

Greenacre Recruitment

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement October 2020



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Diversity and Inclusion within the Housing sector has been a strong topic in recent times, and for good reason. Clearly there is a moral responsibility to embed and nurture fit for purpose D&I strategies and culture into your organisation, but there is also a very strong business case. As well as organisations needing to truly represent the communities they serve, a lack of diversity can also lead to limited vision which, in turn, can impact the effective delivery of corporate goals, as well as being a deterrent to prospective fresh talent joining your business.

For any organisation, developing and embedding a fit for purpose strategy and culture is an ongoing process, and there is never a one size fits all approach. Effective delivery involves listening, acting on and effectively monitoring the values and behaviours we identify as a diverse and inclusive culture.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion is fundamental to Greenacre's success, whether through our recruitment processes, our consultation and research practices, the projects we actively take part in and the organisations we partner with. Greenacre is fully committed to helping the people we work with establish and nurture their own vision and goals, and all our consultants are trained and prepped to ensure they consistently support clients and candidates effectively, through regular training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy awareness, which involves an understanding of the language and behaviour of conscious and unconscious bias throughout each of their processes.

Our Processes

Attracting a diverse talent pool through advertising campaigns

The language and imagery we use throughout our advertising campaigns are key to ensuring we are not unfairly discriminating against anyone, but also to ensure we are attracting talent from as wide and diverse a pool as possible. Wording is extremely important as it is known that certain words can deter demographical minorities from applying for roles they may well be exceptional candidates for. For example, research shows certain words may put off candidates from a different background to those they assume the advert is directed towards, particular words which may be perceived more geared towards male, female, white, younger or able-bodied candidates.

As another example, statistically, women are more likely to apply for a job that they have 100% criteria fit to, whereas men are statistically more likely to apply if they only fit a selection of the criteria, and women and people from certain ethnic minority backgrounds may also perceive particular descriptions in job adverts as aimed at a different targeted audience to themselves. Taking these observations into consideration, we ensure our job descriptions emphasise skill sets and a more outcomes-based requirement (rather than specific personality traits and qualifications), which is more focused on what a candidate will be expected to achieve at incremental stages of the job (i.e. goals for 3, 6, 12 months).

Just as important is how we visually advertise the roles. The picture content used includes, where possible, examples of diverse and inclusive visual imagery.

Creating the right incentives

An agile working environment opens up a lot of opportunity when attracting a diverse talent pool and can often be a bigger incentive than remuneration, as it allows a wider range of talented people to work from a place that gives them more freedom to perform well, whose personal commitments, circumstances or disabilities may have otherwise prohibited them from doing so. We actively

encourage our partners to facilitate an agile approach, especially in light of recent global events, and as a fully adaptive organisation used to the agile workforce model ourselves Greenacre are happy to advise and support others on this approach.

The application and shortlisting process

By anonymising applications (removal of candidates' names, age, date of birth, gender, ethnicity and any other distinguishing demographical indications) before forwarding to the shortlisting stage, we ensure there is less room for conscious and unconscious bias. By prepping our candidates thoroughly, we also coach them to be conscious of their own language on their CVs and application forms, to ensure a fair process.

We are committed to actively searching for and headhunting suitable talented candidates for shortlists who are from diverse minority backgrounds, especially where they may be a shortage of applicants from said backgrounds for a particular role, to ensure our shortlists are reflective of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The interview process

It is important that screening and interview panels also reflect our commitment to E, D & I, and we offer support and guidance to our clients and organisations we work with, to ensure their own strategy is fit for purpose, and the screening panels, language and behaviour reflect their own commitment to fair process.

It is also important candidates have access to the right technology needed to get through remote applications, interviews and assessments. We prepare our candidates, ensuring each has access to the right technical tools, so that no one is unfairly disadvantaged or left behind at interview stage.

Onboarding

We work strategically alongside the organisations we hire for to ensure they are fully aware of the importance of implementing E,D & I through their onboarding processes, and offer support on the use of language, behaviour and visual material to ensure candidates feel included and fully integrated into the teams they join.

Further Commitment and support we offer to the sector

As well as offering practical advice on embedding fit for purpose D&I strategy and culture into the workforce, we fully support our service users in developing and maintaining an equal playing field for every individual, no matter what background, gender, race, disability or religion, and research and publish our perspective on the transitioning fundamental issues surrounding discrimination in the workplace.

Greenacre were invited by the National Housing Federation to participate in an initial steering group for a National BAME staff network and were invited to be part of a panel at the 24Diversity Conference in May 2020, discussing BAME Empowerment and in particular the importance of getting young BAME people into organisations.

As an organisation we have collaborated with the HDN and have participated in regional discussions and more recently co-organised a roundtable event hosted by EMH for senior leaders in the Midlands region. Our aim was to facilitate more collaborative working on the topic within the Midlands region to help drive improvement and share best practice and ideas around implementing positive action and how to support strategic aims through innovation. This was an extremely thought-provoking

session where it became clear that getting the culture and environment right is key and that interventions only act as tools and need to be targeted at the areas of concern rather than blanket approaches. It was also highlighted that how the relationship with “external suppliers and partners” needs to change in order to help support an organisations staff diversity attraction strategy, an area within the agenda in which we feel we are well positioned to help. Our established and purposefully cultivated network allows us to position organisations and roles ensuring we promote opportunity for all.

Greenacre are national sponsors of WISH GB (Women In Social Housing). Our support includes running and participating in events across London, East Anglia, Midlands and the North East and West which typically attract in excess of 100 talented housing professionals to network, where we are involved in sharing learning and best practice and support a diverse section of professional women through their career challenges. We have recently hosted and participated in webinars which have attracted participants across the UK and we continue to support the WISH agenda in the setup of the WISH East board, where we played a pivotal role in establishing the board and start up events. Through building these relationships we have access to a vast network of talented housing professionals across the UK, many of whom we support into senior vacancies, and are able to reach further in addressing the gender disparities at executive level and other senior job roles.

As individuals, our team members at all levels take part in engaging with the wider sector on E, D & I issues and topics. From speaking at events and webinars, taking part in round tables and panel debates, and engaging across social media, our consultants are just as passionate about embedding E,D & I culture throughout everything we do.

If you'd like to read about some of the topics we've covered head over to the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion page on our Insights page, or visit our Resources page to view our other policies and publications, or to see our current activities, projects, and video content.

