

## Equality & Diversity Policy

This policy applies to all trustees, staff, volunteers, and committee members.

ASO recognises, respects and values diversity in its trustees, employees, volunteers, and members. ASO shall encourage diversity and seek to implement a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of its work and responsibilities. The trustees, and committee members of ASO are also committed to ensure that it does not discriminate against people with disabilities. This policy will be delivered through action planning, effective monitoring, and a willingness to tackle problems where they arise.

### **Diversity**

ASO will treat all people with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all. It will promote equality of opportunity and diversity. It will eliminate all forms of discrimination on grounds of the nine protected characteristics (UK Equality Act 2010): **Age, Disability, Gender Assignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Race (including, colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), Pregnancy and Maternity, Religion or belief, Gender, Sexual orientation**

ASO shall encourage all people it works with to contribute to an environment in which people feel comfortable expressing how they feel and what they need, knowing that they will be treated with respect and that their contribution will be valued.

### **Equal opportunities**

The trustees and committee members of ASO are committed to ensure that it does not discriminate against people who identify under the nine protected characteristics. No trustee, committee member, member, or volunteer should receive less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic that they might have. Nor will such a person be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements, which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

- Encourage, promote and celebrate diversity in all of ASO 's activities and services and to recognise and value the differences and individual contribution that all people make to ASO.
- Ensure trustees, committee members, members, and volunteers are representative of the community served and that the appointment policies for trustees and committee members are fair and robust.
- To ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality.
- To create environments free from harassment and discrimination.
- To make a willingness to accept and implement this policy to be a necessary qualification for any trustee position in ASO.
- To confront and challenge discrimination where and whenever it arises.
- To ensure, so far as is practicable, that all the services of ASO are accessible to all people.

### **Responsibility for Implementation**

The overall responsibility for ensuring adherence to, and implementation, of this policy lies with the Board of Trustees of the ASO.

### **Method of Implementation**

ASO intends to implement this policy by:

- Ensuring that trustees, committee members, volunteers, contracted staff, and members, reflect the wider community.
- Ensuring that trustees, committee members, volunteers, contracted staff, and members are made aware, understand, agree with, and are willing to implement this policy. All trustees and committee members will be given a copy of this policy as part of their induction.

- Monitoring the services, publicity and events provided by ASO, to ensure that they are accessible to all sections of the population and do not discriminate and taking active steps to ensure that participation is representative.

All trustees, committee members and those working in positions of authority within the organisation are encouraged to undertake free online learning available from these outlets to challenge thinking and raise awareness of diversity and equality issues:

<https://www.udemy.com/course/gender-equality-and-sexual-diversity/>

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/diversity-inclusion-workplace>

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/diversity-inclusion-awareness>

### **Monitoring and Reviewing**

ASO will regularly review the implementation of its Equality and Diversity Policy. The responsibility for implementing and developing the Policy rests with the trustees of ASO. The board of trustees should review this Equality and Diversity Policy at 3-year intervals or as appropriate.

**Last Reviewed by Trustees:** April 2022

**Date of Next Review:** April 2025

