



She Echoes Equality & Diversity policy - England

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1. Policy Statement

She Echoes CIC is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion across all areas of our work. We believe that every individual has the right to participate in creative and community opportunities in an creative and community opportunities in an environment that is safe, respectful, and free from discrimination.

As an organisation dedicated to supporting women and girls through music, media, and creative expression, She Echoes aims to remove barriers that may prevent individuals from accessing opportunities, particularly those from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds.

This policy aligns with She Echoes Safeguarding Policy and reflects our commitment to creating safe, inclusive spaces where participants feel respected, protected, and empowered.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is guided by the principles of the Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from discrimination based on the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race (including nationality, ethnic, or national origin)
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

She Echoes is committed to ensuring that no individual is treated unfairly or excluded on the basis of these characteristics.

3. Our Commitment

She Echoes will:

- Provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all participants, staff, volunteers, and partners.
- Promote equality of opportunity in all programmes, activities, and partnerships.
- Ensure that all individuals are treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

- Challenge discrimination, harassment, bullying, or exclusionary behaviour.
- Actively support the participation of individuals who may face social, economic, cultural, or accessibility barriers.
- Ensure safeguarding practices reflect the needs of diverse participants, particularly women and girls.

4. Focus on Women & Girls

She Echoes exists to address the underrepresentation of women and girls in music, media, and the creative industries.

While our programmes prioritise female participants, we are committed to delivering services in a way that is inclusive, respectful and compliant with Equality legislation. Our work aims to create safe environments where girls and young women can develop skills, confidence, and creative expression without facing discrimination, harassment, or exclusion.

5. Inclusive Participation

She Echoes aims to ensure that our programmes are accessible to participants from diverse backgrounds. This includes young people who may experience barriers related to ;

- Socioeconomic disadvantage
- Neurodiversity or Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Disability or additional support needs
- Cultural or linguistic differences
- Experiences of marginalisation or social exclusion

Where possible, we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that participants can access and benefit from our programmes.

6. Behavior & Respect

All staff, volunteers, facilitators, participants and partners are expected to contribute to a culture of mutual respect and inclusion.

The following behaviours will not be tolerated within She Echoes programmes or activities:

- Discrimination or prejudice
- Bullying or harassment
- Hate speech or discriminatory language
- Intimidation or exclusion of others
- Any behaviour that underpins the safety or dignity of participants

Any concerns will be addressed in line with She Echoes Safeguarding and Complaints Procedures.

7. Safeguarding & Equality

Equality and safeguarding are closely connected. She Echoes recognises that some individuals may be more vulnerable to harm, discrimination, or exploitation due to their circumstances.

Our safeguarding approach ensures that all participants are protected regardless of their background, identity, or personal circumstances.

All staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Promote inclusive and respectful environments
- Recognise and respond to discrimination or harassment
- Report Safeguarding concerns appropriately
- Ensure that participants feel safe to express themselves and raise concerns.
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8. Responsibility & Implementation

Responsibility for implementing this policy rests with:

- She Echoes leadership and directors
- Staff, facilitators, and volunteers
- Partner organisations working with She Echoes

All individuals involved in delivering She Echoes programmes are expected to uphold the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

9. Recruitment & Selection

Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person and with the involvement of the Human Resources Department, where possible. Our recruitment procedures should be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

- Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. They should include a short policy statement on equal opportunities and a copy of this policy will be made available on request.

- We take steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our Charity. Where appropriate, the Human Resources Department may approve the use of lawful exemptions to recruit someone with a particular Protected Characteristic, for example, where the job can only be done by a woman. The advertisement should specify the exemption that applies.
- We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the Human Resources Department or UK Visas and Immigration.
- To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our CIC, we monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary, and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before shortlisting and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.
- All participants are encouraged to join our open access provision, staff must actively ensure that we provide opening welcoming environments that make clear discrimination will not be tolerated. Any forms discriminatory language will be actively challenged by staff and inclusion and tolerance will be encouraged at all times.

10. Monitoring & Review

She Echoes will regularly review its policies and practices to ensure they remain inclusive, effective, and aligned with safeguarding standards and relevant legislation.

This policy will be reviewed periodically to reflect the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

11. **Breaches of Policy For Participants**

If participants feel they have been discriminated against, they should in the first instance talk to the lead worker for the project. This will then be reported to the Head of Programmes within that region, who will arrange to meet the participant and discuss their concerns. If this does not resolve the matter, it must be reported to the Director of Programmes who will conduct an investigation and take appropriate action.

Breaches of Policy For Staff

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

- If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or through our Anti- harassment and Bullying Policy as appropriate. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.
- There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.