

## **Anti-discrimination Policy**

### **Introduction**

1. U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. recognises that prohibiting discriminatory policies and practices is both a legal obligation and good practice.
2. U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. endorses diversity, supports equal rights and equal opportunity, and does not advocate, support or practice discrimination based on characteristics such as race, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability, whether covered by applicable legislation or not.

### **Purpose**

3. This document sets out the anti-discrimination policy of U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. and the governance structures, responsibilities and processes to give effect to the policy and ensure the organisation complies with its obligations under legislation.
4. This policy aims to foster an organisational culture within U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. which is free from discrimination, and which supports exemplary organisational performance.

### **Policy**

5. Discrimination means being treated unfairly, or not as well as others, because of a personal characteristic that is protected by law, including age, sex, gender identity, race or disability. These are known as 'protected characteristics' or 'protected attributes'.

The Equal Opportunity Act makes it against the law to discriminate against someone because of these specific personal characteristics including when:

- working as a volunteer
- participating in activities such as those run by U3A.

6. U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. takes all reasonable steps to ensure that its volunteers and members are given equal access to the services and benefits provided by the organisation.
7. It is against the law for anyone to treat someone unfairly because they have made (or plan to make) a complaint of discrimination or because they have provided information or evidence about a complaint. This is called victimisation.
8. U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. does not support, tolerate, condone, or practise discrimination. Such discrimination includes, but is not limited to:
  - marital/domestic status
  - disability
  - race, colour, social origin, descent, and ethnic or national origin
  - age
  - family responsibilities and status including as a parent or carer

- gender, sexuality, or transgender
  - religious or political beliefs or activities
  - trade union or employee association membership or activities
  - physical features
  - occupation or calling
  - medical history.
9. U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. is an equal opportunity manager of volunteers. No factors other than performance and competence will be used as the basis for training and development opportunities for volunteers and/or intending volunteers.
  10. U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. will ensure that its programs, policies, procedures, practices, publications and forms accord with the principles expressed in this policy.
  11. U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. will make all reasonable accommodations to improve the experience of its members in accessing its activities or resolving difficulties equitably.
  12. All members and volunteers of U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. will be expected to comply with the principles expressed in this policy.

### **Procedures**

13. The committee of U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. will:
  - review the organisation's practices and procedures to ensure that they incorporate strategies to mitigate against discrimination
  - conduct committee elections that are free from discrimination and which provide equal opportunities for members to stand for election
  - periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures implemented to prevent and manage discrimination
  - make reasonable accommodations to allow diverse groups to access benefits provided by membership of the organisation and its programs and activities
  - monitor the performance of office bearers and volunteers in regard to this policy
  - analyse all reported breaches to identify any trends and ensure that any such trends are addressed
  - foster and promote a culture of anti-discrimination and equal opportunity across the organisation.
14. All members, volunteers and employees will be made aware of the organisation's anti-discrimination policy by its publication on the organisation's website and/or newsletter.
15. A person who believes they are being treated unfairly discriminated against may report the matter to the Secretary, U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. The Secretary will inform the President immediately.
16. A report of discrimination will be investigated promptly, confidentially and fairly, in accordance with the organisation's Rules, Part 3, Div. 2 and 3.

## **Responsibilities**

17. The committee of U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. is responsible for:
  - establishing, implementing, publishing, and reviewing this policy
  - fostering equal opportunity and setting an example by their own behaviour
  - ensuring that the organisation's practices and processes incorporate precautions against discrimination in such areas as selecting volunteers, admitting members and providing access to programs
  - ensuring strategies are in place that allow all members to participate in the organisation's programs and activities
  - managing any allegations of discrimination or vilification according to this policy and the Rules, Part 3, Div. 2 and 3.
  
18. It is the responsibility of all members and volunteers to:
  - treat each other with respect and without discrimination
  - familiarise themselves with this anti-discrimination policy
  - suggest ways in which practices, systems and procedures could be improved to reduce the likelihood of discrimination occurring.
  
19. It is the responsibility of the Secretary, U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. to receive complaints about a breach of this policy and to bring them to the attention of the President.
  
20. The President, U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. is responsible for ensuring that a complaint of a breach of this policy is handled in accordance with U3A Myrtleford and District Inc.'s Rules, Part 3, Div. 2 and 3.

## **Authorisation**

21. This policy was adopted by the committee of U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. and recorded as such, on 18 /September/2023.
  
22. This policy will be published by U3A Myrtleford and District Inc. on its website within 4 weeks of the date of this authorisation.

## **Related Policies**

Bullying Policy  
Code of Conduct  
Health and Safety Policies  
Privacy Policy  
Risk Management Policy  
Sexual Harassment Policy