



## Equality Policy

### Purpose

Sports Equality is about fairness in sport; equality of access; recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It involves changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to all members of society and allowing everyone the opportunity to realise their talent and full potential.

### Equality Policy Statement

CANI is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and aims to ensure that everyone has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in Paddlesport at all levels and in all roles of the sport, irrespective of age; disability; gender including gender reassignment; race; religious belief; political opinion; marital or civil partnership status; pregnancy or maternity; and sexual orientation. In addition, CANI will endeavour to give all individuals the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic background. This includes members, volunteers, participants, supporters, coaches, employees and job applicants (together known as Stakeholders).

CANI recognises that unlawful and unfair discrimination is unacceptable and will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional. CANI will take, or support, positive action to eliminate individual and institutional discrimination.

### Equality Commitments

- CANI will display its commitment to Sports Equality through the development of an Equality Action Plan which will be reviewed regularly.
- CANI are committed to the Equality Standard and will work through the different levels of the framework as appropriate.
- CANI will provide appropriate guidance to all employees and key volunteers to raise awareness of individual responsibilities and prevent occurrences of all forms of discrimination.
- CANI will work towards the equitable provision of its services within the community and avoid disadvantaging any person by conditions or requirements that cannot be reasonably justified.
- CANI will embed Equal Opportunities into all policies, plans and strategies.
- CANI will fulfil all legal obligations under the Equality legislation.
- CANI will publicise this policy and Equality Action Plan to all employees, volunteers and members through its website, e-zine and club mailings. The policy is also publicised to employees through the staff handbook and to all newly appointed employees through an induction.

### Legal Responsibilities

CANI is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its Stakeholders. CANI recognises and will abide by its legal obligations as defined by all relevant legislation concerning equality, whether this legislation refers to employees, members or other users, and will strive to achieve best practice at all times.

Northern Ireland operates separate pieces of legislation for the following protected characteristics.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender (including gender reassignment)
- Marital and civil partnership status
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Political opinion
- Sexual orientation

Any person seeking further advice on any Equality issues may contact the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland by calling 028 90 500 600, or by e-mailing [information@equalityni.org](mailto:information@equalityni.org). Information on a wide range of Equality issues, including all current relevant legislation, can also be found on their website [www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)

## **Reasonable Adjustments**

CANI recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities. CANI will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled Stakeholders to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully in all CANI activity.

## **Implementation**

CANI Council is responsible for designing and approving this Equality Policy, and is responsible for its effective implementation. CANI Council has nominated the Development Manager as the lead officer with responsibility for equality. The policy will be put onto the CANI website. A copy of the policy will be distributed to all current employees and key volunteers and will be integrated into the induction of new employees and key volunteers. All employees, volunteers and members of CANI have responsibilities to respect, act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of the policy.

Consultants and advisors (and where appropriate suppliers) to CANI will be required to abide by this Policy and it will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by CANI.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

CANI will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and the Equality Action Plan by seeking feedback from its member clubs, and will review the policy regularly. All staff, members, and volunteers will have an opportunity to contribute to the review process.

## **Types of Unlawful Discrimination**

CANI regards any form of unlawful discrimination as serious misconduct and any employee, volunteer or member who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action. Unlawful discrimination can take the following forms:

- **Direct Discrimination** - treating a person less favourably than others would be treated in the same circumstances on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.
- **Indirect Discrimination** - occurs when policies, practices and procedures appear to be applied equally to all, but can in fact disadvantage individuals with a particular protected characteristic. Such policies, practices and procedures are only lawful if they can be objectively justified.
- **Harassment** - described as inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that are objectionable or cause offence to the recipient or any other individual affected by such conduct.
- **Bullying** - described as the misuse of power, the act of criticising persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.
- **Victimisation** - described as when one person is treated less favourably than others because he or she has taken action under one of the relevant Acts / Regulations or provided information about discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour.

## **Complaints and Disciplinary**

To safeguard an individual's rights under the policy, an employee, member or volunteer who believes that he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member or volunteer who violates the association's equality policy. Where the violation of the equality policy, in any of the ways described above, amounts to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.