

Equal Opportunities Policy

Manchester Digital Laboratory (MadLab)

Our commitment

MadLab is committed to providing equal opportunities and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment or to users of our services. This policy is intended to assist MadLab in putting this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees, volunteers or anyone else acting on behalf of MadLab (be that through a placement, internship, commission or programme of work) do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

MadLab will aim to ensure that its Board of Advisors is representative of the community and users which it serves. The Board of Advisors will be responsible for ensuring that the equal opportunities policy is properly implemented, monitored and reviewed. The members of the Board of Advisors will aim to undertake equal opportunities training.

1. Introduction

1.1 MadLab is committed to encouraging and achieving a working environment which is underpinned by fairness to all individuals - be they employees, artists, audiences, volunteers - where equality and diversity is recognised, encouraged and valued, and the concept of individual responsibility is accepted by all.

1.2 It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment on grounds of sex, gender history or gender reassignment, pregnancy, age, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or is a civil partner. It is also unlawful to discriminate, without justification, on grounds of disability or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to employment caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services.

1.3 Selection for employment and advancement will be on the basis of suitability, qualifications and aptitude to carry out the duties of the post. Eligibility criteria for all posts will reflect the ethos of MadLab.

1.4 Legal framework

1.4.1 The existing law cannot itself ensure that any policy of non-discrimination will work effectively. This will be achieved only when the organisation (staff, volunteers, users and the Board of Advisors) examine critically their attitudes to people and ensure that no trace of discrimination is allowed to affect their judgement. All staff and volunteers should be aware of

the forms which unlawful discrimination can take, guard against them and avoid any action which might influence others to discriminate unlawfully.

Current relevant legislation comprises the following:

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended)
- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Gender Re-assignment Regulations 1999
- Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Employment Act 2002
- Fixed-time Work Regulations 2002
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Work and Families Act 2006
- Equality Act 2006
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007
- Equality Act 2010

2. Staffing & Volunteering

2.1 MadLab is committed to undertaking open recruitment and selection procedures and wherever possible all vacancies will be advertised and fair and equitable shortlisting and interview processes will be followed.

2.2 Employees of and volunteers working with the organisation will be informed of the equal opportunities policy and receive training on equal opportunities issues as appropriate.

2.3 MadLab will also ensure that the changing and developing needs of staff and volunteers are recognised and appropriate adjustments made to working conditions and/or training provided.

2.4 MadLab operates disciplinary, grievance or complaints procedures which all staff will be appraised of. Behaviour or actions against the spirit and /or letter of the equal opportunity laws, on which this policy is based, will be considered serious disciplinary matters.

2.5 MadLab is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce. Our aim is that each employee feels respected and able to give of their best. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness, and not to discriminate on grounds of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

2.6 This policy aims to promote an inclusive culture and working environment where:

- The diversity of all employees is respected and valued
- All employees have the opportunity to receive fair treatment in an environment free from discrimination and harassment
- Opportunities for promotion, training, and continued employment are provided to all staff based on merit and ability in relation their role
- No employee or job applicant shall be disadvantaged by requirements that cannot be shown to be relevant to the job they applied for or hold
- All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation
- No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated

2.7 Job Description and Person Specification. The duties of a job, placement (or mentoring scheme) and the requirements of a person to perform it, will be identified to ensure that the job is fulfilling the needs intended and that the educational qualifications, work experience and personal attributes required are essential to the performance of the job. These should be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain valid.

2.8 Publicising Vacancies (and Opportunities). In selecting the most effective methods for publicising vacancies and opportunities, managers should carefully consider any under-represented groups and how best to target them, whilst making it clear that the final selection will be solely on the basis of suitability for the post. In all job advertisements MadLab will include a statement that it aims to be an Equal Opportunities Employer.

3. Recruitment and Selection

3.1 Advertisements must not be confined unjustifiably to geographic areas or publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the number of applicants from a particular group.

3.2 Eligibility criteria used for recruitment selection or promotion must be related to ability to do the job.

3.3 Eligibility criteria will be made known to prospective applicants.

3.4 When constituting selection panels, every effort will be made to ensure both male and female representation.

3.5 All applications must be submitted on official application forms and appointments made following a selection process which provides for shortlisting and interview panels.

3.6 Decisions relating to the selection process and the reasons for such decisions will be recorded at each stage of the selection process. All documentation in relation to selection panels will be retained for a period of at least a year.

3.7 Contracts of Employment. Contracts will include reference to the Equality & Diversity Policy and to where further information can be found on this topic. The responsibility of each individual to comply with the Equality & Diversity Policy should be stressed in the documents, together with the fact that any breaches of these policies may be dealt with MadLab's Disciplinary Procedures.

4. Accessibility

4.1 MadLab aims to make its services accessible to as wide a range of the public as possible and in order to achieve this will take steps to remove barriers which prevent potential audience, participants members and users from having equal access to the organisation's activities. This will include:

- ensuring that activities take place in venues and premises which are accessible to disabled people
- providing facilities for disabled people to enable them to participate fully in activities e.g. interpreters, assistants
- ensuring that the design of publicity material takes account of the needs of disabled people both in terms of print, format, information on access
- ensuring that the design of publicity material takes account of the needs of users whose first language is not English
- ensuring that the design of publicity material takes account of the needs of users who do not have access to the internet
- encouraging and enabling people from underrepresented groups to attend and participate
- in so far as is possible, for activities to be free-of-charge or subsidised
- where the above is not possible, by providing reduced-fee or bursary places (for example, for courses)

5. Responsibilities

5.1 MadLab is responsible for maintaining fair, consistent and objective procedures for matters relating to equality of opportunity and diversity and for ensuring that employees are appropriately trained.

5.2 The Managing Director has overall responsibility for the internal organisation, control and management of the policy. This includes responsibility for the collation and retention of the records necessary to enable the organisation to have in place an effective monitoring system.

- Managing her/his employees in a way which is consistent with this policy
- Setting a good example and ensuring all employees understand the standards expected from them
- Following agreed procedures
- Dealing firmly with breaches in accordance with MadLab' disciplinary policy

5.3 All employees and volunteers are responsible for:

- Co-operating with any measures introduced by the organisation in relation to equal opportunities
- Treating colleagues and others (including artists, contractors, audiences, volunteers etc) with respect and in ways which are consistent with this policy
- Challenging and reporting breaches

6. Monitoring of Equal Opportunities

6.1 All personnel procedures and conditions of service will be reviewed on a regular basis, to identify and eliminate processes, practices or eligibility criteria which may discriminate (directly or indirectly) against any particular group or category of employees.

6.2 Job applicants will be asked for anonymous monitoring data on a sheet that can be detached from the application form. Monitoring data will be kept separate from the selection process. Job applicants will be informed that the monitoring data will only be used for equality monitoring and not for short listing.

6.3 All information collected will remain strictly confidential. Personnel records will be kept in a format which enables analysis to be made of the numbers of job applicants, appointments and employees in various categories, including:

- gender
- disability
- nationality
- ethnic origin
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation

- age

6.4 These analyses will be provided on an annual basis to the Board of Advisors for identification of trends and any remedial action.

6.5 By monitoring the various areas above MadLab can check and review whether current recruitment, promotion, training and general employment practices, as well as volunteer recruitment and management, are reaching and protecting the full range of possible candidates and help to guard employees against any potential for discrimination.

7. Discrimination and Harassment

7.1 MadLab will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment, by or against its employees.

8. Complaints

8.1 The Board of Advisors will take prompt action to investigate any grievance concerning discrimination or harassment.

9. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Directors every two years