

LGBTI+ Inclusion Policy

Introduction

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to clearly outline to all Localise stakeholders the policy and procedures relating to the Localise Youth Volunteering LGBTI+ Inclusion Policy in line with our current Equality Policy.

Scope:

This policy covers all persons who participate in Localise Youth Volunteering programming. This includes Localise staff, new and existing Localise members, Localise volunteers, members of the Board, management and other committees; this will include relationships with casual visitors, independent contractors and others with whom the company is in contact and collaborators.

Objectives:

To outline Localise procedures to ensure a safe space for members of the LGBTI+ community.
To outline the roles and responsibilities of the Designated Liaison Person
To present the Localise reporting and complaints procedure for dealing with abuse and discrimination of the LGBTI+ community.

Localise Youth Volunteering is committed to creating an environment that supports equal opportunity and the creation of discrimination-free spaces for all persons, regardless of ethnicity, religious beliefs or none, sex, age, perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, marital status, nationality, or disability.

Localise Youth Volunteering understands and recognises that prejudice and stereotyping are prevalent in society. It is for this reason, that Localise dedicates itself to creating spaces that are safe and secure for all.

It is hereby Localise Youth Volunteering policy to implement and promote across all of our programmes to the highest level of quality and services to those of LGBTI+ community. All those that participate in Localise Youth Volunteers programming will receive fair and equal treatment and without bias.

Statement of Inclusion to LGBTI+ Community

Localise Youth Volunteering will take all reasonable steps within its control to meet the diverse needs of all those participating in its programming and provide an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of an individual's intersectionalities around sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Localise Youth Volunteering is committed to providing programming to the LGBTI+ without discrimination or harassment and will promote a physical and emotional space that is accepting and encouraging to the LGBTI+ community. Pronouns will be used in the way each person identifies and confidentiality shall be respected in regards to disclosures concerning transgender status, medical history or sexual orientation.

Training in Regards for Staff and Adult Volunteers

Localise has as its foremost priority the welfare and safety of its concerning stakeholders. We are committed to providing a safe environment where together, people can come together through volunteer work to care in their community. Localise has several procedures in place designed to safeguard all persons involved in our programmes. Our staff endeavour to ensure that all individuals are protected and kept safe from harm while taking part in any of the Localise programmes.

It is for this reason, that Localise Youth Volunteering adult volunteers and staff are to receive regular training in regards to supporting LGBTI+ young people and understanding LGBTI+ concerns.

Complaints of Abuse and Discrimination Directed at LGBTI+ Individuals

The following adheres to and follows the Localise Child Protection Policy.

Volunteers of all ages, members of partnership schools and organisations, and staff providing and/or participating in programming shall not discriminate against or harass an individual.

If any form of abuse and discrimination; verbal, physical, or sexual will be immediately reported with any evidence of discrimination, to Localise Youth Volunteering. Individuals who feel they have been subject to discrimination or harassment should report this occurrence to the assigned Designated Liaison Person (DLP). The DLP will immediately take appropriate measures to ensure that the individual(s) is exposed to any further behaviour during Localise Youth Volunteering programming. During this time, the following is the Localise Youth Volunteering guideline for dealing with complaints –

If an individual wishes to make a complaint, they should contact a Localise member of staff, group coordinator or Localise head office at the earliest opportunity to discuss the matter. If the individual is unhappy with the outcome of this meeting, they can put his/her complaint in writing to the Director of Localise. The Localise Director will then decide on how to proceed.

- If the complaint relates to the safety and welfare of an individual, it will be examined in accordance with current good practice.
- The complaint will be dealt with properly, fairly and impartially and in the best interest of the individual.
- Making a complaint will have no implications for further dealings with Localise.
- An official other than those originally involved will examine the complaint.
- The complaint will be reviewed and a reply will be sent within 20 working days. Where it is not possible to meet this target, the complainant will be informed on an ongoing basis until the matter is resolved.
- Localise will endeavour to rectify all matters with regards to any upheld complaints.
- All review outcomes can be appealed to the Director of Localise within one month of the review.
- All false and malicious complaints will be dealt with accordingly.

If a decision is made to report the matter to Garda Síochána, the DLP will follow the standard reporting procedure and support the victim when and where possible. When this happens, the Director of Localise Youth Volunteering will inform the individual and their guardian(s)/school; if applicable, that an allegation has been made and explain the nature of that allegation. Any response made by the accused will be recorded and passed on to the Garda Síochána. The individual and their guardian(s) (if applicable) have a right to reply to the allegations made against them.

Further decisions on how to proceed will be consulted with the Garda Síochána, Director and Localise Board at that time.

Reporting to Garda Síochána

Should a complaint be reported to the Garda Síochána, Localise will support this process.

The following information comes from the Garda Síochána website - <https://www.garda.ie/en/crime/hate-crime/> - accessed on the 26th of May 2021.

At the stage of reporting, the individual will be attended to by a Garda who will take their report of the incident.

The officer will make an assessment to commence an investigation. An investigation will involve gathering evidence such as taking statements from the victim(s) and witnesses, etc.

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- The individual will be offered a choice to be referred to victim support.
- The individual will be kept informed of developments throughout the investigation.

There are 281 Garda Diversity Officers appointed throughout the country who can assist in the course of the investigation.

Should the individual not wish to attend their local Garda station, they can seek the services of the Garda National Diversity & Integration Unit, which will act as liaison with the local Garda station or Garda Diversity Officer.

Should the individual require further information, please contact the staff at the Garda National Diversity & Integration Unit, who will deal with any query on these regards.