



Equal Opportunities Statement

Policy Lead	Executive Officers
Audience	Anyone who engages with the Grassroots Trust
Formally endorsed by	Trustees
Last updated	November 2023
Next Review	November 2024

- 1 *The Grassroots Trust* is a Christian organisation committed to social justice and resolutely opposed to discrimination in society. We are committed to providing services on a fair and equitable basis, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, life-style, sex, sexuality, physical/mental disability, offending background or any other factor. No person requiring services from *The Grassroots Trust* will be treated less favourably than any other person on any grounds.
- 2 Recruitment of staff and volunteers in the UK: While recognising that we are mostly a volunteer organisation, we actively seek to recruit employed UK staff and volunteers with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, promoting equality for all, and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, experience and commitment to the values and purposes of the organisation.
- 3 As an organisation seeking to deliver services within a Christian context, some posts can only be filled by Christians. These posts are specified in the “List of roles within Grassroots” (below) document and kept under regular review. The nature of these posts or the context in which they are carried out, and their link to the ethos of the organisation, give rise to a genuine occupational requirement (GOR) for the post-holders to be Christians. All staff in these posts are required to demonstrate a clear personal commitment to the Christian faith. This policy is implemented in accordance with Employment and Race Directives issued by the government and ACAS guidance.
- 4 As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants’ suitability for positions of trust, the church/organisation undertakes to comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any person on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- 5 A Disclosure is only requested if relevant for the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will

contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.

- 6 Where a Disclosure is to form part of a recruitment process (whether for employed UK staff, those on seeking to work on contract with the charity or for volunteers applying to take up a role with the charity), we encourage all applicants to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent separately and in confidence to the Recruiter within the organisation and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to, as part of the recruitment process.
- 7 Unless the nature of the position allows questioning about your entire criminal record, we only ask about “unspent” convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 8 We ensure that all those in the organisation who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance of offences. We will also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders eg: the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 9 At interview, or in separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary work.
- 10 Every person under-going a DBS check will be made aware of the DBS Code of Practice and a copy will be available on request.
- 11 We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking a position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend upon the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

APPENDIX : Handling, Use, Secure Storage, Retention & Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information

In consideration of our use of the Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Service, to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, we agree to comply with the CRB Code of Practice, Data Protection Act and other legislation in regard to the correct handling, use, storage, retention, and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.

Storage and access.

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant’s personal file but stored separately and securely, in a lockable, non-portable, storage container (e.g. filing cabinet), with access strictly limited to those who are entitled as part of their official duties.

Handling.

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all

those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information have been revealed and we recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage.

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention.

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, Disclosure information may be kept for up to six months for the resolution of disputes or complaints, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If this happens it will be done in consultation with the CCPAS Disclosure Unit who will seek advice from the CRB giving full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights legislation. The conditions regarding safe handling and storage will continue to apply.

Disposal.

Once the retention period has lapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately and appropriately destroyed (e.g. by shredding, pulping or burning). While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will continue to be kept securely. We will not keep any original documents or copies relating to the disclosure certificate. However, we may keep a record of it, i.e. the name, date, and type of disclosure, the position for which it was requested, the unique reference number and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

"List of roles within Grassroots"

In line with the trust's equal opportunities statement, here is a list of roles with Grassroots that require the person involved to have a strong Christian commitment in line with the statement of faith that is in the trust deed.

Executive Officer: This role is both part/one of the executive of the organisation and one of teaching/preaching and in other ways to propagate the Christian faith.

Team Leader: Grassroots runs various projects that are led by either paid or volunteer staff. This is a role of Christian leadership & mentoring to those on the team concerned. It is also a role of leading the team to propagate the Christian faith.

Assistant team leader: This is similar to "Team Leader" and qualifies for the same reasons.

Trustee: Since the trust deed has a specific requirement to be in line with a statement of faith it is a requirement of those in the role of trustee to hold to that belief and have a lifestyle that reflects this.

Other roles where the need for a strong Christian commitment is not paramount (but would still be desirable) include:

Treasurer, Team Treasurer, Team Administrator, Volunteer, Cook, Driver.

The Grassroots Trust

8 Meadow Way, Rowledge, Farnham, Surrey GU10 4DY

Tel: 01252 792387

e-mail: admin@grassroots.org.uk

website: www.grassroots.org.uk

GRASSROOTS is a Christian charity based in the UK.

England & Wales Registered Charity No: 1060034 and Scottish Registered Charity No: SCO46121