17/01/22

Environmental & Sustainability Policy

Scope

At Genius Within CIC (“the Company”), we provide coaching, training and assessment to adults and young people from neurominorities.  We have a small support functions office, a Social Inclusion Staff Team who work in Prisons and community settings with vulnerable adults and young people, and a network of Associates who work with our clients in their place of work.

This Policy outlines the actions and commitments the Company makes to minimise our potential impact on the environment. We operate in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and strive to use pollution prevention and environmental best practices in all we do.

This policy is applicability to ESF funded contracts that Genius Within work on.

Responsibilities

As a professional services company, our reliance on natural capital is small compared with many other industries. Whilst this is an advantage, our clients, our people and other stakeholders still expect us to minimise our impact, and as a responsible business whose operations ultimately rely on natural resources, we want to do everything we can.

We expect all employees and Associates to reduce waste, recycle and use public methods of transport wherever possible.

Our Directors have overall responsibility for ensuring we fulfil our objective of being an environmentally responsible organisation, and monitors our activity regularly to make sure we are working in a way that supports our goals.

Climate Change and Reaching Carbon Neutrality

The Climate Change Act 2008 named six major greenhouse gases which account for around 19% of all UK emissions in 2018:

* Carbon dioxide
* Methane
* Nitrous oxide
* Hydrofluorocarbons
* Perfluorocarbons
* Sulphur hexafluoride

The Company pledges to contribute towards reducing these emissions while operating as a business. To do this, we will:

* Reduce our energy consumption in our offices and encourage our employees and Associates to do the same when working from home
* Reduce our work-related travelling footprint by promoting working from home and flexible video call arrangements
* Source energy-friendly appliances, light bulbs and reduce our electricity consumption wherever possible
* Ensure the premises we use but do not own meet our commitments to preserve energy (e.g. insulation; electrical equipment; recycling; efficient water equipment (not leaking), etc.)
* Decouple our business and finances from fossil-fuel extractive companies

Minimising Our Environmental Impact

Tackling Travel

Employees and Associates are based nationwide, and as such, under normal circumstances, a great deal of travel is essential to our business. Wherever possible, you should use trains, tubes, buses and car share for internal training events. Mileage allowance is deliberately low to encourage the use of public over private transport.

Internal events are always held at the most central location for attendees, and we rely heavily on video call platforms and online meetings to reduce this further.

Reducing Consumption and Waste

We have a strong focus on reducing paper consumption, with virtual storage and document sharing being the norm. Reports are shared through a secure online database with clients, rather than printing and sending, and everyone is reminded to “think before you print”.

Everything that can be recycled is, and remote workers are encouraged to consider their waste to landfill practices by impeccable modelling of good practice by the Management team. We are aiming for “Zero waste to landfill” from our central office by2025 however due to local council recycling restrictions, 100% zero waste is not possible.  The Company is always striving to send as little waste to landfill as possible. Paper, plastics, glass, furniture and equipment are all currently recycled.

**Please also refer to Appendix 1: Sustainable Development Action Plan 2020/2021**

Global Impact

At Genius Within, we use ethical banking, and are therefore part of the divestment scheme that ensures savings / pensions are not invested in fossil fuel production.

In addition, we have made the following **commitments** to environmental responsibility:

We will:-

* Consider environmental concerns and impact when making business decisions about new activity
* Promote environmental awareness among our employees and Associates, encouraging them to work in an environmentally-responsible manner
* Reduce waste through re-use and recycling and by purchasing recycled, recyclable or re-furbished products and materials where these alternatives are available, economical and suitable
* Promote efficient use of materials and resources throughout our facilities including water, electricity, raw materials and other resources, particularly those that are non-renewable
* Purchase and use environmentally responsible products
* Actively promote recycling with our ‘Swap shop’ in relation to work equipment, such as cables, ink cartridges, etc. to effectively reduce the need to purchase new items
* Communicate our environmental commitment to clients, customers and the public and encourage them to support it
* Strive to continually improve our environmental performance and minimise the social impact and damage of activities by periodically reviewing our environmental policy in light of our current and planned future activities

**Appendix 1: Sustainable Development Action Plan 2020/2021**

**Reduce the Environmental Footprint**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Actions | Action Owner/s | Progress Update | Supporting Evidence |
| Energy and carbon management | Use natural light wherever possible. Ensure we use energy efficient day light bulbs    Set printers to hibernate mode when inactive for a length of period of time      Turn all laptops and computer terminals off at the end of the working day    Keep offices heating to a comfortable level in winter and ensure doors are closed and heaters turned off at night | Gemma Pullen – Executive Assistant        All employees who have a printer at home;  Gemma Pullen for Plumpton office    All employees    Last person to leave the office | HR to send this Policy to all employees after annual review |  |
| Low carbon travel, transport and access | Encourage employees to utilise teleconferencing facilities as opposed to travelling to meetings    Encourage car sharing/the use of public transport | Fiona Barrett – Chief Operating Officer      Fiona Barrett – Chief Operating Officer | As above |  |
| Procurement – Reducing waste | Environmentally friendly/recycled products to be purchased where viable. E.g. manufactured ink, recycled paper.      Encourage all employees working from home to do the same | Helen Charnock – Head of Finance  Gemma Pullen– Executive Assistant  Marian Symons – Business Administrator    All employees | As above |  |
| Organisational and workforce development – promoting sustainability/employee awareness | Employees read all Policies regularly - at least every 12 months and when new changes occur.    Notices in offices & to employees working from home to encourage reduce, reuse, recycle and turn off lights | Angelica Simpson – HR      Marian Symons-Business Administrator | As above |  |

**Objective: Contribution to Social Sustainability**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Actions | Lead | Progress Update | Supporting Evidence |
| Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all | Facilitators and specialist providers to promote life- long learning and opportunities for all.    Facilitators to encourage self/peer support groups. | Fiona Barrett – COO |  |  |

Revision History

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Revision** | **Changes** | **Author** | **Approver** | **Date** |
| 1A | New document | Kate Gilbert | Nancy Doyle | 10/04/15 |
| 2A | Revised Document | Fiona Barrett | Sandie Scrase | 20/02/17 |
| 3A | Name changes | Marian Symons | Fiona Barrett | 19/1/18 |
| 4A | Review of policy | Dom Nally | Nancy Doyle | 08/09/19 |
| 5A | Annual review of document – added the Sustainable Action Plan as an Appendix as they are related | Dom Nally | Fiona Barrett | 2020 11 04 |
| 6A | ESF logo added | Marian Symons | Fiona Barrett | 2021 03 01 |
| 7A | Change of Format | P Apricio | F Barrett | 2022/01/17 |
| 8A | Update of date and names | J Wallis | Fiona Barrett | 2022/07/04 |