

**Inclusion &  
Belonging (I&B)**

**Policy Owner:**  
Chief People Officer

**Accountable Lead**

Director of Organisational Development



Policy Control	
<b>Policy Level</b>	- Regulatory / Strategic
<b>Policy Reference</b>	PC/RNC/002/2024
<b>Link to Strategy</b>	Purposeful Culture
<b>Version Control</b> V1.0  V2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whilst assurance has been gained that this policy demonstrates appropriate levels of compliance, this new version will be reviewed by RNC in April 2025 for further comment.</li> <li>- Amendments made following initial feedback from Inclusion and Belonging steering group</li> <li>- Effective from 14/02/2025 to 14/02/2028</li> </ul>
<b>Approved by</b>	Chief People Officer
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## **1. Policy Statement and Aims**

This Inclusion and Belonging (I&B) Policy reflects our commitment to being a fair and inclusive organisation to support our colleagues, customers, partners, and stakeholders.

To create a high performing organisation within our community it is essential we attract, develop and retain diverse and talented people and we create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued.

Our values underpin all aspects of our commitment to Inclusion and Belonging and allow our colleagues to work within and embed a truly inclusive environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging.

Our sector has a wider social purpose that places a responsibility on us to be a beacon for diversity, equity and inclusion to create a true sense of belonging. Diverse teams, make better decisions for our customers which is why this policy is essential to the way we work in Curo.

Curo has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010: to eliminate all unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation to advance equity of opportunity.

This policy was formerly the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) policy; this has been changed to Inclusion and Belonging (I&B) as a core aim, however this is underpinned by improving the diversity of our organisation and our thinking as well as providing equity to our colleagues and customers.

It is essential for the components of this policy to be understood, reflected and underpinned throughout our ways of working.

### **Equity**

We are committed to fairness and justice recognising that we all have a different starting point and we must make adjustment for imbalance and remove barriers.

We promote equity (being fair) and distinguish this from equality which means providing the same to all.

Our equity activities include:

- Reviewing policies and processes to establish fair treatment and outcomes for all colleague's and customers.

- We will ensure that our policies reflect our CROFT values (Care Respect, Open Fair & Trust)
- Providing opportunity, resources and development to all colleagues without discrimination or bias.
- Collating and analysing data to identify gaps, opportunity and trends to inform our decision making.

## **Diversity**

We recognise the diversity of individuals and the value everyone brings to our community and working environment to bring real change. We recognise that diversity includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, physical and mental ability, and religion. The nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 are the base foundation for Curo to build upon to be truly inclusive. We recognise that everyone is unique and there are overlaps and interconnections for everyone which impact on experiences and therefore intersectionality is an important factor to reflect in our Inclusion and Belonging policy.

Our diversity commitments include:

- Celebrating the individuality and unique value that our colleagues and customers contribute for greater good of our community.
- Developing, supporting and promoting colleague groups to ensure we use lived experiences to inform our decision making.
- Ensuring representation and consideration of diverse perspectives in decision-making and leadership roles.

## **Inclusion**

We will create an environment where everyone feels respected, supported and valued and we will promote co production and design to ensure we are inclusive and representative in our approach and decision making.

Our inclusion goals include:

- Building an organisation that reflects our community and customers.
- Tailoring our services to accommodate the diverse needs of our colleagues and communities providing a person-centred approach.

- Creating opportunities for all voices in the community, customer and colleague to be heard, be valued and to inform our decision making.
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- We will remove barriers and establish time that is needed for our underrepresented groups to take part in colleague groups to improve our working environment and decision making.
- Ensure that Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are embedded in all areas of our business and colleague and customer groups are included in this process.

## **Belonging**

We are dedicated to fostering a sense of belonging where everyone feels connected and welcome in Curo and our communities.

Our belonging key goals include:

- Attract, recruit and retain great talent
- Creating a vibrant and inclusive environment where every colleague feels valued and invested in and chooses to stay.
- Creating and celebrating our culture where high performance delivers exceptional outcomes for customers.
- Support the development and promotion of events to celebrate diversity and create a strong sense of belonging for our colleagues and customers.

## **2. Scope, roles and responsibilities**

We operate under the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance 2021, which requires that our Board takes responsibility for the organisation's commitment to equality and diversity. This policy applies to all colleagues, board members, contractors, volunteers and partners of Curo.

