that all North East Museums contractors, consultants and outside agencies working for or with the organisation, or on our premises, adopt and observe the provisions of Newcastle City Council's Equality Policy (see appendix 1 point 1) and this Policy
- ensuring North East Museums' venues are as physically, sensorial, and intellectually accessible as possible
- establishing and maintaining robust consultation networks with its visitors, service users, community organisations, cultural partners, and stakeholders
- facilitation of a staff Equalities Working Group (EWG)
- embedding in our organisation the fact that the delivery of this policy is a responsibility of every individual, team, department, service, and venue
- providing training for staff and volunteers to make sure we offer appropriate support to all visitors
- providing mechanisms to receive comments and complaints to help us maintain and improve our services

#### **5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

**5.1** Effective engagement with people with protected characteristics is the responsibility of every employee, volunteer, and member of governing bodies.

**5.2** Every member of staff and every volunteer will have responsibility for:

- contributing towards providing a world-class, inclusive service

- familiarising, implementing, and promoting the Equal Opportunities policies and procedures of Newcastle City Council and North East Museums' Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (EEDI)
- implementing and promoting inclusive programmes not tolerating and seeking to eradicate racism, bullying, harassment, victimisation (see appendix 1 point 2), microaggressions, direct/indirect discrimination and discrimination by association against individuals on any grounds
- participating in relevant training and development to maintain a commitment to inclusion and to increase skills and knowledge in the fields of cultural Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- identifying personal and organisational skills and knowledge gaps in EEDI issues
- understanding the duties and responsibilities appropriate for their role

## **6. VENUE AND TEAM EQUALITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

**6.1** There are key work areas that are the responsibility of all North East Museums venues, and teams. These assist in the delivery of the organisation's delivery of our Mission and Vision and supports North East Museums Business Planning and these are:

- the undertaking of an Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA) process when there are significant changes in our policies, processes, or service delivery
- ensuring that staff receive relevant EEDI training and are aware of and understand this Policy/NCC Equality Policy
- dealing with concerns or complaints by colleagues in line with NCC's Dignity at Work Policy

## **7. AREAS OF PARTICULAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR STAFF GROUPS**

**7.1** Some groups of staff will have responsibility for the delivery of specific areas of this EEDI Policy. These areas are NOT exclusive to specific groups identified, and DO NOT exclude any staff, either from their responsibilities for delivering an inclusive service, or from identifying opportunities to improve and develop this service. As part of North East Museums' planning process guidance will be issued to all staff on the responsibility of their teams/venues.

### **7.2 Challenging and reporting inappropriate behaviour**

We are committed to promoting equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion and will take steps to challenge discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in everything we do.

All staff are responsible for challenging and reporting inappropriate behaviour in line with North East Museums' Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

If a member of staff wants to challenge inappropriate behaviour, they can in the first instance discuss it with:

- your line manager
- Senior Manager/Director
- HR adviser/ Trade union Representative

Depending on the nature of the incident North East Museums has a few ways to respond to an issue. The policies and procedures found in Appendix 1 are in place to challenge inappropriate behaviour by staff, trustees, or volunteers.

### **Glossary of terms**

**Diversity** – diversity is about recognising, valuing, and taking account of people's different backgrounds, knowledge, skills, and experiences, and encouraging and using those differences to create a productive and effective workforce.

**Equality** – is the state of being equal in status, rights, or opportunities

**Equity** – recognises that each person has different circumstances and resources, and allocates resources in a way which ensures an equal outcome

**Inclusion** - is the practice of including people in a way that is fair for all, values everyone and empowers each person to be themselves

**Microaggression** - a comment or action that negatively targets a marginalized group of people. A microaggression can be intentional or accidental. It is a form of discrimination. People who use microaggressions may mean no harm toward the person or group they use it against.

More definitions can be found here: [Your A-Z D&I Glossary - Hive Learning](#)

### **What do I do if I am worried about discrimination or harassment in my organisation?**

In the first instance please refer to the policies and procedures referenced in Appendix 1

The following information can offer help about other steps you can take:

- If you think you have been unfairly discriminated against, you can read what the government advise here. information on legal duties can help you understand the different types of discrimination that exist.
- If you think you might have been treated unfairly or want assistance on issues relating to equality and human rights, you can contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service. Their website offers BSL (British Sign Language) interpretation, web chat services and a contact us form. You can call them on 0808 800 0082 or textphone: 0808 800 0084.
- Citizens Advice have separate guides to what you can do if you have experienced unlawful discrimination outside of employment and if you are being discriminated against in the workplace. This service can also be used by volunteers.

- Crimes committed against someone because of their disability, transgender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation are hate crimes and should be reported to the police. Learn more and get links on how to report on the [True Vision website](#).
- Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) has a [guide for what employees and employers of all sizes must and should do when discrimination happens or is alleged within the workplace \(PDF, 335 KB\)](#).
- You have rights to speak up about harm in your organisation, commonly known as 'whistleblowing'. See [contact Protect](#).
- Read the [Acas guidance on dealing with discrimination at work](#).



## Appendix 1

### North East Museums, NCC & Arts Council Policies, Procedures, Guidelines & Documents

#### **Newcastle City Council (See Newcastle City Council Intranet for Links)**

1. NCC Equality Policy
2. Dignity at Work Policy
3. Maternity/Paternity Policy
4. Disability Related Leave Process
5. Grievance & Complaints Policy

#### **North East Museums**

6. [Access Information](#) (Internal link only)
7. [Accessible Information Guidelines \(draft\)](#) (Internal link only)
8. [Collections Development Policy for Museums and Galleries](#)
9. [Customer Service Standards](#) (Internal link only)
10. [Ethics Policy](#)
11. [Research Code of Practice](#)
12. [Volunteer policy 2020](#)
13. [Safeguarding Policy & Procedure](#)
14. [Confidential Reporting Policy](#)

#### **Arts Council England (ACE)**

15. [ACE - Lets Create](#)

#### **Other**

16. [Equality Act 2010](#)

A large print version of this policy is available from North East Museums.

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