

# COASTArts

## Equal Opportunities Policy

### STATEMENT OF INTENT

Cromer and Sheringham Art and Literary Festival (CASALF) recognises that individuals and groups may experience disadvantage and discriminatory treatment. It is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful and unjustifiable discriminatory treatment and reducing disadvantage in all its activities.

We, the members of CASALF, are committed to providing quality, value for money services that are responsive to the needs of, and accessible to, all sections of the community. This commitment means treating everyone fairly and justly. We will resist and challenge discrimination and will not unlawfully or unjustifiably discriminate against individuals or groups on the grounds of:

age; disability; health; language; marital, family or personal circumstance; material status; nationality or citizenship; political opinion; religion or belief; race or ethnic origin; sex or gender; sexual orientation; social class; unrelated criminal conviction; or any other condition or requirement which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

We all have a responsibility to support and implement this policy.

### POLICY AIMS

We recognise that discrimination and disadvantage exist in society and take many forms, with some individuals and groups suffering multiple and simultaneous discrimination.

We are committed to organising inclusive events by working towards eliminating unlawful and unjustifiable discrimination and reducing disadvantage. To achieve our goal we will work towards integrating equal opportunities into all our policy development, implementation, evaluation and review processes.

### Community Advocates

As advocates for our community, we aim:

1. To establish clear, effective, appropriate and inclusive two-way communication with the community in order to:
  - inform everyone about our policies, services and performance;
  - encourage everyone to participate in the development and application of those policies and practices; and to
  - determine and take account of the range of needs and future aspirations.
2. To encourage all sections of the community to participate fully in community life.

3. To influence individuals and organisations to reject discrimination and adopt an equalities attitude by our example.
4. To promote the needs and aspirations of all sections of the community in all our dealings with other organisations and to refrain from supporting any organisation that actively promotes or practises unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination.
5. To challenge all unlawful or unjustifiable discriminatory behaviour.

### **Service Provision**

In providing or commissioning services, we aim:

1. To treat everyone fairly, courteously and reasonably and to encourage such treatment in return from our service users.
2. To develop and provide or commission services that seek to meet the actual, not the presumed, needs of all sections of the community. This means researching the needs of our community and listening to, welcoming and responding to their comments on our services.
3. To set eligibility criteria for services only where these can be justified and to apply those criteria consistently.
4. To work towards making all our buildings, communications and services safe and accessible to everyone.
5. To ensure contractors supplying services on our behalf comply with all equal opportunities legislation and are fully aware of our policy.
6. To ensure that tenders for services are welcomed from suitably qualified contractors from all sections of the community.
7. To take appropriate and effective action on all complaints about discriminatory treatment or harassment and to ensure that complainants are not victimised.

### **ACHIEVING THE POLICY**

We will achieve our aims by placing equality at the heart of everything we do. We will work towards integrating equal opportunities into all our activities and processes.

Every member of CASALF, and contractors providing a service on behalf of CASALF, has a role to play in achieving the aims stated in this policy.

### **LEGISLATION**

Individuals, as well as CASALF itself, can be held liable for breaches of the legislation. It is unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of disability, gender, marital status or race; induce others to discriminate; and victimise or harass individuals who complain about discrimination.

The 5 main acts dealing with discrimination are:

- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Human Rights Act 1998

Policy reviewed and adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2016 for and on behalf of the Coast Art and Literary Festival.