

Equality and Diversity in faith based social action: Worksheet 1

What do we mean by equality and diversity?

1. Re-read your definition of equality and diversity. In the light of what you have heard about the Act what might you change.
2. Share your original statements with the group – what are the clear messages that come out.
3. What has surprised you about the Act?
4. Do you think the new Act is fair?
 - If you have time you could run a debate on this question having people speaking for and against it. You would need to have good time to prepare.
5. Discrimination can happen in a number of ways provide examples for the following:
 - It can be direct – when someone is treated less favourably than someone else because of their protected characteristic For example.....
 - It can be indirect – when rules or practices are put in place for everyone but create a disadvantage for you because of a protected characteristic. For example.....
 - It could be harassment – behaviour that is unwanted, and is offensive or embarrassing, intimidating or humiliating. For example.....
 - It could be victimisation- when you are treated less favourably because you have complained about discrimination. For example.....

6. We all carry prejudices of different kinds. Write down examples of prejudices that you have heard or seen, related to the nine protected characteristics:

Age

Disability

Gender reassignment

Marriage and civil partnerships

Pregnancy and maternity

Race

Religion

Sexual orientation

7. Discuss in twos or threes what would help to reduce those prejudices or even better to eliminate them? Share these findings with the whole group. You will probably come up with a very practical list of things you can do to reduce discrimination and prejudice. You will probably find a number of things on the list relate to having good relationships with people who are different to us. In other words we start to celebrate our diversity as well as recognising it might be hard sometimes for lots of reasons.

Equality and Diversity in faith based social action: Worksheet 2

But we're a faith based project so surely we're exempt

You will need large sheets of paper and marker pens/ paints/ anything that helps you be creative.....

1. Being a faith based social action project means that you will be working with and for a range of people to bring about positive change locally and to transform lives. Working in small groups design a poster demonstrating how your project takes a positive attitude towards equality and diversity.
2. Discuss each poster and once they are completed display them in your project. See what sort of response you get. Encourage everyone involved in the project to contribute their thoughts
3. We suggest you meet a week or so after the posters have been displayed to see what you can learn from people's reactions.
 - a. What do you need to change about the way you do things or the services you provide or the way people feel they are treated?
4. Get hold of a copy of your governing document or the document that outlines what your project does. Is it up to date and are you doing what it says you will do? If not decide what needs to change, how the changes will be made and who will be responsible for them. If you change your governing document and you are a charity you will need to inform the charity commission. There is guidance on their website about how to do this.

Equality and Diversity in faith based social action: Worksheet 3

How can we be sure we are not discriminating in our project?

1. Many funders and partners will want to see your equality and diversity policy. Even if you have one we suggest as a group you now draft one that will help your project to overcome any kind of discrimination. Work in twos or threes to do this and just include bullet points for now.

You may find the following headings useful:

- a. The nature of our project
 - b. The requirements of the Equality and Diversity Act (nine protected characteristics and the discriminatory practices as they apply to you)
 - c. Any exemptions to the Act
 - d. Positive discrimination
 - e. Legitimate organisational requirement (e.g. if the job or governing document requires a particular person)
 - f. To eliminate unlawful discrimination (remember you can positively discriminate)
We will...
 - g. To ensure equal opportunity
We will...
 - h. To foster good relations
We will...
2. Once you have done this in small groups we suggest you share the main points with the whole group and then delegate one or two people to tidy the policy up and test it out on a few people including your local CVS or VSC. Make sure you share the final version with the group so everyone can comment. If you don't already have a policy you could adopt this one.
 3. If you already have a policy check the new one with that and see what the differences are.
 4. Finally as a group plan and run a celebratory event. There are loads of events during the year that can be used to raise the profile of positive equality and diversity. Many of these are cultural or are festivals, so will include food. Have a great time planning and hosting the event.
 5. At the end of the event meet up to discuss all you have learned about overcoming prejudice and celebrating diversity.
 6. Perhaps it could become an annual celebration linked to Inter Faith Week, or another festival.

Equality and Diversity in faith based social action: Resources and further support

The Faith Based Regeneration Network is grateful to:

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Further courses:

Open College Network (OCN)
<http://www.nocn.org.uk/qualifications/faith-community-development>

Further reading:

FbRN briefing paper Equality and Diversity
www.fbrn.org.uk/factsheets/equalities-update-november-2011.

Equality and Diversity 2010 Quick Start Guide Government Equality Office
[Equality Act 2010](#)

Changing your charity's governing document Charity Commission
<http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/cc36.aspx?>

Further support:

Runnemedede Trust <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/>
Equality and Diversity Forum www.edf.org.uk
Local CVS and VSC

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