

Equalities and Diversity Policy

The South East Museum Development Programme (SEMDP) is governed by a consortium of four leading museum organisations in the south east through the SE Museum Development Coordination Group (MDCG). The lead body for the SEMDP is the Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove City Council, and the membership of this group comprises the senior representatives from: Royal Pavilion and Museums (Brighton and Hove City Council); Hampshire Cultural Trust, Oxfordshire County Museums Service (Oxfordshire County Council), Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, and the Arts Council England.

The mission of the SEMDP is to be a leading source of professional support enabling the region's museums to evolve and flourish. We want to achieve this by raising ambition across the sector, driving excellence, and building resilience. This Policy reflects the need to do this fairly, appropriately and proactively across diverse groups, including those protected in law.

The programme is delivered through a small team of staff, employed by one of three organisations in the south east region: Brighton & Hove Council (seven posts), Oxfordshire County Council (one post), and the Hampshire Cultural Trust (two posts).

The SEMDP will normally adhere to the equality policies and protocols of the lead body, but it is acknowledged that each of the other employing organisations will have their own Equal Opportunities Policy (or equivalent), informed by the Equality Act 2010 and the duties and protected characteristics the Act defines. This SEMDP Equalities and Diversity Policy is similarly informed by the Equality Act 2010 and intended to complement, rather than take precedence over, the pre-existing policies of the employing authorities.

Core Principles

The SEMDP is committed to working in a fully inclusive and fair manner, with regard both to those employed through the programme, and those engaging with its services, either as users or delivery partners. It is also committed to being a champion for equalities and diversity within and on behalf of the museums sector in the region. Each of the above aspects is fully integrated into the main SEMDP Programme Plan.

The SEMDP team will participate in the Arts Council England, Creative Case for Diversity training and will seek on-going development to ensure that these principles are embedded into our practice with museums.

The SEMDP recognises the characteristics protected within the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, ethnicity/race, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sex/gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity status, marriage or civil partnership status, and will actively promote and encourage good practice across the consortium and in other agencies/organisations/groups it works with. It will enable and support the sharing of good equalities practice, in relation to increasing access, removing barriers to involvement with museum activities, and fostering good relations between groups engaging with the museums.

Employment Practices

The SEMDP will actively promote equal opportunities in its activities to ensure that individuals receive treatment that is fair and equitable and consistent with their relevant aptitudes, potential skills and abilities. Employees will be recruited and selected, promoted and trained according to the prevailing protocols of the employing organisation.

The SEMDP will treat unfair or discriminatory conduct by any member of staff as a disciplinary offence, and will work with the employing organisation within their protocols to respond effectively to a given situation.

Similarly, the SEMDP will treat unfair or discriminatory conduct towards any member of staff as a very serious matter, and will work with the employing organisation to respond effectively to a given situation.

Service Delivery

The SEMDP will apply this policy to its services through its approved SEMDP Programme Plan for 2018-22, in which the Equality and Diversity Action Plan is embedded. These principles will be underpinned by effective equality monitoring and an equality impact assessment approach, both of which will enable us to demonstrate how we are meeting the duties contained within the Equality Act 2010.

Monitoring and Review Arrangements

The SEMDP Team will regularly monitor the effectiveness of this policy as part of its risk management process, reporting to the SE Museums Development Coordination Group (MDCG). The equalities actions will be reviewed quarterly by the MDCG in line with established review and reporting procedures, and the policy and plan will be updated when required. Remedial action will be identified where needed and delegated to the appropriate member(s) to implement.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

The SEMDP must necessarily defer to the grievance procedures of the relevant employing organisation but will ensure that any team member who feels that she or he has been treated unfairly or subjected to direct or indirect unfair discrimination by their host organisation, or client museum, or individual in connection with their work, can raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure, when every effort will be made to secure a satisfactory resolution.