

# DanceEast

## Equal Opportunities Policy

### 1. Commitment to Equal Opportunities

DanceEast is committed to creating a stimulating and supportive working environment based on mutual respect and trust where equality of opportunity is offered to all our employees, job applicants and participants. We recognise the link between equality and high quality performance and we understand that ensuring equality of opportunity is essential for the successful and innovative development of our organisation. We are committed to providing equal opportunities and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.

We acknowledge our responsibility to identify, value and respond appropriately to varying needs and perspectives. No one should receive less favourable treatment before or during employment on the grounds of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, disability, marital/civil partnership status or religious belief.

DanceEast deplores all forms of harassment and seeks to ensure that the working environment is sympathetic to all its employees and participants. We have adopted a procedure which includes examples of unacceptable behaviour constituting harassment or bullying. For further information please refer to our Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedure.

This policy is founded on the firm belief that recognising the difference in people creates a productive environment in which everyone feels valued and can give of their best to successfully achieve our organisational objectives.

**Every individual within DanceEast has a personal responsibility for the implementation of this policy.**

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to every aspect of our organisation, including recruitment and selection processes, remuneration, conditions of work, training and development of staff, promotion, selection for redundancy and/or dismissal.

As you would expect, this policy applies equally to the treatment of our contractors, partners, participants, suppliers and others outside the organisation. It also extends to those groups and individuals within society who experience discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of particular social circumstances and who are not covered by existing legislation.

### **3. Implementing equality of opportunity**

#### **3.1 Management responsibility**

Directors, managers and senior staff have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is implemented and observed. They have a key role in ensuring that individuals are recruited, selected, promoted and treated fairly using objective, relevant criteria. No one must be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions which are not necessary for the performance of their job or which constitute direct or indirect unfair discrimination. The Head of Operations will provide support to enable this. Directors, managers and senior staff also have a responsibility to act as positive role models encouraging and supporting diversity and equality of opportunity in the workplace.

#### **3.2 Recruitment**

Recruitment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria. Job and person specifications are based on relevant requirements for the effective performance of the role. When advertising roles we seek to use a variety of routes to encourage applications from as wide a range of applicants as possible. Job advertisements are constructed from the job and person specification and include only criteria that are essential for the role to avoid exclusion of potential applicants. Interviews are conducted on an objective basis against criteria for the role. All interviewers receive appropriate training in interviewing skills including Equal Opportunities and current discrimination legislation.

#### **3.3 Training**

All those involved in managing employment including training, performance management, recruitment, selection, promotion and dismissal decisions receive appropriate training in this policy and the key principles that support it. This ensures that they are aware of the importance of valuing diversity and relevant discrimination law. We recognise that all our employees should have the opportunity to develop as individuals to maximise their own potential and contribution to our organisation. All employees have access to development and training opportunities through our performance management processes.

#### **3.4 Disability and Reasonable adjustments**

The requirements of job applicants and existing employees who have or have had a disability will be reviewed to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to enter into or remain in employment with the Company. This will include working with the individual and advisors to identify the most appropriate solution. Access to promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment are open to all, and every reasonable effort is made to ensure that disabled employees participate fully in the workplace.

Participants who are disabled or become disabled during the course of their

activity should inform DanceEast and advise us of any "reasonable adjustments", as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, to their participation conditions which they consider to be necessary. Careful consideration will be given to any proposals of this nature and, where reasonable and reasonably practicable, such adjustments will be made. A failure to consider properly or make a reasonable adjustment is unlawful discrimination. There may however be circumstances where it will not be reasonable or reasonably practicable for DanceEast to accommodate those proposals and where less favourable treatment may be justified in accordance with the statutory provisions.

### **3.5 Work and Families**

We recognise that in order to get the best from our workforce we need to support employees with family and domestic responsibilities. In addition to statutory entitlements, we will consider flexible working options for our employees where operational needs can be met. Further information on flexible working and statutory entitlements can be found in our Flexible Working policy.

### **3.6 Religious Beliefs**

We recognise the need to respect and value cultural difference. We will accommodate the religious beliefs of our employees including provision of time off to attend religious festivals subject to the usual annual leave arrangements and operational requirements.

### **3.7 Employees' responsibility**

All employees have a right to equality of opportunity and a duty to implement this policy. Breach of this policy is potentially a serious disciplinary matter. Anyone who believes that he or she may have been victimised, harassed or discriminated against is entitled to raise the matter through the Grievance Procedure or Harassment Procedure.

### **3.8 Monitoring**

All employees, job applicants and participants will be invited to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form which will be used solely for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy.

### **3.9 Equality Schemes and Action Plans**

DanceEast is fully aware of its responsibilities as a provider of services to the local community. In order to recognise and promote diversity we have a diversity action plan which incorporates race, disability and gender equality issues. The plan is owned and regularly reviewed by our Board.

## **4. Remedies**

**4.1** Inappropriate behaviour between work colleagues constituting bullying, harassment or victimisation, will not be tolerated. Individuals who believe that they are being discriminated against or who witness discriminatory behaviour should raise this with their manager, or if preferred the Head of Operations.

#### **4.2 Grievance**

Any member of staff may use the Grievance Procedure or Harassment and Bullying Procedure to raise a concern or complaint about perceived discriminatory behaviour. No individual will be disadvantaged for raising such a concern. However, we expect that any such complaint will be truthful and made in good faith. Every case will be treated seriously and in confidence unless it is proven to be malicious or fraudulent.

Anyone working on behalf of DanceEast who wishes to raise a concern or complaint should approach a Senior Manager or the Head of Operations, who will investigate the situation.

#### **4.3 Conduct**

Any employee who breaches the Equal Opportunities policy will be subject to our Conduct and Capability procedure. In serious cases such behaviour will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

Questions relating to the application of this policy should be directed to the Head of Operations.

#### **Definitions**

Direct discrimination occurs where someone receives less favourable treatment than another in comparable circumstances for a reason prohibited by the law. Unlike the other forms of discrimination, direct discrimination on the grounds of age can be justified in certain circumstances.

Indirect discrimination is where everyone is treated in the same way but the treatment adversely affects one group more than another and cannot be objectively justified, eg requiring everyone to work full time will normally adversely affect more women than men and will be unlawful indirect sex discrimination unless there is a good reason, unrelated to sex, as to why the particular job has to be done on a full-time basis.

Victimisation occurs when an individual is treated less favourably than colleagues because he/she has taken action to assert their statutory rights or assisted a colleague with information in that regard.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power which is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the

person on the receiving end. Examples of bullying would include picking on someone or setting him or her up to fail or making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to sex, gender reassignment, race or ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or any other personal characteristic which:

- has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his or her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him or her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Examples of harassment would include: physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault, unwelcome sexual advances, demeaning comments about a person's appearance, unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature or about an individual's age, the use of obscene gestures and the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person, eg magazines, calendars or pin-ups.

Using any form of electronic media including email, internet or mobile phone to undertake any of the above.