



Disability Inclusion and Equal Opportunity Policy

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Drafted by:	Finance, Audit & Risk Committee	Approved by Board on:	25/07/19 (Reapproved on XX)
Responsible person:	Board	Scheduled review date	31 May 2023

Educating The Future Australia Limited Disability Inclusion and Equal Opportunity Policy (2021)

1. Introduction

Educating The Future Australia Limited (ETF) is committed to assuring that Directors, Volunteers, Partners and any other affiliated parties create a positive environment that enables beneficiaries as well as volunteers, partners and affiliated parties to participate equally in activities.

ETF is committed to challenging and preventing stereotyping, prejudice, disability discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We aim to develop a greater awareness of disability, remove barriers and change attitudes among our volunteers, partners, beneficiaries and other affiliated parties that prevent people with disabilities from accessing their rights.

2. Purpose of policy

This policy outlines ETF's principles and practices to achieve disability inclusiveness. It articulates ETF's roles and responsibilities in promoting the rights of people with a disability in Australia and Timor-Leste. ETF recognises that disability inclusion is an ongoing and evolving process and this policy aims to encourage and equip all volunteers, partners, beneficiaries, internal/external stakeholders and other affiliated parties to embrace it as an opportunity for reflection, learning and growth, rather than simply a destination or compliance, ultimately ensuring equal opportunity in all facets of operations.

3. Scope of policy

This policy is intended to apply to all ETF activities. The policy is applicable to all ETF Directors and Volunteers. The policy also extends to ETF partners and associated implementing organisations, abiding by anti-discrimination legislation focused on behaviour in the workplace and recruitment.

4. Definitions:

Word	Definition
Disability	A disability is understood as a long term or episodic physical, mental, intellectual or sensory condition which may act as barriers, limiting an individual's ability to participate in society on an equal basis with others persons.
Equal opportunity	Broadly defined as the right to be treated fairly and impartially, free from discrimination. In this sense, all employees, interns, volunteers and persons working with and/or through ETF can expect equal and fair treatment and opportunity. There is strictly to be no discrimination, based especially upon age, race, disability or gender.

5. Legislative Framework and Standards

ETF will adhere to the following Australian legislation and international conventions and frameworks:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

- Federal anti-discrimination laws such as the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)'s 'Development for All 2015-2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's Aid Program

ETF is aware that the sector's thinking and learning around disability inclusion and the priorities of the Disability Movement are forever evolving and is committed to ensuring it is up to date on any changes to legislative frameworks and standards.

6. Policy Statement

ETF is working towards the achievement of all rights for people with disabilities. ETF recognises and values diversity and is committed to an environment that is safe, with equal opportunities for all Volunteers and beneficiaries including people with disabilities. To achieve this ETF is guided by a human rights-based approach that sees those in power, including the Board, Managing Director, leadership team and recruitment team as duty bearers to ensure persons with disabilities enjoy their rights.

As an organisation that values all people equally, ETF will ensure information disseminated to ETF volunteers, partners and implementing organisations is respectful of and builds an understanding of disability. With operations in Australia and Timor-Leste, ETF acknowledges the significant impact of gender, poverty and cultural differences on disability inclusion.

Confidentiality of individuals with disabilities and the disclosure of their status follows the guidelines outlined in ETF's Privacy Policy.

7. ETF Principles of Disability Inclusion

ETF's disability inclusion policy is guided by the following principles.

Awareness

ETF is committed to raising awareness of the barriers faced by and experiences of persons with disabilities in order to equip volunteers, partners and affiliated parties with the tools and knowledge to identify and stop discrimination and proactively work towards a more inclusive organisation. This aims to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, to combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices as well as to promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities to ETF and the wider society.

Participation

ETF will ensure that persons with disabilities are involved in all aspects of the organisation's programs, particularly in high level decision making. ETF recognises that persons with

disabilities have the right to be included in decisions about every aspect of their lives and their role in the organisation.

Comprehensive accessibility

ETF is committed to taking appropriate measures and identifying and removing barriers to ensure that persons with disabilities have access on an equal basis with others. This includes physical access as well as different access requirements for learning, communication and social disabilities.

Universal design

The UNCPRD defines 'universal design' as the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

8. ETF disability inclusion policy for Australia programs

ETF is committed to ensuring all programs in Australia are inclusive and achieve the equality of rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities. This is achieved through adopting the twin track approach. This involves targeting disability-specific initiatives to support the empowerment of persons with disabilities as well as integrating disability-sensitive measures into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programs. ETF recognises the importance of the codesign of these initiatives and measures with persons with disabilities for the greatest impact possible.

ETF aims to foster a welcoming, empowering and kind culture that is inclusive of people with a diverse range of abilities. This is channeled throughout the entire organisational structure and is a driving element in recruitment of new volunteers, where ETF applies a zero tolerance to discrimination on the basis of disability.

ETF's policy is guided by the principles as previously mentioned. The practical actions based on these principles include:

- Raising awareness is achieved through mandatory training during volunteer induction, providing resources for volunteers, partners and affiliated parties to educate themselves and ensuring persons with disabilities always have a voice in the organisation.
- Persons with disabilities are encouraged, empowered and equipped with the confidence and tools to participate fully in the organisation. The people and culture team aims to always ensure that persons with disabilities are included in key decision making in the organisations and makes sure to communicate clearly regarding support and opportunities.

