



Cordis Bright | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy

Statement of intent

1. This strategy sets out Cordis Bright's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). It applies to Cordis Bright staff and others who work on our behalf (e.g. associates). It also guides how we engage and interact with our partners, contractors, clients and the people whom our work aims to support.
2. We are committed to continuously embedding values around inclusivity and equity in our work, culture and actions, individually and collectively. This strategy will be paired with an action plan, which will ensure that promoting EDI becomes an ongoing strand of work at Cordis Bright.
3. We want to contribute to a fair and equal society and tackle the [systemic barriers](#) that some people and groups face in the workplace and in society. We want to deliver our responsibilities under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and find ways to go beyond them.
4. This strategy sets out our commitment to: empower colleagues to adopt inclusive practices and attitudes; create a supportive and empowering environment at Cordis Bright by promoting inclusivity and accessibility in our work; and promote principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in our sectors and with our clients.

Our views on equality, diversity and inclusion

5. Prioritising EDI is the right thing to do. It is fundamental to our core values, including fairness, respect and dignity towards other people, openness and embracing difference as a strength.
6. Harm is caused to individuals and communities by the inequity and discrimination that is prevalent in our society, including the sectors in which we specialise¹. Tackling this is therefore core to Cordis Bright's purpose to deliver improved outcomes for individuals, their families and communities.
7. Embracing diversity and inclusion also helps to create stronger, higher skilled, more innovative and higher performing organisations². In turn, this improves the quality of public services and outcomes for people who benefit from them. Co-production and other inclusive approaches are important ways to achieve greater diversity and inclusion and to improve quality by bringing in a wider range of experiences and skills to inform decision-making, planning and delivery.
8. Employees who feel confident in being themselves at work have a greater sense of self, commitment and opportunity³. They are better able to engage with and support colleagues and stakeholders, and to bring their perspective and lived experience into their work.
9. EDI has many dimensions, and is relevant to many people, groups and characteristics:

¹ For example: <https://www.scie.org.uk/workforce/socialcareandhealthinequalities/>; <https://bmcpyschiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12888-016-0767-z>; <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/blog/how-systemic-racism-affects-young-people-uk>

² <https://www.tate.co.uk/-/media/tate/tate-candidate-guides/generic-guides/5-benefits-of-equality-and-diversity-in-the-workplace.pdf>

³ <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/about-deloitte/us-about-deloitte-uncovering-talent-a-new-model-of-inclusion.pdf>



- a. The Equality Act 2010 covers discrimination, harassment and victimisation linked to specified protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation⁴.
- b. Many people face further structural barriers and discrimination linked to characteristics and experiences not covered by the Equality Act, such as: asylum-seeking or refugee status, caring responsibilities, care background, gender identity, HIV status, homelessness, long-term and/or chronic health conditions, mental health, nationality or residency status, neurodiversity, offending history and socio-economic status. This is not an exhaustive list; we recognise that people may experience barriers and discrimination relating to other characteristics and experiences.
- c. In reality, people's identities and the ways in which they are perceived result from a range of intersecting characteristics and experiences, leading some to face multiple structural barriers simultaneously, and compounding the discrimination they experience.

Our commitments

- 10. We commit to providing equal opportunities in all aspects of employment and ensuring that we do not discriminate in recruitment or employment on the basis of a protected characteristic or any other characteristics or identities.
- 11. We will oppose discrimination in all its forms, be it at a structural or institutional level or an inter-personal level. This includes direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, victimisation, harassment and bullying⁵.
- 12. We will seek to build our understanding of the barriers created by discrimination and inequality and ensure fair, equal and inclusive treatment for our staff, clients and the people whom our work aims to support.

Our priorities

- 13. The three inter-related priorities for our strategy over the next three years are:
 - a. **Recruit and retain the best staff.** We will do this through a combination of fair, open and effective recruitment processes, training and development opportunities, and providing a supportive work culture that promotes equality, challenges conscious and unconscious bias and discrimination, and encourages colleagues to be themselves and maximise their potential. We want our organisation to better reflect the diverse communities in which we live and work, and the communities we serve. We also want to ensure that our team have the knowledge and skills to make a difference.
 - b. **Build in and maintain an explicit focus on EDI in our project work.** We will ensure that EDI is a central consideration in our projects, including the opportunities we select to pursue. It will inform method selection, field work delivery, analysis, reporting and the recommendations we make to clients. This includes incorporating the perspectives, knowledge and lived experiences of people from different backgrounds in our work, reducing barriers to participation and ensuring participation is a positive

⁴ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

⁵ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/your-rights-under-equality-act-2010>



experience for people with different backgrounds and experiences, and making our research findings more accessible.

- c. **Contribute to a better society.** We are committed to challenging discrimination and inequality and will use the tools available to us to address this. This includes taking account of EDI in all business decisions, such as the work we bid for, maintaining focus on how our research can drive change for individuals and communities, and any other areas not covered by the above priorities.

Delivering our strategy

14. Six key principles have informed the development of our strategy and will inform its delivery:

- a. **Creating impact:** we will focus on priorities and actions that will make a real and concrete difference to the lives of individuals.
- b. **Collaboration with external partners:** we will engage with experts and those with lived experience outside of our organisation to help inform our priorities and key actions.
- c. **Co-production within Cordis Bright:** we will mobilise the knowledge, skills and experience of our whole team to decide on priorities and key actions. The strategy and action plan will be co-produced and monitored by team members from across all levels of the organisation as part of our EDI working group.
- d. **Encouraging individual action:** we will encourage all team members to offer feedback where they feel our efforts could be improved and to take action to make a difference. We recognise our responsibilities as an organisation and as individuals to continue to reflect on and educate ourselves about promoting equality, diversity and inclusivity.
- e. **Senior leadership:** we will ensure that senior leadership endorse the priorities and actions and that we make sufficient capacity and resources available to deliver them.
- f. **Using data and evidence:** we will gather and analyse data to help us to make decisions on priority actions and to monitor progress. This includes internal data to understand our own performance and progress. It also includes external evidence, such as drawing on the existing evidence base for improving practice in EDI.

15. We will review our strategy and priorities on a three-yearly basis, or more frequently should the need arise.

16. This strategy is complemented by a Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resourced, and Timed (SMART) action plan that details how we will go about bringing about changes in the three priority areas. The action plan will be reviewed yearly.