|  |
| --- |
| Human Resources |
| EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CHARTER |
|  |

**DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DOCUMENT TITLE | Equality, diversity and inclusion charter |
| DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION  | This charter sets out our organisation’s commitments to equality and diversity and to creating an inclusive workplace culture, the measures we will put in place to achieve this and our expectations for employees to make sure we put our ethos into practice. |

**DOCUMENT VERSION HISTORY**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE** | **VERSION NO.** | **AUTHOR** | **OWNER** | **APPROVED BY** | **COMMENTS** |
| January 2022 | 1.0 | P Leathem | HRD | Board | New Charter |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**KEYWORD DESCRIPTORS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| TAGS:  | COMPANY POLICY, HR POLICY, CHARTER, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION |

CONTENTS

1. CHARTER STATEMENT 4

2. OUR COMMITMENTS 4

3. HOW WE WILL DEMONSTRATE OUR COMMITMENTS 4

4. OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR EMPLOYEES 5

1. CHARTER STATEMENT

 NIE Networks is committed to equality and diversity and to creating an inclusive workplace culture. Our business is about people and we strive to create an environment responsive to different cultures and groups in all our interactions with employees, customers, visitors, suppliers, contractors, stakeholders, investors and in the communities in which we operate. We value diversity, we consider it to be important to business success and integral to our company values.

We believe that every employee has the right to be treated with respect and dignity throughout their employment with our organisation and not to be discriminated against. We do not accept any level of bullying, harassment, exclusion or victimisation of any kind. Equality and Diversity in the workplace can add significant value and benefit for the business and employees through more diverse and creative thinking which will ultimately deliver increased productivity and performance, improved employee retention, increased skill levels, improved understanding of customer requirements and enhanced company image.

We seek to achieve higher standards than the minimum set out in legislation and we will pro-actively encourage a culture that supports diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity.

This charter sets out NIE Networks commitment to equality and diversity and to creating an inclusive workplace culture, the measures we will put in place to implement this and our expectations for employees to make sure we put our ethos into practice.

1. OUR COMMITMENTS

We want to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in our culture, and reflected in our people and behaviours.

We are committed to ensuring eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in NIE Networks on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work.

We aim to provide opportunities for all sections of the community and continue to strive to create an inclusive working environment in which difference is recognised and valued.

We want to ensure a harmonious workplace where every individual feels valued, respected and included, irrespective of their gender, including gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race/ethic origin, religious belief or political opinion, disability, having or not having dependants, sexual orientation and/or age.

We want to ensure everyone is acting in accordance with our purpose, values and behaviours and our Code of Conduct, which emphasise the inclusive behaviours expected of all our people and those working on behalf of our organisation.

We will address any instances of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour such as harassment, bullying, discrimination and victimisation and encourage everyone to speak up about any concerns, incorporating our no tolerance commitment to all forms of discrimination and abuse of policies and procedures.

We will provide guidance, training and support to help our people deliver our diversity and inclusion commitments. We will set targets and take affirmative action to ensure we are delivering and achieving the aims of this charter.

1. HOW WE WILL DEMONSTRATE OUR COMMITMENTS

We will develop an overarching equality, diversity and inclusion strategy to help put our vision into practice. We will take the following steps to demonstrate our commitments:

* Continue to regularly review and benchmark our employment policies and practices and their application and make any updates to ensure they demonstrate our equality, diversity and inclusion values and continue to work towards identifying and eliminating any discriminatory practices
* Ensure the principles of this charter are reflected in our employment practices and standard terms and conditions of employment
* Remove obstacles faced by unrepresented groups at key points of career development and progression
* Comply with relevant legislation by requiring all employees to meet the minimum standards of behaviour and conduct in relation to how they treat their colleagues and other people they have contact with as part of their work with NIE Networks
* Provide employees and managers with the appropriate information, via our policies, on equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, as well as to provide equality diversity and inclusion training for all employees
* Educate all colleagues and raise awareness of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour such as harassment, bullying, discrimination and victimisation and encourage everyone to speak up about any concerns, incorporating our zero-tolerance approach
* Continue to build our employee support networks that meet the needs of our workforce and help to build awareness and understanding
* Continue to work with our employee network groups to create safe, collaborative spaces for colleagues to connect with others who share their lived experience, with these groups being open to all colleagues for awareness and learning
* Make adjustments to meet the needs of disabled employees where reasonable and practicable to do so
* Ensure all internal publications and material reflect, in the language and images, the diversity of our employees
* Ensure that decisions affecting employment, training, promotion and career development are based on an individual’s ability and irrespective of an individual’s protected characteristics
* Through employing a diverse workforce this will lead to increased employee and business performance
* Continually improve our data and reporting on equality, diversity and inclusion to highlight areas where we need to improve and put in place improvement plans to ensure we achieve our stated objectives
* Develop a strategy that advances and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion across NIE Networks
1. OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR EMPLOYEES

We all need to work together to make sure we put our ethos into practice. It is everybody’s responsibility to contribute to creating a diverse and inclusive culture. We expect the following commitments from our employees to help us achieve our vision:

* Familiarise yourself with this charter, our policies and to act in accordance with our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion at all times;
* Not to discriminate, harass, bully or victimise colleagues and other people you have contact with as part of your work with NIE Networks, treating everyone with respect and helping to create an environment that is free from any discrimination and/or harassment, bullying or victimisation of any kind;
* To be sensitive to the potential impact of your behaviour on colleagues, customers, visitors, suppliers and contractors;
* To work in partnership with managers to create and sustain an inclusive working environment, in which everyone’s unique contribution is valued;
* To complete all training on equality, diversity and inclusion that NIE Networks may arrange from time to time; and
* To speak up if you are subject to/witness behaviour that is not in accordance with our values and expected behaviours in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.