- ETF encourages and equips all volunteers and beneficiaries with disabilities to communicate with the leadership team to work collaboratively to achieve accessibility in the sense that works best for them.
- ETF is committed to designing its programs in Australia and Timor-Leste are designed for the diversity of human abilities.

9. ETF disability inclusion policy for Timor-Leste programs

ETF is committed to supporting pre-school construction initiatives where all community members are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

ETF's partners in Timor-Leste will be held accountable for the implementation of inclusive activities however, the ETF provides the following recommendations:

- All students and members of preschool communities should be treated with respect and dignity.
- Students should not be discriminated against and where necessary, education and school activities, as well as facilities, should be designed and modified to ensure the inclusion of all students on the same basis as their peers.
- Teachers should acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students.
- Bullying, harassment and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals because of their personal attributes should not be tolerated in our school community.
- Teachers should encourage empathy and fairness towards others.
- Teachers should challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices.
- Teachers should contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students.
- Consultation with the local community regarding local disability needs should inform the design and construction of disabled toilets, disability mobility ramps and other special needs equipment and considerations.

10. Responsibilities

ETF as an organisation is aware of its responsibility to genuinely embody these principles in our work and organisational structure, with the primary aim of removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from accessing their rights.

The implementation of this policy will be guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) principles (Article 3, UNCRPD) and will be embedded within ETF's organisational culture and practices as follows:

- All Directors and Volunteers are responsible for the implementation of this policy and ensuring that key principles (underpinned by the UNCRPD principles) are reflected in all ETF activities.
- ETF is a safe environment and works to improve equality for persons with disabilities in all areas of public life, including volunteering and education.
- ETF will ensure its program activities are inclusive to persons with disabilities and empower them to access their rights.

11. Monitoring of Policy

This policy will be monitored and reviewed in line with the process outlined in the Policy Framework. Team Leaders and Directors are accountable to the Board for managing and maintaining this policy.

Where compliance issues are identified, Directors will work with Volunteers, partners and associated implementing organisations to address these issues promptly, ensuring the problem does not escalate.

If the individual feels as if they are unable to communicate to the individual they must raise a concern with the appropriate human resources delegate. This can be found in the organisational flow-chart.

12. Complaints Procedure

Anyone who is subject to a breach of this policy, or is subject to any forms of discrimination, if able to, inform the alleged harasser that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome. ETF recognises that harassment and discrimination may occur in unequal relationships and that it may not be possible for the victim to inform the alleged perpetrator.

Victims of harassment or bullying are encouraged to report incidents to the People and Culture Team. Alternatively, incidents can be reported to team leaders who will follow the following procedure.

The complaints procedure is as follows:

- When a designated person receives a complaint, they will:
- Record the dates, times, and facts of the incident(s)
- Ascertain the views of the victim as to their desired outcome for the situation

- Ensure that the victim understands ETF's procedures for dealing with the complaint
- Discuss and agree the next steps: either informal or formal complaint, on the understanding that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude the victim from pursuing a formal complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome
- Keep a confidential record
- Respect the choice of the victim
- Ensure that the victim knows that they can lodge the complaint outside of ETF through the relevant country/legal framework

ETF understands that victims often feel they cannot come forward. ETF therefore understands the need to support victims in making complaints.

Informal Complaints Mechanism

If the victim wishes to deal with the matter informally:

The designated person will take the following steps:

- Give an opportunity for the alleged harasser or bully to respond to the complaint
- Ensure that the alleged individual understands the complaints mechanism
- Facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution or refer the matter to a designated mediator
- Ensure a confidential record is kept, and the incident is recorded in the Incident Register
- Follow up after the outcome to ensure behaviour has stopped
- Ensure that this is done quickly and within 7 days of the complaint being made

Formal Complaints Mechanism

If the victim wishes to make a formal complaint or if the informal complaint result is unsatisfactory, the formal complaint mechanism should be used.

The designated person to receive the initial complaint will refer the matter to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, which will then deal with the matter.

Individuals carrying out the investigation will:

- Interview the victim and alleged perpetrator separately
- Interview relevant third parties
- Decide whether or not the incident(s) took place
- Produce a report detailing investigation, findings and recommendations
- Decide the appropriate response in consultation with the victim,
- Follow up to ensure behaviour has stopped and the victim feels safe
- Still make recommendations if the incident is deemed not to have taken place
- Keep a record of actions taken, the incident will be recorded in the Incident Register.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained throughout the whole process

- Ensure the process is completed quickly and within one month of the complaint being made.

External Complaints Mechanism

If the victim decides to make a complaint outside ETF, that is their right and they will be supported by ETF.

External Complaints can be made to the Australian Human Rights Commission, which is an independent third party which investigates complaints about discrimination and human right breaches. They cover the complaint areas: Disability Discrimination, Sex Discrimination, Race Discrimination and Age Discrimination. External Complaints should also be reported to ACFID, specifically to their Code of Conduct Committee available here: <<https://acfid.asn.au/>>

13. Policy Amendments

13.1. This policy and any amendments enter into effect immediately.

13.2. This policy shall be disseminated through an appropriate directive to all internal ETF stakeholders and necessary persons.

13.3. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Mr. Adam Alexander Hegedus
Managing Director
Re-signed on XXX

