

# Diversity and Social Inclusion Policy

## 1. Purpose and Scope:

This policy provides guidelines to the board, staff, volunteers and participants of Tailem Bend Community Centre Incorporated (TBCC) to promote equality of access, foster and encourage unprejudiced attitudes, prevent discrimination and allow people to participate in the economic and social life of the community. This policy reflects TBCC's commitment to create an inclusive environment that is free of discrimination and in which all people are permitted equal access and opportunity to progress to the full extent of their ability.

- 1.1. TBCC is committed to empowering and supporting consumers to fully participate in the community and in this organization by:
  - Ensuring a supportive workplace that respects and values diversity of customs, cultures and beliefs.
  - Ensuring that its services are delivered in a manner that respects and values the customs, cultures and beliefs of its consumers.
  - Preventing harassment or discrimination of any kind.

## 2. Definitions:

- 2.1 Cultural diversity and cultural inclusion refers to creating and maintaining a workplace and culture that is respectful of all people. In particular this applies to:
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
  - People from non-English speaking backgrounds ;
  - People from diverse racial, religious or cultural backgrounds;
  - People with a disability; and
  - Gay, Lesbian, Transgender/gender diverse, Bisexual or Intersex people.
- 2.2 Direct Discrimination - when a person or organisation intentionally treats someone unfairly because of their age, sex, marital status, pregnancy, sexuality, impairment or race.
- 2.3 Indirect Discrimination – when there is a policy or a rule or a 'way of doing things' that might appear on the surface to be fair or neutral, but which has an unequal effect on certain groups of people because of their age, sex, marital status, pregnancy, sexuality, impairment or race.
- 2.4 Access - The state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair.
- 2.5 Diversity - The quality or state of being different. The quality or state of encompassing people of a different race, gender, religion, physical disability, age, sexual orientation, and income.
- 2.6 Equity - The state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair.
- 2.7 Inclusion – Supporting the full involvement of all people, regardless of any physical or cultural differences. The state of all being included as part of the group, with equal opportunity for participation, and differences appreciated as the uniqueness of each individual.

## 3 Background:

- 3.1 Equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation has been enacted at both the State and Federal levels. The *South Australian Equal Opportunity Act (1984)* specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, sex, race, physical or intellectual impairment, chosen gender or sexuality, marital status or pregnancy. This applies to the areas of employment, education, provision of goods and services, accommodation, membership of clubs and associations, conferral of qualifications, and advertising disposal of land.

- 3.2 TBCC endorses the principles of social justice and equity, in particular for groups who have traditionally been marginalised in Australian society including people with an intellectual, physical or mental disability, dementia and/or neurological disorders, educational and/or learning difficulties. This also includes people who are Indigenous Australians, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, homosexual/transsexual, socially isolated, financially disadvantaged, frail or aged.
- 3.3 The Board of TBCC expect board members and paid and unpaid staff to respect the rights of all groups in the community, regardless of culture and physical abilities, and to expect their inclusion fully in activities of the centre.

#### **4 Policy:**

- 4.1 The overall responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness and review of this policy lies with the Board of Management.
- 4.2 Whilst all paid and unpaid employees have a personal responsibility in the practical application of this policy, specific responsibility falls upon the Board of Management.
- 4.3 Every Board member, employee and volunteer has a responsibility to treat people as individuals with different skills and abilities, without making judgments based on stereotypes, or on characteristics (such as sex, age, race, sexuality, disability, pregnancy, marital status or cultural group) that are irrelevant to a person's ability to do a job.
- 4.4 TBCC will provide accessible, equitable and equal opportunity programs, learning opportunities and services to the community that aim to enhance life and work opportunities which are diverse and socially inclusive.
- 4.5 TBCC will develop and sustain programs, practices and services that are responsive to the needs of a diverse and evolving community.
- 4.5 TBCC will provide a community access centre where people can come together in an atmosphere of equality, friendship and trust, sharing their skills and experiences in order to improve the quality of their living.
- 4.6 All staff, volunteers and centre participants are encouraged to raise equal opportunity issues or grievances through the TBCC grievance procedure or with the Equal Employment Opportunity Board. Confidentiality will be respected.

