

## **6. U3A BENALLA Inc. – Policy Guidelines**

### **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION (approved 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023)**

#### **Introduction**

1. U3A Benalla Inc. recognises that prohibiting discriminatory policies and practices is both a legal obligation and good practice.
2. U3A Benalla Inc. endorses diversity, supports equal rights and equal opportunity, and does not advocate, support or practice discrimination based on characteristics such as race, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability, whether covered by applicable legislation or not.

#### **Purpose**

3. This document sets out U3A Benalla Inc's anti-discrimination policy and governance structures, responsibilities and processes to give effect to the policy and ensure the organisation complies with its obligations under legislation.
4. This document is a policy guideline and is consistent with:
  - The U3A Network Victoria Rules & Constitution amended December 2013.
  - The Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012.
5. This policy aims to foster an organisational culture that maximises access to membership and grows organisation performance.

#### **Policy**

6. *Discrimination* consists of treating an individual with a particular attribute less favorably than an individual without that attribute or with a different attribute under similar circumstances. It can also involve seeking to impose a condition or requirement on a person with an attribute who does not or cannot comply, while people without that attribute do/can comply.
7. *Equal Opportunity* consists of ensuring that all volunteers and members are given equal access to the services and benefits provided by U3A Benalla Inc.
8. *Victimisation* happens where a person is treated harshly or suffers detriment because they have made a complaint of discrimination. Victimisation can also happen if a person suffers detriment because they have provided information or evidence in connection with a complaint.

9. U3A Benalla Inc. does not advocate, tolerate, condone or practice discrimination and regards as unfair, all forms of unlawful discrimination or vilification, including but not limited to that which relates to:
  - gender
  - pregnancy and potential pregnancy
  - marital/domestic status
  - disability
  - race, colour, national extraction, social origin, descent, and ethnic or national origin
  - age
  - family responsibilities, family status, status as a parent or carer
  - racial classification or caste
  - sexuality, transsexuality, transgender or sexual preference
  - religious or political beliefs or activities
  - trade union or employer association membership or activities
  - physical features
  - occupation or calling
  - medical record, including HIV/AIDS vilification
  - criminal record
10. U3A Benalla Inc. is an equal opportunity manager of volunteers. In all cases no factors other than performance and competence will be used as the basis for training and development opportunities for volunteers and/or intending volunteers.
11. U3A Benalla Inc. will ensure that its programs, policies, procedures, practices, publications and forms accord with the principles expressed in this policy.
12. U3A Benalla Inc. will make all reasonable accommodations to allow people who experience difficulties in their dealings with it to benefit equally from its activities.
13. All of U3A Benalla Inc. members and volunteers will comply with the principles expressed in this policy.

## **Procedures**

14. U3A Benalla Inc's Committee of Management will:
  - review the organisation's practices and processes to ensure that they adequately incorporate precautions against discrimination
  - conduct elections to positions on the Committee of Management that are free from discrimination and provide an equal opportunity for all members to stand for election
  - periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the systems established to remove and/or prevent discrimination
  - make reasonable accommodations to allow diverse groups to access benefits provided by the membership of the organisation and its programs and activities
  - monitor the performance of office bearers and volunteers in regard to this policy
  - analyses all reported breaches to identify systematic trends and ensure that any adverse trends are addressed
  - ensure a culture of anti-discrimination and equal opportunity compliance is promoted across the organisation
15. All members, volunteers and employees will be made aware of the organisation's anti-discrimination policy by its publication on the organisation's website and/or newsletter.
16. A person who believes they are being treated unfairly as a result of discrimination should report the matter to U3A Benalla Inc's Secretary. The Secretary will inform the President immediately.
17. A report of discrimination will be investigated promptly, confidentially and fairly, in accordance with the organisation's Grievance Policy.

## **Responsibilities**

18. U3A Benalla Inc.'s Committee of Management is responsible for:
  - establishing, implementing, publishing and reviewing this policy
  - fostering equal opportunity and setting an example by their own behaviour
  - ensuring that the organisation's practices and processes incorporate precautions against discrimination in such areas as selecting volunteers, admitting members and providing access to programs
  - ensuring reasonable accommodations are made to allow diverse groups to become members and participate in the organisations programs and activities
  - ensuring that allegations of discrimination or vilification are properly investigated.

19. It is the responsibility of all members and volunteers to:
- treat each other with respect and without regard to non-relevant criteria or distinctions
  - familiarise themselves with this anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policy
  - where appropriate, suggest ways in which practices, systems and procedures could be improved to reduce the likelihood of discrimination occurring.
20. U3A Benalla Inc's President is responsible for ensuring that a complaint of a breach of this policy is handled in accordance with U3A Benalla Inc's Grievance Policy.

***This document was approved by the U3ABenalla Inc.  
Committee of Management on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023.***