The Board and Executive team through the Policy Owner, ensure that the policy delivers Curo's strategic objectives and reflects our values. The Accountable Lead is accountable to the Combined Board for the effective implementation of the Inclusion and Belonging policy in Curo.

Managers are responsible for role modelling behaviours and our CROFT values (Care Respect, Open Fair & Trust) putting the policy

into practice as part of team plans, day-to day leadership of themselves, colleagues and business areas.

All colleagues are responsible for role modelling behaviours and our CROFT values, putting the policy into practice in their day-to-day work and their interactions with other customers, colleagues, and partners.

Customers are responsible for supporting others in creating an inclusive neighbourhood where everyone feels involved and can participate. By treating others with respect, together we create a community where everyone feels valued and respected.

Contractors and suppliers have responsibility to follow this policy, share it with their colleagues and ensure their own hiring practices are fair, and let Curo know about any cases of discrimination they see or experience so, we can all contribute to a more inclusive and respectful working environment. Fostering a culture of equity and mutual respect where everyone feels valued and safe.

The policy lead will provide organisational wide influence, implementation and embedding of process, values and frameworks that inform and underpin equitable practice.

The Purposeful Culture Strategy and subsequent action plans will resource, measure and monitor our progress.

### **3. Principles**

Our Inclusion and Belonging Policy will be reflected in all aspects of our CROFT values so that our colleagues live our values in a truly inclusive way to create the environment for everyone to thrive.

We are committed to transparency, value for money and efficiency in the delivery of this policy.

We will engage and consult our customers in all aspects of the delivery and embedding of our Policy and customer involvement.

We will work with our colleagues and specifically our colleague representation groups to ensure that our policy and subsequent action plans are fit for purpose

We will make commitments to respected charters, pledges and associated bodies, including the Chartered Institute of Personal

Development (CIPD), that drive high standards of Inclusion and Belonging to reflect best practices and demonstrate our commitment to our colleagues and customer.

#### **4. Application**

The policy will be delivered through the effective use of the following documents and plans

- Business Plan
- Purposeful Culture
- How we get things done performance cycle

**Accountability** - The application of this policy is overseen by the Curo Inclusion and Belonging Steering Group, formerly EDI Steering Group under the leadership of the Chief People Officer.

**Alignment with Strategy** - The policy will be applied in conjunction with the delivery of our business plan.

**Operational commitments** – the policy will be delivered through the following operational commitments:

- Collate, maintain and analyse demographic data of our customers and colleagues. To help us understand their specific needs and experience
- Design and implement metrics, utilising our demographic data, to help us improve diversity and accessibility across our colleague groups, at all levels including entry-level roles.
- Complete asset mapping to identify, engage, and include community groups.
- Develop and drive a sector-wide approach to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for our community.
- Analyse recruitment and retention data to ensure we are equitable and ensure fair recruitment processes are followed throughout our colleague lifecycle.
- Pay particular attention to the differences in diversity and experiences between our colleague segments, developing opportunities to learn from each other.
- Provide comprehensive learning and development for colleagues to understand and challenge bias and its impact to improve self-awareness and decision-making.
- Design, provide and evaluate a learning curriculum for Inclusion and Belonging and continually improve.

- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination by colleagues, customers, and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
- Publish reports and actions for gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps, and Environmental, Social & Governance Report to meet statutory and regulatory requirements.

## **5. Associated documents**

We recognise that inclusion and belonging is an important aspect to life at Curo and underpins other key policies including, but not limited to:

- Purposeful Culture Strategy and associated action plans
- A suite of HR policies (e.g. Prevention of Harassment at Work, Carers' Leave, Behaviour Policy, Resolution Policy et al.)
- Data Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Procurement Policy
- Anti-social Behaviour Policy
- Home Adaptations Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Customer Feedback Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Support Planning Policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Consents policy
- Exclusion policy
- Acceptable behaviour policy
- Vulnerable persons policy
- Volunteering Policy

## **6. Measurement of Success**

To demonstrate our progress towards the achievement of our policy we will:

- Measure and monitor through the completion of our I&B action plan which will be reviewed and monitored at the I&B Steering Group.
- Conduct an annual review of Inclusion & Belonging that will be reported to RNC.
- Measure and review colleague data to inform our Inclusion & Belonging actions plans.

- Use our engagement data from our well-established engagement tools to inform our I&B actions.
- Work alongside the Customer Experience Committee on all aspects of Inclusion and Belonging seeking input and feedback to inform our ongoing progress and actions.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

*An Equality Impact Assessment was completed on 06.12.24.*