

Scottish Environment LINK is committed to encouraging equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion among our workforce and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society in Scotland, and for our employees, volunteers, and member organisations' staff to feel respected. LINK, in pursuing our work, is also committed against unlawful discrimination of our staff, volunteers, including Board members and member organisations' staff or the public.

LINK's Equal Opportunities Policy sets out the standards to be achieved by staff in relation to providing people with equality of opportunity and valuing people as individuals who have diverse experiences, backgrounds and beliefs. LINK's approach to harassment and bullying is set out in our zero tolerance policy and we are an anti-racist and anti-oppression organisation. Links to these policies are below.

We will make sure that dignity, equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion are at the heart of all aspects of our work. We will ensure that these purposes are fundamental to all our activities and underpin our policies, procedures, and operating practices.

We are committed to creating a culture that encourages and supports all individuals to develop and reach their full potential, and recognise that in the interests of equity, some individuals may need more support to achieve equality of opportunity, access, service, or outcomes.

This policy sits alongside our Equal Opportunities policy and is in place to detail our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion by providing equal opportunities to all through proactive equality and equity, eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and upholding everyone's human rights.

This policy is also underpinned by our values including:

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|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| • Integrity | • Honesty | • Fairness |
| • Objectivity | • Dignity | • Flexibility |
| • Accountability
and stewardship | • Respect | • Accessibility |
| • Openness | • Inclusion | • Empowerment |
| | • Equality | • Coproduction |

Proactive Equality and Equity

At LINK, we believe in proactive equality so that everyone is treated with respect and ensuring that all have equal access and equal opportunities. For example, creating accessible materials for all to read.

However, we do recognise that not one size fits all and we also believe in equity by making tailored personalised adjustments for certain people in different environments so that fair treatment is given to everyone.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity includes all the attributes that reflect the make-up of society, including ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, religion/faith, disability and recognises the value of difference. We are committed to understanding each other and truly embracing every individual.

Our approach to inclusion is a values-driven practice to create a diverse, open and welcoming environment through concrete commitments and actions, and being transparent with our shortfalls and successes.

We value different identities, knowledge, skills, ideas and experiences, and want to create an effective, inclusive, innovative workforce to increase our effectiveness as a movement.

Discrimination, including direct, indirect and by association or perception

LINK's approach to eliminating discrimination is outlined in our Equal Opportunities policy. Our approach is publicly available in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, anti-racism and anti-oppression statement. LINK's zero tolerance policy on harassment and bullying covers our approach to harassment, bullying and victimisation.

Human Rights

Human rights are based on core principles such as dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence and are protected by law under the Human Rights Act 1998. Respecting and upholding Human Rights across LINK is best practice and is encouraged. Every person in the world has basic human rights and freedoms, and (all types of) discrimination, harassment, and victimisation listed above will not be tolerated in alignment with our zero-tolerance approach. This includes the human right to a healthy environment, a key focus on our work.

Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

Details of LINK's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in the Staff Handbook. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Our commitments

1. **Positive action:** LINK is a Disability Confident Employer and applies positive action to all recruitment and works to support all staff, volunteers and members to ensure they are able to reach their potential.
2. Encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
3. **Accessibility:** Continuing to provide information upon request in a number of different formats. Alternative formats including large print and audio are available on request, when possible. Continuing to ensure, where possible that meetings and

events are accessible by using online meetings and accessible venues whenever possible for face to face events.

4. Creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
5. Providing training for all staff about their rights and responsibilities under this and related policies (see below). Staff responsibilities include helping the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and preventing bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination.
6. Ensuring all staff understand that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, volunteers, members and the public.
7. Taking complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination from employees, volunteers, partners, the public and any others in the course of LINK's work activities seriously. Such acts are dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken.
8. Ensuring opportunities for training, development and progress are available to all staff, who are helped and encouraged to develop their full potential through LINK's Performance and Development Review process, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of LINK.
9. Ensuring decisions concerning staff are based on merit, apart from any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act.
10. Reviewing employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also updating them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
11. Monitoring the make-up of the workforce, where possible, regarding protected characteristics information and socioeconomic background to support equity, equality, diversity and inclusion.
12. Assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion and related policies and supporting action plans, including LINK's Diversity Action Plan and Equality Impact Assessment are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

This policy should particularly be read in conjunction with our:

- [Staff Handbook](#) including the grievance procedure
- [Equal opportunities policy](#)
- [Zero-tolerance to harassment and bullying policy](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, anti-racism and anti-oppression statement](#)
- [Safeguarding policy](#)



Scottish Environment LINK the voice for Scotland's environment

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