

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Bridges Musical Theatre is a society open to anyone sharing our interest in amateur theatre regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, sex or sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or belief, party political views or socio-economic status. We call these, together with any other criterion not relevant to the point at issue a "Protected Characteristic".

This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination. Our committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, and we ask that all members do what they can to help make sure that the policy works in practice.

### **Aim**

All of our members, and ticket holders, and other users of our facilities have the right to be treated fairly, equitably and with respect.

Bridges Musical Theatre aims to promote equality of access, equality of treatment and equality of opportunity, and to challenge discrimination wherever it occurs.

We will consider very carefully all feedback and take reasonable steps to respond to suggestions and complaints as quickly as we can.

### **Equality of Access**

Bridges Musical Theatre will try to meet the access requirements of all our members, ticket holders and other users of our facilities. All our meeting, rehearsal venues and performance spaces are accessible to wheelchair users. We can produce papers and scripts in large fonts for those with visual impairments. If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what other reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

### **Equality of Treatment**

Bridges Musical Theatre is committed to equal treatment of all our members, ticket holders and other users of our facilities. We ask that all our suppliers abide by an equal opportunities policy too.

We will not treat any person less fairly than others on the grounds of any Protected Characteristic. We will not expect any person to comply with membership requirements that are different to those that apply to others due only to a Protected Characteristic.

We do not allow any person to be victimised or harassed.

### **Equality of Opportunity**

We will not discriminate or in any way treat anyone less favourably due to a Protected Characteristic. We acknowledge that some casting decisions are based on the requirements of a script, and we will work with rights holders when relevant to achieve equality of opportunity.

However, equality of opportunity does not just apply to casting decisions. We will also aim for equality of opportunity when seeking new members and new committee members, and when selecting members of the creative team, backstage and front of house volunteers.

When appropriate, we will take positive steps to meet the needs of underrepresented communities, especially when making invitations to our events and productions.

**Anti-discrimination procedure**

Bridges Musical Theatre will not tolerate harassment or other unlawful discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal and will ensure that appropriate action is taken whenever it occurs.

Any person guilty of unacceptable behaviour may be asked to leave the meeting, event or production, may be suspended from office or any appointment or role, and may be banned from being a member of Bridges Musical Theatre. We reserve a right to take other appropriate action as our committee deems fit.

**Complaints Procedure**

In the event that any person feels that they have suffered discrimination in any way, we ask that the following procedure be followed:

1. The matter should be reported to the Chair or another member of the Committee. The report should include as much detail about the nature, time and place of the objectionable behaviour as possible.
2. Please include any suggestions on how the situation can be addressed to your satisfaction.
3. The Committee will consider the complaint as soon as possible. You will be kept informed about the decision-making processes and actions taken. A record will be archived by the Secretary.
4. All information will normally be treated confidentially but any allegation of a criminal offence, or any safeguarding concerns, will be passed to the appropriate authorities depending on the nature of the incident.

**Review**

The Committee will, as appropriate, monitor and enforce this Policy and will review it regularly:

Date of next review: September 2025