Equal Opportunities Policy

Statement of Policy

EcoMove EV Group (The employer) is committed to equal opportunities for all staff and applicants.

It is our policy that all employment decisions are based on merit and the legitimate business needs of the company. The employer does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour or nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, disability, religion or belief, age or any other ground on which it is or becomes unlawful to discriminate under the laws of England, Wales, and Scotland (referred to as Protected Characteristics).

Our intention is to enable all staff to work in an environment which allows them to fulfil their potential with fear of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The employers commitment to equal opportunities extends to all aspects of the working relationship including:

- Recruitment and selection procedures;
- Terms of employment, including pay, conditions and benefits;
- Training, appraisals, career development and promotion;
- Work practices, conduct issues, allocation of tasks, discipline and grievances;work-related social events; and
- Termination of employment and matters after termination, including references.

This policy is intended to help the employer achieve its diversity and anti-discrimination aims by clarifying the responsibilities and duties of all staff in respect of equal opportunities and discrimination.

The principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities also apply to the way in which staff treat visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former staff members.

This is a statement of policy only and does not form part of your contract of employment. This policy may be amended at any time by the employer, in its absolute discretion.

Who is responsible for equal opportunities?

Achieving an equal opportunities workplace is a collective task shared between the employer and all its staff. This policy and the rules contained in it therefore apply to all staff of the employer irrespective of seniority, tenure and working hours, including all employees, directors and officers, consultants and contractors, casual or agency staff, trainees, homeworkers and fixed-term staff and volunteers or interns (referred to as staff).

All staff have personal responsibility to ensure compliance with this policy, to treat colleagues with dignity at all times and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, visitors, clients,

customers, suppliers and former staff members. In addition, staff who take part in management, recruitment, selection, promotion, training and other aspects of career development (referred to as managers) have special responsibility for leading by example and ensuring compliance.

Managers must take all necessary steps to:

- Promote the objective of equal opportunities and the values set out in this policy;
- ensure that their own behaviour and those of the staff they manage complies in full with this policy;
- Ensure that any complaints of discrimination, victimisation or harassment (including against themselves) are dealt with appropriately and are not suppressed or disregarded.

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination occurs in different ways, some more obvious than others. Discrimination on the grounds of any of the Protected Characteristics is prohibited by law, even if unintentional, unless a particular exception applies.

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination is less favourable treatment because of one of the Protected Characteristics. Examples would include refusing a woman a job as a chauffeur because you believe that women are not drivers or restricting recruitment to persons under 40 because you want to have a young and dynamic workforce.

Direct discrimination can arise in some cases even though the person complaining does not actually possess the Protected Characteristic but is perceived to have it or associate with other people who do. For example, when a person is less favourably treated because they are (wrongly) believed to be homersexual or because they have a spouse who is Muslim.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination arises when an employer applies an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice which in fact outs individuals with a particular Protected Characteristic at a disadvantage, statistically and this is unjustified. To show discrimination the individual complaining also has to be personally disadvantaged. An example would be a requirement for job candidates to have ten years' experience in a particular role, since this will be harder for young people to justify. This kind of discrimination is unlawful unless it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Victimisation

Victimisation means treating a person less favourably because they have made a complaint of discrimination or have provided information in connection with a complaint or because they might do one of these things.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant Protected Characteristic (within the Equality Act 2010) which has effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating,

hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature or it may be related to age, race, colour or nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity.

Harassment can arise in some cases even though the person complaining does not actually possess a Protected Characteristic but is perceived to have it (for example, when a person is harassed because they are (wrongly) believed to be homosexual) or associates with other people who possess a Protected Characteristic (for example, because they have a spouse who is Muslim).

A person may also be subject to harassment even if they were not the intended target. For example, a person may be harassed by a sexist joke about a different gender if it created an offensive environment for them to work in.

Harassment may include:

- Use of insults or slurs based on a Protected Characteristic or of a sexual nature or other verbal abuse or derogatory, offensive or stereotyping or remarks;

- Physical or verbal abuse, threatening or intimidating behaviour because of a Protected Characteristic or behaviours of a sexual nature;

- Unwelcome physical contact including touching, hugging, kissing, pinching or patting, brushing past, invading personal space, pushing, grabbing or other assaults;

- Mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability, appearance, accent or other personal characteristics.

- Unwelcome requests for sexual acts or favours; verbal sexual advances, vulgar, sexual, suggestive or explicit comments or behaviours;

- Repeated requests, either explicitly or implicitly, for dates;

- Repeated requests for social contact or after it has been made clear that requests are unwelcome;

- Comments about body parts or sexual preference;

- Displaying or distributing offensive or explicit pictures, items or materials relating to a Protected Characteristic or of a sexual nature;

- Shunning or ostracising someone, for example, by deliberately excluding them from conversations or activities;

- 'Outing' or threatening to 'out' someone's sexual orientation (ie to make it known;

- Explicit or implicit suggestions that employment status or progression is related to toleration of, or acquiescence to sexual advances, or other behaviour amounting to harassment;

- Racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist jokes, and stereotypical remarks about a particular ethnic

or religious group or gender;

- Posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags and emblems; and
- Isolation from normal work or studyplaces, conversations or social events.

