

# Welcoming Multi Ethnic Volunteers

## C H E C K L I S T

Welcoming a diverse range of people into your organisation provides many benefits:

- Attracts new volunteers, staff and clients
- Introduces fresh ideas and different perspectives on local issues
- Acknowledges there are more than two communities in Northern Ireland
- Promotes respect for others
- Volunteer pool reflects the local community
- Promotes understanding and a cohesive community

The tips below will help you communicate your commitment to diversity in volunteering:

### **Ethos**

Why does your organisation want to involve a diverse range of people? What are the benefits? This needs to be discussed and understood throughout the organisation. You need to ensure that positive attitudes towards diversity and intolerance to discrimination is part of your organisation's culture. How will your organisation communicate this to all volunteers, staff and clients? Have you reviewed your policies and procedures to assess how they reflect your ethos?

### **Welcome**

Does your organisation have a 'welcome statement' in its recruitment materials and displayed on a prominent notice board in your organisation? A welcome statement should be a positive statement of how your organisation welcomes volunteers from diverse backgrounds and the valuable contribution a diverse volunteer pool makes to the organisation.

### **Adverts**

Where do you advertise for volunteers? Your organisation should consider what communities are represented in its area. Do your services reach/affect these communities? It is important that your organisation increases its awareness and understanding of these communities and cultures (religious holidays, prayer times, clothing cultural norms etc). Are there local support groups/umbrella groups for black and/or minority ethnic communities in your area? Try and establish links with them.

### **Images**

What images does your organisation have on its promotional materials? If you were a potential volunteer from a black and minority ethnic community would you relate to the images you saw? Review your fliers, website pages (particularly your home page), display stands etc and check out how diverse your images are!

## Policy

Do you have an Equal Opportunity policy? Does it clearly say that staff, volunteers and clients will not be discriminated against because of their race/ethnicity? Are all volunteers, staff and clients aware of this policy? Have they been involved in developing/reviewing it?

## Training

What training does your organisation offer staff and volunteers to help promote understanding and respect for people from different cultures? Through information in your volunteer handbook, volunteer role training and induction training, volunteers should have a clear understanding of the ethos of your organisation. In addition, it is important to communicate effectively relevant policies, prejudice awareness, complaints; problem solving procedures as well as support and supervision procedures. These are all vital in developing a fair, supportive and respectful environment.

Should you wish to increase the diversity of your volunteering team and would like some more help, a staff member of Volunteer Now can provide advice, help to review your current practice and identify gaps and suggest further steps. A more detailed diversity checklist is also available.

Reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure information in this publication is accurate. However it is not intended to be legally comprehensive; it is designed to provide guidance in good faith without accepting liability. If relevant, we therefore recommend you take appropriate professional advice before taking any action on the matters covered herein. Charity Registration No. NIC101309. Company Limited by Guarantee No. NI602399. Registered in Northern Ireland.