

VISION VANCOUVER

Draft Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Responsible Executive: Co-Chairs, Vision Vancouver Executive

Effective Date: January 16, 2018

Date approved by Executive Committee: December 13, 2017

Purpose:

Vancouver is a rapidly changing city with diverse and distinct communities. It is this diversity of people and communities that makes Vancouver a rich, vibrant, and desirable place to live and to work. We believe that we can only be effective and support our vision for the city if we are able to fully represent and reflect all those that live and work here.

Therefore, in alignment with Vision Vancouver’s Constitution and Bylaws, specifically our mission, key principles, and the purpose of the Society, Vision Vancouver is committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice.

Our main purpose is to “operate as an ‘elector organization’ promoting the election and work of candidates for civic office within the City of Vancouver (which may include City Council, Park Board, and School Board) who support the principles” of Vision Vancouver (Constitution 4(a)). Additionally, Vision Vancouver endeavours to “foster a city where equality and the needs of diverse communities and cultures are respected” (Constitution 4(d)).

Furthermore, our key principles include a dedication to:

- improving the quality of life for all Vancouverites, regardless of their social identity or economic status; (Constitution 3(a));

- diversity, equality, and social justice; (Constitution 3(d)); and
- being a democratic member-based organization that reflects Vancouver’s vibrancy and vitality. (Constitution 3(f)).

To create a truly inclusive organisation we acknowledge that the work is both internal and external. In order to provide the leadership and ability to govern inclusively in a diverse city, we aim to ensure that we are equally addressing internal diversity as well as the systemic barriers that exclude some groups from fully participating in all areas of Vision Vancouver. In particular, we endeavour to ensure that we continue to support diverse candidates in all stages of the electoral process in order for our Elected Officials to represent and reflect the communities within the city’s population. We are committed to ensuring that all those engaged in the work of Vision Vancouver, including Staff, Candidates, Elected Officials, Volunteers, Executive, and Members, reflect the communities that we serve and are able to fully contribute at all levels of the organisation.

This policy is designed to clearly articulate Vision Vancouver’s commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice; to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Staff, the Executive, and Members; and to identify the range of strategies and initiatives that are in place to support this commitment.

This policy also ensures that Vision Vancouver abides by the provincial and federal laws and requirements of all organisations, and in so doing, ensures that Members and Staff are entitled to the rights and benefits specified by the law.

Scope:

This policy applies all those engaged in the work of Vision Vancouver, all Staff, Candidates, Elected Officials, Volunteers, Executive, and Members of the Society.

Policy Statement:

It is Vision Vancouver’s policy to:

- create an organisational culture that ensures all individuals, regardless of their background, perspectives, and circumstances, are able to fully and freely participate in all Vision Vancouver’s activities with success;
- promote understanding, attitudes, and perceptions that lead to respecting and valuing individuals and communities across difference and, in particular, support underrepresented groups;

- commit to applying a diversity and equity lens to all actions, decisions, and work of Vision Vancouver;
- support diverse candidates in all stages of the electoral process by addressing systemic barriers;
- provide training and support to Staff, Candidates, Elected Officials, Volunteers, Executive, and Members to promote respect for equity, diversity, and inclusion;
- commit to developing and implementing an action plan to eliminate systemic barriers, which intentionally or unintentionally exclude or limit the participation of individuals and groups in Vision Vancouver as outlined in the BC Multiculturalism Act and the BC Human Rights Code;
- create an organisational culture that ensures all individuals can live, work, and learn in an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment based on individual attributes such as: gender, race, ancestry, language, age, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic background, ability, opinions, and life experiences, as outlined in the BC Human Rights Code; and
- ensure equitable work practices for everyone including those within four designated groups (women, visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, and persons with disabilities) as outlined in Canada's Employment Equity Act.

Definitions:

Diversity: refers to the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes between and within groups, some of which are visible and others that are not. It recognizes that we are all different, and that our differences can be a source of strength.

Equality: is about treating everyone the same; everyone is equal and the same. Equal treatment does not recognize group or individual differences and therefore can lead to inequitable outcomes and potentially discrimination and harassment.

Equity/Equitable: is about fairness; everyone is equal and different. It involves accommodating differences and recognizing that some people may face barriers or disadvantages in particular due to social inequalities, which require accommodation in order to achieve the same goal. Equity is not necessarily the same as equality.

Inclusion/Inclusive: describes any effort to include people and communities, and to value the diversity of their differences so that they are able to participate as valued, respected, and contributing Members of the Society/community/organisation.

Underrepresented groups: refers to any group that is disadvantaged, excluded, discriminated against, exploited, or oppressed in society, usually based on their physical or cultural

characteristics. They have an inferior status in society and/or their culture, whereby ways of being are seen as ‘bad’, ‘inferior’ or ‘wrong’.

Barriers: Generally fall into three areas: attitudinal/behavioural, procedural, and physical. Barriers prevent people from maximizing their contribution to the Society/community/organisation because of their race, ancestry, place or origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status, or disability.

Questions:

Questions about this policy may be directed to info@votevision.ca.

References:

- [BC Multiculturalism Act](#)
- [BC Human Rights Code](#)
- [Employment Equity Act](#)

Review date:

This policy will be reviewed by the Vision Vancouver Executive on or before December 31, 2022.