

WIRED approach to Equality, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Intersectionality.

WIRED's core values are:

- The promotion and development of a society in which all people can lead full and independent lives fully participating in society and reaching their potential
- To promote the equality, dignity and independence of all children, young people and families and keep them safe from harm
- To support children and young people to be ready for school, work and adulthood

In order to effectively deliver these values, all staff and volunteers at the organisation are required to embrace a culture where all cross sections of society can meaningfully contribute.

Equity and Equality – what are they and how do they work together?

Equity provides everyone with the resources they need to succeed, recognizing that different circumstances require different support to achieve equal outcomes. Equality provides everyone with the same resources or opportunities, regardless of their circumstances. While the goal of fairness is shared, equity achieves it by accounting for individual needs and varied starting points, whereas equality treats everyone identically, which may not result in fair outcomes. Equity and Equality work together in the UK through the Equality Act 2010 providing a legal framework to protect against discrimination whilst an equity based approach builds on this by seeking to address the unfair disadvantages that prevent people from reaching equal outcomes

As a result it is a requirement for all staff and volunteers to commit to:

- Fully understanding and upholding the **Equality Act 2010** within all areas of WIRED's work – This means fair treatment, preventing discrimination, and providing equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of their protected characteristics such as age, disability, race, or religion, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. It involves eliminating unlawful discrimination, proactively addressing barriers that prevent people from participating fully, and ensuring a fair chance to fulfil potential and to access resources.
- Fully understanding and upholding the principal of **Equity** – Equity means that in addition to upholding individuals basic rights within the Equality Act 2010, WIRED also account for individual needs and varied starting points by providing different levels of support and resources to individuals based on their specific needs to ensure they can achieve equal outcomes. For example, providing different-sized boxes to people of different heights so they can all see over a fence. For a workplace, this could mean offering different incentives or providing tools and support for employees to gain qualifications.
- Fully understanding and upholding **Diversity** within all areas of WIRED's work – Diversity means the active recognition, value, and celebration of the unique individual differences among staff, volunteers, and people who use WIRED's services, encompassing a wide range of characteristics such as race, gender, age, disability, socioeconomic background, and lived experiences, to foster

innovation, improve decision-making, and increase WIRED's overall impact. It involves more than just a superficial representation of characteristics; it's about creating a rich mix of different ways of thinking and being to better achieve WIRED's core values.

- Fully understanding and upholding **Inclusion** within all areas of WIRED's work – Inclusion means proactively ensuring people of all backgrounds, experiences, and identities feel welcomed, respected, and able to participate fully in the organisation's work, services, and decision-making processes. It moves beyond simply having a diverse workforce to creating a culture where individuals can be their true selves, feel a sense of belonging, and have barriers removed so they can realise their full potential and contribute meaningfully to WIRED's core values
- Recognising, fully understanding and appreciating **Intersectionality** and how it impacts on WIRED's work - Intersectionality is the framework that recognises an individual's multiple, overlapping social identities—such as race, gender, class, and sexuality—and how these identities combine to shape their experiences of discrimination, privilege, and their unique position in society. For charities, adopting an intersectional approach means moving beyond single-issue support to create programs and services that are inclusive and effective for people with diverse and compounded identities and needs.

Examples of overlapping identities include a Black transgender woman, a working-class gay man, or a disabled immigrant woman, all of whom possess multiple social categories (like race, gender, class, sexuality, or immigration status) that intersect to create unique experiences, advantages, and forms of discrimination, as described by the theory of intersectionality. These overlapping identities are not just a collection of individual traits but a dynamic combination that shapes an individual's lived reality and their interaction with society. In order to have an understanding of intersectionality it's important to be aware of the following;

- **Overlapping identities** - An individual's identities are not separate but interconnected, like pieces of a puzzle forming a complete picture of who they are

- **Each individual's unique experiences of discrimination** - Forms of discrimination like racism, sexism, and homophobia do not affect individuals in isolation but can intersect, leading to compounded challenges and unique forms of oppression for those with multiple marginalized identities. For example, a Black lesbian woman may face both racism, sexism, and homophobia, experiences that differ from those of a white woman or a straight Black man

- **Understanding privilege** - Intersectionality also accounts for privilege, which is the advantage gained due to a particular aspect of someone's identity.

Why is this important for anyone who volunteers or works at WIRED?

This is important for anyone who works or volunteers at WIRED because;

- By understanding these concepts WIRED can design programs that reach more people and address their complex, layered needs more effectively
- Diversity and cross-sectionality on WIRED's Board are vital for WIRED to widen community representation, better understand and meet the needs of the community and to increase organisational reach.
- It prevents WIRED from making assumptions based on singular identities or overlooking the specific barriers faced by people with multiple overlapping identities
- An intersectional lens is crucial for addressing compounded inequalities in order to achieve true equity and ensuring that no one is left behind due to their multifaceted experiences
- It supports the organisation to recruit and retain diverse staff, volunteers, and board members with intersectional identities.
- Diverse perspectives lead to more balanced, thoughtful, and robust decisions, helping the WIRED board to consider risks and opportunities more effectively
- A variety of experiences and ways of thinking helps WIRED to be more innovative, flexible, and better able to adapt to a changing external environment.
- A board that mirrors the community it serves ensures that WIRED's services continue to be relevant and authentic, maintaining and increasing the charity's ability to connect with and serve those in need.
- A diverse board is more effective and better positioned in relation to achieving WIRED's strategic goals and fulfil the organisations core values
- It is the right thing to do, promoting equality of opportunity and inclusivity within the sector