Other important points to note about harassment;

- A single incident can amount to harassment;
- Behaviour that has continued for a long period without complaint can amount to harassment;
- It is not necessary for an individual to intend to harass someone for their behaviour to amount to harassment;
- It is not necessary for an individual to communicate that behaviour is unwelcome before it amounts to harassment; and
- The onus is on each individual to be certain that their behaviour and conduct is appropriate and is not unwanted and in the case of doubt, you must refrain from such conduct.

Disability Discrimination

This could be direct or indirect discrimination, and is any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Disabled Persons

Any staff member who considers that they may have a disability is strongly encouraged to speak with the Directors, particularly if they experience difficulties at work because of their disability so that any adjustments to help overcome or minimise difficulties can be discussed. For these purposes, disabilities includes any physical or mental impairment which substantially affects your ability to perform day to day activities and has lasted (or is likely to last) more than 12 months. Disclosure of this information will be treated in confidence, if you wish it to be, so far as is reasonably practicable and we will do our best to handle matters sensitively and to ensure that you are treated with dignity and with respect for your privacy.

We will consult with you about whether adjustments are needed to avoid you being disadvantaged and may ask you to see a doctor appointed to us to advise on this. We will seek to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment unreasonable we will explain why and try to find an alternative solution.

Managers with responsibility for managing a member of staff who they know or thing to be disabled should speak to the directors to ensure that all relevant duties are complied.

Making Employment Decisions Fairly

As noted above, the employer will recruit employees and make other employment decisions concerning promotion, training, dismissal and related issues on the basis of objective criteria.

Managers should only stipulate criteriaor conditions (including job selection, promotion and redundancy) which are based on legitimate business needs and which do not go further than is needed to satisfy that need. If you are in any doubt about whether particular criteria or conditions are indirectly discriminator, or justifiable, then please speak to one of the Directors.

Recruitment

Managers and Directors involved in recruitment must:

- Specify only recruitment criteria that are relevant to the job, reflect genuine business needs and are proportionate. More than one person should be involved in shortlisting of applicants wherever practicable.
- Ensure that vacancies are advertised to a diverse audience and try to avoid informal recruitment methods that exclude fair competition. In very rare cases, it may be legitimate and necessary to restrict recruitment to a particular to certain groups, but it is essential that this is discussed with the directors so that appropriate steps can be taken to ensure legality;
- Review job advertisements carefully to ensure that stereotyping is avoided and that particular groups are not unjustifiable discouraged from applying;
- Not ask applicants about health or disability before a job offer is made (other than in exceptional circumstances and after having been approved by the directors). If necessary a job offer can be expressed to be conditional upon satisfactory passing a medical check.
- Not ask a candidate about any Protected Characteristics if the question may demonstrate an intention to discriminate. For example, candidates should not be asked about current or future pregnancy, childcare or related matters; and
- Not make assumptions about immigration status based on appearance, accent or apparent nationality;
- So as reasonably practicable, keep a written record for their reason for relevant decisions.

The employer is legally required to verify that all employees have the right to work in the UK. Prior to starting employment, all employees must produce original documents to the employer's satisfaction, irrespective of nationality. Information about the documents required is available from the recruitment policy.

Staff training, career development and promotion

Training needs to be identified during the normal appraisal process. Appropriate training to facilitate progression will be accessible to all staff.

All promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit and according to proportionate criteria determined by legitimate business need.

Conditions of service

Access to benefits and facilities and terms of employment will be kept under review to ensure that they are appropriately structured and that no unlawful barriers to qualification or access exist.

Discipline and termination of employment

Any redundancy selection criteria and procedures that are used, or other decisions taken to terminate employment, will be fair and not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

Disciplinary procedures and penalties will be applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal, or other disciplinary action.

Discipline and termination of employment

Part-time and fixed-term staff will all be treated the same as full-time or permanent staff of the same position and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (pro-rata, where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

What to do if you Encounter Discrimination

If you believe that you have been a victim of discrimination. You should follow the employer's Grievance Procedure.

Every member of staff has a responsibility to combat discrimination if they encounter it. Staff who observe or are aware of acts that they believe amount to discrimination directed at others, are encouraged to report it to the directors.

Any grievance or report about discrimination will be kept confidential as far as this is practicable. We may ask you if you wish your complaint(s) to be put to the alleged discriminator if disciplinary action appears to be appropriate. It sometimes may be necessary to disclose the complaint or take action even if this is not in line with your wishes, but we will seek to protect you from victimisation and, if you wish, we will seek to protect your identity. You should be aware that disciplinary action may be impossible with your co-operation or if you refuse to allow relevant information to be disclosed.

Staff who raise a complaint about or report discrimiantion in good faith will be protected from retaliation or victimisation. As long as you act in good faith, the fact that you have raised a complaint or report will not affect your position within the company, even if the complaint is not upheld. Making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith is a misconduct offence and will be dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary policy. Any member of staff who attempts acts of retaliation or victimisation may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for gross misconduct.

Non-Compliance with Equal Opportunities Rules

Any breach of equal opportunities rules or failure to comply with this policy will be taken very seriously and is likely to result in disciplinary action against the offender, up to and including immediate dismissal.

Staff should also note that:

- In some cases, they may be personally liable for their acts of discrimination and that legal action may be taken against them directly by the victim of any discrimination; and
- It may be a criminal offence to intentionally harass another employee.

Review of this policy

The employer encourages staff to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved or ask any questions if they are unsure about any part of this policy or how it is applied by contacting the nominated HR officer, **Nicole Chaskelson.**