Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Policy (EDIB)

People & Culture Policies
TITLE: **EDIB Policy** VERSION: 1
Authorised by: Executive Leadership Team

If the local statutory requirements in a worker's country provide greater benefits or protections than this policy, we will honour the local statutory and legal obligations. The UK policy will only apply where local statutory provisions offer lower benefits or protections to the worker.

Contents

1. Introduction and scope

Cochrane's employees and workers are unique, whether in terms of background, personal characteristics, experience, skills or motivations. We value our people for the differences they bring to the work that we do, and we recognise that these differences – this diversity – is powerful.

Fostering an inclusive culture helps each of us to benefit from a wider range of different perspectives, experiences and skills. We believe that this creates a happier, more productive working environment for us all.

To support this inclusive culture, this policy seeks to:

- Clarify what we mean by Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging (EDIB)
- Outline our commitment throughout the employment lifecycle to EDIB and sets how we put this commitment into practice
- Explains the behaviours we expect of our people in support of this commitment
- Sets out the key steps we take to make our culture as inclusive as possible

This policy applies to all employees/workers in Cochrane's Central Executive Team (CET). For individuals working with or on behalf of Cochrane, please refer to the Code of Conduct in *Section 10. Related Policies***.** Most statutory requirements regarding the Equality Act and the Disability Discrimination Act fall within UK employment law and forms the basis of this policy.

2. Our Commitment

We believe that a culture of equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging not only benefits our organisation but supports wellbeing and enables individuals to work better because they can be themselves and feel that they belong. We are committed to promoting a working environment based on dignity, trust and respect, and one that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Cochrane's commitment to EDIB is championed not only at Executive Leadership Team (ELT) level but also at Governing Board level; with EDIB leadership involved in strategy development and action planning. The Head of People & Culture works closely with ELT and the Board to align policies, EDIB directives, strategic initiatives and positive action across all elements of Cochrane.

As a global organisation, embracing global identity and inclusion is extremely important although the legislation within this policy is UK based for the purposes of compliance with UK employment law.

We will ensure that our recruitment, promotion and retention procedures do not treat people less favourably because of one or more of the following:

- Disability
- Gender, gender identity or gender reassignment status
- Marital status

- Race, racial group, ethnic or national origin, or nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Civil partnership status
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Paternity
- Educational or socio-economic background
- Caring responsibilities
- Employment status - part-time, fixed term, employee or EoR worker

3. What is EDIB?

EDIB stands for **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging**. Sometimes the 'E' is referred to as **Equality.** The bullet points below explain the differences between the two by providing context and we have chosen **Equity** because we believe this goes further than simply **Equality.**

- **Equality** – everyone is getting a pair of shoes
- **Equity** – everyone is getting a pair of shoes – that actually fits them

EDIB is about ensuring fair treatment and equal opportunities for all, recognizing and celebrating our differences, creating welcoming environments, and fostering a sense of belonging.

4. Responsibilities

We expect our employees and workers to take personal responsibility for observing, upholding, promoting and applying this policy to foster a culture of EDIB in all that we do. This is a shared responsibility to ensure we are creating the right environment. Cultivating an EDIB culture does not happen by accident but requires ongoing commitment and nurturing. The reality is that we live in a world where areas of difference (whether gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or others) often translate to biases, challenges and barriers that may not be faced by others.

The more areas of difference a person brings, the more this effect can be compounded. In this way, the experiences of a black woman with a disability may be very different to the experiences of a black woman without a disability and also very different from the experiences of a white woman. This way of looking at diversity and inclusion is known as "intersectionality". Sometimes, this may mean allowing for different views and viewpoints and making space for others to contribute. By embedding such values and constructively challenging inappropriate comments or ways of working, you can help us achieve and maintain a truly inclusive workplace culture.

It is the responsibility of all employees and workers to treat colleagues and third parties fairly and with dignity, trust and respect. Third parties include our beneficiaries and other community members, and employees/workers should familiarise themselves with our Code of Conduct (see Related Policies in Section 10).

5.   Equity of Opportunity

Recruitment

We take reasonable and appropriate steps to encourage job applications from as diverse a range of people as possible. Anyone making a decision about recruitment must not discriminate in any way and must have attended appropriate diversity and inclusion training.

Decision-makers should challenge themselves, and other members of the recruitment selection panel, to make sure that any stereotypes, unconscious bias or prejudice do not play any part in recruitment decisions. Where possible support will be provided by the People & Culture team.

Career development

Any decision you make relating to a person's promotion or career development must be free from discrimination. The People & Culture team will ensure that any selection criteria or processes for recruitment and promotion are reviewed on a regular basis so that there is no discriminatory impact on a certain group. If necessary, they will undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

Disability inclusion

The People & Culture team will consider disability in advance of a recruitment campaign so that advertising, application forms and assessments, arrangements for interviews, job descriptions and employee specifications, and selection criteria are appropriate and as inclusive as possible.

Candidates are asked at the outset if they require any reasonable adjustments to be made to the recruitment process. If you are involved in the interview process, you must not ask job applicants about their health or disability.

Talking about disability

We understand that some people find it hard to discuss their disabilities and that disability can be invisible. Psychological safety, where people feel able to speak up about their experiences without fear of negative consequences, is paramount to ensuring disability inclusion. However, this is only possible if we treat people with dignity, trust and respect and we expect everyone to uphold these values.

We do not tolerate ableist language in our organisation. Ableist language is language that is negative, inappropriate or offensive towards people with a disability and may take the form of jokes or "banter". If you adopt such language, we will take action against you including (for those to whom it applies) under our Disciplinary Policy.

Reasonable adjustments

If you have a disability, you do not have to tell us. However, we would encourage you to let us know so that we can support you, for example by making reasonable adjustments to our premises or to aspects of your role, or to our working practices.

If you are experiencing difficulties at work because of your disability, please contact your line manager in the first instance and they will seek advice from the People & Culture team. We may need to discuss your needs with you and your medical adviser to help us get the right support in place.

Support

If you have a disability, or you care for someone with a disability, and need emotional support or help with practical issues, please contact our EAP for free, confidential advice.

We also encourage you to speak with others who also have experience of disability and who understand the associated workplace challenges. You can make your voice heard and make a difference by helping raise disability awareness and understanding across the wider organisation.

Training

All new starters must attend EDIB training as part of their onboarding programme.

Employees and workers must attend regular training on EDIB, or refresh themselves on the EDIB Policy, on at least an annual basis. People & Culture policies are reviewed and updated every January.

Working Groups & Workstreams

We seek to proactively support our EDIB strategy by developing employee-led working groups to support EDIB initiatives. The aim of these working groups would be to identify events, webinars and other resources to improve EDIB across Cochrane and lead on educating colleagues on the challenges faced by others and how to help alleviate these in the workplace.

Some of these working groups may be focused inward i.e. for the workplace, and others may be focused outward i.e. Cochrane Community including volunteers, contributors, supporters and members.

Monitoring and review

The People & Culture team will analyse EDIB data (in compliance with GDPR) on a regular and ongoing basis to assess the impact of this policy, our EDIB strategy and any EDIB initiatives which we undertake as an organisation.

Code of Conduct

[Principles of Collaboration: Working Together for Cochrane | Cochrane Community](#)