

## **NAWRA**

### **Notes from Equality and Diversity working group meeting 14 March 2023**

#### **Present:**

Atif Kaudri – Mind (Chair)

Riley Bartholomew – Deafblind Scotland

Bhavani Sarma – Central Bedfordshire Council

Keith Thompson – Northumberland Council

Juan Ramirez – Derbyshire County Council

Sangeeta Enright – Cystic Fibrosis Trust

Rita Chadha – Advice Services Alliance

Kelly Smith – Child Poverty Action Group / NAWRA Secretary (minutes)

#### **Apologies:**

Lindsey Poole – Advice Services Alliance

Will Hadwen

Daphne Hall – Rightsnet

#### **1. Notes from the last meeting(s)**

These can be found on the [Equality and Diversity page](#) of the NAWRA website. Notes agreed.

#### **2. Researching and adopting good practice guides written by other organisations**

Thanks to working group members who shared good practice guides and resources. They have been adopted and are now on the [NAWRA website](#).

**Action:** All members to send good practice guides on protected characteristics to Kelly at [kelly@nawra.org.uk](mailto:kelly@nawra.org.uk) for discussion and adoption.

#### **3. Promote the discounted/free membership scheme widely to allow small organisations**

**with little funding to join NAWRA and ensuring a seamless service from nomination to joining for such organisations**

So far, five organisations have been invited to join NAWRA for free and have accepted this offer. One advises survivors of domestic abuse, three are user-led disability groups, and one offers a range of services to people affected by HIV/AIDS. A number of Somali community groups and Bristol Black Carers have been invited to join NAWRA for free but have yet to take up the offer.

**Action:** all members to consider nominating any organisation that they feel meets the criteria for free membership by emailing Atif Kaudri (Mind) at [a.kaudri@mind.org.uk](mailto:a.kaudri@mind.org.uk) with the details.

#### **4. Contributing to work on equality and diversity in the wider rights and advice sector**

Members of the working group were invited to share their views as and when they arise.

From Lindsey Poole (ASA) by email:

The Access to Justice Foundation is offering funding through their [Improving Outcomes Through Legal Support](#) . This call includes the possibility for collaborative pieces of work which reach people at an early stage and who may be excluded.

The London Legal Support Trust has secured more funding from the Lottery to promote skills development and training to address the current skills shortage. Addressing the race and ethnicity glass ceiling in the advice sector is an important part of this. They are looking to recruit a project manager for this work, (see <https://www.charityjob.co.uk/jobs/london-legal-support-trust/head-of-advice-workforce-development/891899?tsId=6>) but more importantly, are interested in sharing their thoughts and proposals to others outside London.

- **Measuring the diversity of the NAWRA membership**

**Action:** Jacob Cain (Bristol Council) to draft a monitoring form on the characteristics of our members and the groups their organisations serve.

All agreed that ethnicity options should be listed in alphabetical order. Kelly to follow up with Jacob.

- **Equality and diversity considerations at NAWRA conferences**

All agreed that we should consider equality and diversity when organising conferences and make it a fundamental part of everything we do, including specifically asking speakers to think about how the topic they are presenting on impacts upon different groups.

The accessibility standard of the venue for the recent conference in Oxford was very good. **Action:** please send any feedback about the conference to Atif at [a.kaudri@mind.org.uk](mailto:a.kaudri@mind.org.uk).

**Action:** Kelly to check the accessibility of the venue in Nottingham where the next NAWRA conference will take place.

Online meetings are more accessible for many people but in-person meetings are valued too.

Rita Chadha (ASA) has offered to talk about a new project on racialised communities in London at a future NAWRA conference. **Action:** Kelly to contact Rita to arrange a date for this.

## 5. AOB

21 March is the UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. **Action:** Rita to send Kelly details of an event taking place for circulation to the NAWRA membership.

## 6. Next meeting

The next meeting of the equality and diversity working group will take place in May 2023. **Action:** Atif to set a date and Kelly to circulate the invitation and Zoom link to the working group and the full NAWRA membership.