

Purpose

This policy sets out our organisations commitment to diversity and inclusion in the workplace at all levels and provides a framework to achieve our diversity objectives.

We are committed to creating and ensuring a diverse work environment in which everyone is treated fairly, with respect and where everyone feels responsible for the reputation and performance of our organisation, and we represent, support, and reflect the rich diversity of the communities we serve. A commitment to an inclusive and diverse workforce reflects the values and purpose of our organisation.

Diversity refers to characteristics that make individuals different from each other. Diversity encompasses differences in background, qualifications, experiences, and differences in approach and viewpoints. It includes factors such as gender, age, disability, ethnicity, marital or family status, mental health status, criminal history, religious or cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy and language, and other areas of potential difference.

Inclusion occurs when the unique diversities that people bring are valued. Individuals feel respected, safe, and connected, and have opportunities to progress and contribute to organisational success. An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. Our organisation supports and facilitates an inclusive environment that embraces all that makes us different and recognises the benefits that these differences make to each employee and the organisation.

Scope

This policy applies to all Board Directors, Board Committee members, officers, employees, volunteers, students, contractors, consultants, suppliers, and other persons that act on behalf of our organisation such as agencies or brokers.

Definitions

Board Director is any person who is a Director of the Board of Afford

Board Committee member is any person who a Board Director of the Board of Afford and a member of a Board Committee and any person who attends a Board Committee as a subject matter expert.

CEO means Chief Executive Officer

Executive Director means Chief Operations Officer (COO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Executive Director Consumer Experience and Safeguarding, Executive Director People and Organisational Development.

Client is a person/people who use our organisation's services.

Employees are people who work for our organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

Volunteer is a person who works for our organisation in an unpaid capacity.

Student is a person who is undertaking a placement with our organisation through a formal arrangement with an educational institution.

Contractor is a person who is engaged by our organisation to work on a short-term contract, to provide a body of work, engaged through a labour hire company to fill vacant shifts.

Our Organisation is a description of 'Afford'.

Services are the various supports we provide, irrespective of what type they are.

Policy Statements

1. Our organisation will actively seek to represent, support, and reflect the rich diversity of the communities we serve, the clients we support, and our employees.
2. Our organisation will take an active role in promoting diversity and inclusion as a provider of disability services.
3. Clients and employees will be able to bring their unique, authentic selves and feel safe, secure, and supported by our organisation.
4. Our organisation values consultation and diverse voices and will use this to inform, influence and enhance our decision making to improve the quality of our services and the experience of our employees.
5. Diversity can broaden the pool for recruitment of high-quality employees, enhance employee retention, improve our organisations brand and reputation, and foster a closer connection with and better understanding of our clients. It is important that our organisation is able to attract, retain and motivate employees from the widest possible pool of talent. With this consideration, our organisation will:
 - a. Take a human rights based approach to decision making, in accordance with our Human Rights Policy, and aim to develop and promote a workforce based on inclusion where individuals, irrespective of individuals gender, age, disability, ethnicity, marital or family status, mental health status, criminal history, religious or cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy and language, are respected, supported and provided with appropriate opportunities.
 - b. Aim for our Board and Management composition to reflect the diversity of our employees, clients, and communities in which we work.
 - c. Recognise the differing needs at different stages of life, e.g., study, family responsibilities and retirement. Therefore, we endeavour to support and accommodate individual changing life needs so that our employees reach their full potential.
 - d. Actively seek to create career and employment pathways, leadership training opportunities, and diverse leadership representation for employees in underrepresented groups.
6. Our organisation will actively seek to recruit and retain a diverse workforce as part of our Recruitment and Selection Policies and Procedures, by proactively sourcing candidates from diverse and inclusive backgrounds as well as identifying qualities and backgrounds in teams that may be underrepresented.
7. An Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement must be included in all job advertisements and have specific strategies and measures aimed at attracting candidates with particular attributes underrepresented within our organisation's workforce. All employees involved in the recruitment, selection and development of

employees must undertake these duties in a way that supports inclusion and equal opportunity as outlined in this policy.

8. Organisation employees must ensure recruitment and selection processes across all levels of our organisation are structured so that a diverse range of candidates are sourced and considered. This includes understanding how institutional barriers and unconscious bias affect people's employment opportunities, making the recruitment process accessible to all candidates by advertising positions both broadly and in specific publications, using professional recruitment services where required, and providing guidance on its recruitment processes.
9. Our organisation will undertake reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process, role specifications and workplaces, wherever practicable, to facilitate recruitment and selection of diverse candidates. This includes, but is not limited to, adjustments to work environment, the scope and hours of available roles, role types themselves, and provision of adaptive equipment and technology.
10. Our organisation's goal is to create a safe and respectful environment. We will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, vilification, and victimisation including where it is based on religious, political, or personal views. All employees are required to follow the Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy at all times.
11. Our organisation will maintain commitment to gender diversity and the fundamental principle that gender identification is not a barrier to participate in our workforce, management, Executive or Senior Leadership teams, and our Board.
12. Our organisation will maintain commitment to an inclusive workplace that embraces and promotes diversity as part of our culture and leading inclusive and accessible services. This involves supportive and inclusive policies and practices within our practices. Initiatives and areas of focus will include:
 - a. Understand the visible and invisible barriers to access, inclusion and belonging in measurable ways.
 - b. Measurement of key diversity indicators in line with best practice including but not limited to, culturally and linguistically diverse, gender identification, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, and disability.
 - c. Grow the cultural awareness of our employees through induction, training and other programs promoting cultural awareness and diversity.
 - d. An organisation Reconciliation Action Plan
 - e. Diversity action groups formed and functional. We will hear the voice of our employees and clients and learn from experts to regularly update our thinking and practice.
 - f. Share opportunities, experiences and expertise in the disability sector and community to accelerate and grow inclusion for people living with disability.
 - g. Establish, growth and maintain partnerships and relationships with strategic alliances to promote the interests of culturally and linguistically diverse, gender diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people living with disability.

- h. Develop thought leadership and advocacy initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion internally and externally.

13. The Board will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy, including in relation Board diversity.

Breach of Policy

Director or Board Committee member breaches will be dealt with by the Board Chair.

Employee breaches of this policy will be dealt with by the CEO.

Responsibilities

All Directors and Board Committee members must adhere to this policy.

The Board Chair must ensure Directors and Board Committee members understand and adhere to this policy and that the Board skills and experience matrix reflects the organisations policy positions.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and up to date, and the Executive Director People and Organisational Development will monitor the policy for effectiveness and compliance.

Where a position or organisational unit title changes or is no longer the title that appears in a policy document, and where a position and/or deliberative body named in the policy approval pathway has changed, the nearest appropriate equivalent body or position will have the same role and/or responsibility until that policy is updated.

Associated Documents

Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Human Rights Policy

Recruitment and Selection Policies and Procedures

Exceptions

Any exception granted will require approval confirmed in writing via email by the CEO.

Consultation

The following were consulted during the development of this policy:

Board

People and Culture Committee

Executive Leadership Team

Document Review Group

Policy Owner

The owner of this policy is the Board.

Policy Approval

This policy was approved by the Board.