



## **Our Commitment to Fair Work**

At **The Village Storytelling Centre (VSC)**, we are committed to operating within the 5 key principles of Fair Work. We recognise that fair working is a journey, where we are always learning and always working towards better practice.

This document highlights the areas in which we are committed to Fair Work, with an understanding that this is constantly evolving. This document refers to policies and procedures contained in our Staff Handbook, as noted by their page numbers in brackets.

### **Effective Voice**

Effective Voice is the right of a worker to be heard by their employer individually and collectively. At VSC we believe in setting up effective channels for communication, and consulting meaningfully with employees so they can be actively involved in organisational decision-making. It's an integral part of building a workplace where staff views are listened to and make a difference.

We commit to:

- Provide platforms for people to share their voices – as one of our strategic aims and core values, this also encompasses staff, board, volunteers & freelancers
- Actively involve staff in decision making & managing change at all levels. A recent example being that all staff and board members were actively involved in the development of our new strategy
- Help staff develop key competences around effective voice that build confidence, through formal training and mentoring. *See Training Policy (p.29)*
- Fostering a working culture where leaders emphasise active listening – through one to ones, appraisals, staff surveys – giving staff the chance to be heard and influence outcomes
- Ensuring employment processes and values are understood through the use of a clear staff handbook. We provide safe space and processes for employees to express concern and raise issues with appropriately trained personnel, such as one to ones and our *Disciplinary & Grievance Policy (p.68)*

### **Opportunity**

For individuals, having fair and equal access to work and career development opportunities improves life chances and social mobility. At VSC, we value the benefit of having more diversity within our organisation, where talent from all sections of society is valued, developed and utilised.

We commit to:

- Having fair, accessible recruitment, selection & promotion processes that prevent bias or other barriers to access and opportunities. This includes providing adjustments and support at interviews, ensuring diverse interview or selection panels, or holding exit interviews to understand the reasons for a person leaving a job. *See Recruitment Policy (p.4)*
- Working towards a more representative board by increasing opportunities for diversity of leadership and decision-making roles in the organisation with reference to gender balance, ethnicity, disability and age.

- Including and ring-fencing budget lines for training and development for both employees and freelancers employed on projects, and ensuring equal access to those opportunities. We offer free places to freelancers we work with regularly, on training delivered by VSC.
- Supporting paid internships or apprenticeships to remove barriers for people to careers in the culture sector. We recently delivered paid Emerging Storyteller placements and an Early Years residency and are seeking further funding to continue these programme.
- Making workplace adjustments for employees with physical or mental health conditions or disabilities, through reviewing, updating and ensuring all staff understand workplace policies and processes. We support flexible working and working from home (*See p.87, p.90*)
- Removing barriers to work for those with caring responsibilities by offering flexible working and parental leave for both parents
- Creating opportunities for people from all backgrounds, in line with our strategic aim To increase access to storytelling and creative opportunities for communities

## **Fulfilment**

Worker fulfilment is a key factor in both individual and organisational wellbeing. Employees who are fulfilled in their jobs are more likely to enjoy better health and wellbeing, and to be more engaged and motivated in their work.

We foster fulfilment by:

- Supporting employees in leadership development opportunities, through formal training as well as job-shadowing and mentoring. *See Training Policy (p.29)*
- Offering opportunities for staff at all levels of the organisation to 'step up', contribute to organisational problem solving or take the lead on certain projects. We run annual staff and board development days to look at areas such as strategic planning
- Offering regular equality and diversity, and health and safety training as required for all employees well as sharing relevant training programmes and resources
- Encouraging and supporting employees to create peer groups that build mutually beneficial healthy working practices, such as Storyteller Sharing Sessions
- Regularly sharing and celebrating work and efforts of every team member during team meetings
- Encouraging staff to look after their own wellbeing, and recognising that wellbeing takes different forms for different individuals. Senior leaders lead by example, letting staff know that it's okay and encouraged to have a healthy work life balance. We also offer an additional 2 days of paid mental health leave, annually, to all staff. *See Policy for Managing Absence & Wellbeing (p. 101)*
- Encouraging sharing of interesting external opportunities during team meetings
- Ensuring freelancers are paid fairly by regularly reviewing our rates in line with industry standards

## **Respect**

Ensuring that people are respected, and treated with dignity, whatever their role and status in an organisation is central to Fair Work. It creates workplaces that enhance employee health, safety and wellbeing, and work environments that are free from bullying and harassment. *See Equality & Diversity Policy (p.12)*

We foster a culture of respect by:

- Establishing and putting into practice organisational values that promote respect and dignity, with everyone embodying behaviours and attitudes that consider the concerns of others. We expect all staff and board members to follow our *Code of Conduct (p.57)* which underpins these values.
- Developing processes and practices that ensure all workers feel safe to raise issues and are confident that their concerns will be dealt with appropriately by trained personnel. (See *Disciplinary & Grievance Policy, p.68*)
- Making positive changes around important workplace issues such as bullying and harassment, equality and diversity, health and safety, mental health and work-life balance. This is achieved through employee training and supporting workplace dialogue around important issues
- Promoting an inclusive workplace culture that challenges hierarchy and values each individual's contribution to the team

## **Security**

Security of employment, work and income are essential to wellbeing and stability across the creative and cultural sectors.

We commit to:

- Building stability into contractual arrangements that include appropriate terms and conditions, regular and reasonable hours, holiday entitlement, sick pay and pension contributions.
- Ensuring all contracts (employed or freelance) are paid fairly and equitably, in line with industry standard rates of pay and the Living Wage.
- Adopting a policy of no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts or exploitative working patterns. For example, offering only paid internships, not using volunteers for roles that should be employed, and not asking anyone to work or give their time for free
- Offering flexible working to align with family life and caring commitments.
- We are a Living Wage Scotland accredited employer.