#### **5 Procedures:**

TBCC will:

- Demonstrate respect for cultural or religious customs and health practices including beliefs and taboos.
- Provide information about participation opportunities to consumers through a range of mediums (written, images, verbal, video) including but not limited to: consumer information booklet, newsletters, website (with 'listen' option), social and print media, radio, digital sign, consumer calls.
- Arrange for interpreters (including sign language interpreters) in circumstances where consumers are unable to communicate easily in English.
- When conducting an assessment for consumers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or Indigenous communities, they should be conducted in a manner that is culturally appropriate and respectful. This may also include using accredited interpreters where required, or involvement of a larger group of extended family members identified by the consumer.
- Actively seek information from consumers or where appropriate their family/carer about their customs, culture and beliefs where it may affect the provision of service. (e.g. culturally appropriate diet preferences, or religious rituals or the need for staff to be of the same gender as the consumer).
- Attempt to meet specific requests from consumers, where possible, to demonstrate respect for the consumer (e.g. assistance in religious practices or help with establishing social networks).
- Ensure where possible, and if appropriate, that consumers have access to staff (within the organisation and external services) from similar cultural or linguistic backgrounds.

- Support consumers to participate in communities and activities of choice respecting their choices and plans regarding employment, education, leisure and their social lives.
- Enable consumers to be involved in decisions that affect them and the services they receive.
- Encourage and support consumers to be involved in service development, evaluation, planning and organisational management.
- Seek consumer input regarding consumer participation information strategies, assistance and support, service involvement and development.
- Develop links with other groups to promote greater opportunities for connections and meaningful participation in the community.

TBCC will ensure that the following practices are implemented:

- Encourage the active recruitment of staff from diverse backgrounds or staff who have previous experience in service delivery to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Provide training for board, staff, contractors and volunteers – to understand, respect and support consumers in their skill development, and on how to support consumer participation.
- Seeking funding opportunities to subsidise expenses of participation.
- Planning cycles based on identifying community needs and on-going evaluation of services.
- Flexibility in service provision.
- Adapting programs, activities and equipment as appropriate and wherever possible.
- Promoting and fostering an environment of acceptance of diversity.
- Advocacy and intervention on behalf of the organisation's participants where appropriate.
- Respect and value of an individual's sense of dignity and self-worth.
- Respect for participants' privacy and confidentiality.
- Promoting and encouraging freedom of choice and taking personal control of own lives.
- Creating opportunities for individual participants to achieve their goals.
- Creating opportunities for individual participants to improve their overall sense of well-being.

### **3 Service development and organisational management:**

Consumers are encouraged and supported to become involved in service development and organisational management, if they choose to do so.

- Expression of interest are called through newsletters and media resources.
- Taking part in consumer surveys and feedback forums including design of surveys and forms.
- Input when new services or activities are being developed.
- Representation on consumer committees or groups.
- Information about training and conferences.
- Active membership of the organization.
- Standing for the board or management committee.

<b>Date first formulated</b>	October 2015 ( <i>Incorporating previous Access and Equity Policy October 2011</i> )	
<b>Dates approved by Board</b>	V2 V4	May 2019 Feb 2022
<b>Next Review Date</b>	February 2024	
<b>Related Documents</b>	Diversity and Social Inclusion Policy Disability Action Plan Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society. DIMA 1998 Human Resources Management Policy HR Equal Opportunity Strategy HR Standards Rights and Responsibilities Strategy	
<b>Legislation</b>	<a href="#">Equal Opportunity Act (SA) 1984</a> <a href="#">Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander Act 2005</a> <a href="#">NDIS CALD Strategy</a> <a href="#">NDIS Accessibility Strategy and Action Plan</a> <a href="#">Disability Services Act 1993</a> <a href="#">Carer Recognition Act (SA) 2005</a> <a href="#">LGBTI</a>	
<b>Signed on behalf of TBCC Board of Management by:</b>		
<b>Name: Jack Hunt</b>		
<b>Position held: Chairperson</b>		<b>Signature:</b>
		February 2022