

Equal Opportunities Policy

Reviewed March 2008

Statement of intent

URBED (Urbanism Environment and Design) Ltd is committed to principles of equal opportunity, in all aspects of its activities. While we have only a small core staff, we work extensively with associates who share our values and practices regarding equality of opportunity. We also expect the other companies we regularly work with in consortia to share these values.

Both in its external policies and procedures and in the process of carrying out consultation studies and training and development activities we aim to eliminate practices of discrimination as they relate to gender, sexual orientation, disability, race or ethnic background, religious belief or background, and age.

The key contact responsible for equal opportunities issues within URBED are members of the Personnel working group (Currently Helene Rudlin, Nick Dodd and Debbie Fuller)

We have in place a number of measures to ensure equal opportunities, which are appropriate and affordable for a small organisation such as URBED. These include:-

Recruitment and Professional Development of our staff

URBED consider our staff to be our greatest asset and take great pride in their continuous development.

- We check all written documentation relating to recruitment to ensure it contravenes none of the following - Equal Pay Act 1970, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003.
- All new employees/ students are informed of all policies and procedures as part of their induction. All employees have access to all policies and procedures that are available on our IT network.
- URBED ensure all staff complete regular (at least annual and within 6 months for new joiners) reviews of their work where training needs can be identified and development targets set.
- URBED make it clear that harassment and bullying by our staff or of our staff is not tolerated. We have clear guide lines who to approach in this situation outlined in our grievance policy - serious acts of discrimination, victimisation or harassment against clients and employees, including trainees,

on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, disability, race or ethnic background, religious belief or background, and age is treated as gross misconduct.

- URBED have clear procedures for handling discipline problems and grievances using our regular work reviews. All employees have open access to managers so issues that arise at other times can be dealt with promptly.
- As a workers cooperative URBED have an open book approach to all business issues/ recruitment – except where there is a need for confidentiality.
- URBED keep clear and monitored records of:
 - Gender, ethnic group and disability status of employees and applicants
 - Job applications and appointments
 - Sick leave
 - Disciplinary action/ grievances
 - Staff working hours (via time sheets)
 - Rates of pay and
 - Training received, for all staff.

Equal opportunities in our consultancy work

- URBED aim to open up involvement and training activities to as wide a client group as possible (while working within a client's needs and policies) and aim to remove barriers to participation – this could include offering on site rather than residential training courses, taking account of accessibility, dietary or other cultural/ religious needs.
- URBED encourage participation in consultation events such as workshops, conferences and exhibitions from people of as varied and diverse a background as possible. This could include using accessible venues and transport, planning events to be sensitive to religious holidays and providing for dietary needs etc. This would also include providing extra support for disabled stakeholders, people with care responsibilities or stakeholders with translation needs, in partnership with our clients.
- URBED make clear that discrimination or harassment of any participants in our training or events on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, disability, race or ethnic background, religious belief or background, and age is not acceptable. We will challenge any such behaviour and exclude offenders from future events if there is no change in behaviour.
- URBED ensure all publications can be made available in large print, translations or other accessible formats as requested in partnership with our clients.
- URBED check all of our publications for references that may be considered offensive or contrary to equal opportunities.

Monitoring and Review

- URBED review our practice and procedures regularly (every three years and as issues are brought to our attention) to take account of new best practice and changes to legislation.