**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

**Policy**

1. The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Board and Chief Executive to the promotion of equality of opportunity by CITB NI.
2. It is CITB NI’s policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

* Gender, including gender reassignment
* Marital or civil partnership status
* Having or not having dependants
* Religious belief or political opinion
* Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller)
* Disability
* Sexual orientation
* Age

1. CITB NI is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, learning and development or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination. This policy applies to all those who work or apply to work for the organisation.
2. CITB NI recognises that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice, but also makes sound business sense. CITB NI’s equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
3. CITB NI is committed to:

* promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
* promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect
* preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
* fulfilling all legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
* complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
* taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
* regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct with could lead to disciplinary proceedings

1. This policy is fully supported by Line Managers / Directors and has been agreed with NIPSA Trade Union.

**Implementation**

1. The Chief Executive has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and the Human Resources Manager for its day-to-day operation. Each Director and Line manager also has responsibilities and CITB NI expects all staff to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective.
2. In order to implement this policy, CITB NI shall:

* Communicate the policy to all staff, job applicants and relevant others.
* Incorporate specific duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of staff.
* Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate including induction and management training.
* Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be training in non-discriminatory selection techniques.
* Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communication practices.
* Obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our workforce.
* Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.
* Consult with NIPSA on the implementation of this policy and any amendments to practice will be negotiated.

**Monitoring and Review**

1. CITB NI will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy.
2. The effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly in consultation with NIPSA, the recognised Trade Union. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to address the imbalance.
3. CITB NI and NIPSA are committed to working together to ensure an effective equal opportunities culture is developed and maintained.

**Complaints**

1. Staff members who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the Grievance Procedures which can be found in the Staff Handbook. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.
2. In addition to the internal procedures, staff have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an Industrial Tribunal or the Fair Employment Tribunal under the following anti-discrimination legislation:

* Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976, as amended
* Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended
* Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, as amended
* Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003
* Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, as amended
* Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
* Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, as amended

1. However, staff wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal would normally be required to raise their complaint under internal grievance procedures first.
2. Every effort will be made to ensure that staff making complaints will not be victimised. Any complaints of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.



Signed: Barry Neilson Dated: 1 September 2014

Chief Executive