

Equal Opportunities Policy

Music as Therapy International:

ACCEPTS that in society certain groups or individuals are denied equality on the grounds of race, gender, language, marital status, caring responsibilities, disability, gender re-assignment, age, background, sexual orientation and religion/belief or any other factor irrelevant to the purpose in view.

WELCOMES the statutory requirements laid down in:

- ✓ the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- ✓ the Equality Act 2010
- ✓ the Human Rights Act Nov 1998

RECOGNISES that it has moral and social responsibilities that go beyond the provisions of the above-mentioned Acts and Regulations, and that it should support and contribute to the wider process of change through all aspects of its work and practices in order to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and diversity.

IS COMMITTED to taking positive steps to ensure that:

- all people are treated with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all;
- equality of opportunity and diversity is promoted;
- services are accessible, appropriate and tailored to the needs of our beneficiaries;
- the mix of its representatives (employees, trustees, volunteers and freelance workers) reflects, as far as possible, the broad mix of the population of its local community; and
- our Local Partners (both abroad and in the UK) are encouraged to participate in decisions about, and the management of the services provided.

This policy applies to all representatives, beneficiaries and the general public.

Commitment

Equality and diversity are central to the work of *Music as Therapy International*. *Music as Therapy International* will treat all people with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all. It will promote equality of opportunity and diversity. It will eliminate all forms of discrimination on grounds of race, gender, language, marital status, caring responsibilities, disability, gender re-assignment, age, background, sexual orientation, religion/ belief, irrelevant offending background or any other factor irrelevant to the purpose in view. It will tackle social exclusion, inequality, discrimination and disadvantage.

Where there are legitimate issues of cultural sensitivity and/or practical considerations of working anywhere, these are assessed and discussed openly with representatives wishing to undertake work for *Music as Therapy International* in any country where we operate as part of our application process.

For this policy to be successful, it is essential that everyone is committed to and involved in its delivery. *Music as Therapy International's* goal is to work towards a just society free from discrimination, harassment and prejudice. *Music as Therapy International* aims to embed this in all its policies, procedures, day-to-day practices and external relationships.

Aims

Music as Therapy International aims to:

- provide services that are accessible according to need;
- promote equality of opportunity and diversity in volunteering, employment and development; and
- create effective partnerships with all communities we work in.

Objectives

Music as Therapy International's objective is to realise its standards by:

- sustaining, regularly evaluating and continually improving its services to ensure equality and diversity principles and best practice are embedded in our performance to meet the needs of individuals and groups;
- working together with our Local Partners to provide accessible and relevant service provision that responds to service users' needs;
- ensuring employees, freelance workers, volunteers and trustees are representative of the community served and the employment policies are fair and robust;
- responding to volunteers' and employees' needs and encouraging their development to increase their contribution to effective service delivery;
- recognising and valuing the differences and individual contribution that all people make to *Music as Therapy International*;
- challenging discrimination;
- providing fair resource allocation; and
- being accountable.

PROCEDURES

Responsibility for Implementation

This policy covers the behaviour of all people employed, freelancing or volunteering in *Music as Therapy International*, as well as our beneficiaries, and sets out the way they can expect to be treated in turn by *Music as Therapy International*. The overall responsibility for ensuring adherence to and implementation of this policy lies with the Trustees, the Director and employees.

Complaints

Any complaints regarding discrimination, bullying and harassment should be raised with the Director (alexiaquin@musicastherapy.org) who will initiate a full investigation within 7 days, which will be reported to the Trustees.

Any complaints regarding discrimination, bullying and harassment that involve the Director should be reported to John Ellis, our Designated Trustee (johnellis@musicastherapy.org), who will initiate a full investigation within 14 days, in consultation with the other Trustees.

Breaching this policy by any of our employees or Trustees would be grounds for disciplinary action.

Method of Implementation

Music as Therapy International intends to implement this policy by:

- ensuring that it is a condition of paid employment in *Music as Therapy International*;
- ensuring that all representatives are made aware, understand, agree with, and are willing to implement, this policy. All representatives will be given a copy of this policy as part of their induction;
- monitoring the services, publicity and events provided by *Music as Therapy International*, to ensure that they do not discriminate; and
- responding to any complaints regarding discrimination, bullying or harassment as outlined above.

Monitoring and Reviewing

Music as Therapy International has declared its commitment to establishing, developing, implementing and reviewing a policy of equality of opportunity. Effective record keeping and monitoring, and acting on information gathered, are essential in order to measure effectiveness and plan progress. This policy is reviewed annually and major updates will be shared with the Trustees for their approval at the May meeting.

*Last review: April 2025
Date of next review: April 2026*