

ECONORTH LTD.

# Equal Opportunities

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## Policy

John Thompson

Next Review Date: 14.02.21



**This policy applies to all EcoNorth Staff / Internships / Consultants / Placements who work on behalf of the company and is reviewed annually to ensure its continuing suitability.**

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## Equal Opportunities Policy

### 1. Purpose, Scope and Users

EcoNorth Ltd (EcoNorth) is committed to becoming an equal opportunities employer and to ensuring that all employees, job applicants, customers and other people with whom we deal are treated fairly and are not subjected to unfair or unlawful discrimination.

This policy sets out the way in which EcoNorth aims to manage equal opportunities. It is designed to ensure all current employees, potential employees and interns are offered the same opportunities regardless of their sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, colour, marital status, race, nationality or ethnic origin, religious belief, political beliefs, disability, dietary choices, age, membership or non-membership of a trade union, or any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job. Our aim is to provide a working environment free from harassment, intimidation or discrimination in any form.

This policy must be adhered to by all current employees, potential employees and interns. Everyone who works for EcoNorth is expected to be treated and to treat others fairly and with respect.

EcoNorth recognises that an effective Equal Opportunities Policy will help all staff to develop to their full potential, which is clearly in the best interests of both our staff and our business. We aim to ensure that we not only observe the relevant legislation but also do whatever is necessary to provide genuine equality of opportunity.

We further recognise the benefits of employing individuals from a range of backgrounds as this creates a workforce where creativity and valuing difference in others thrives. We value the wealth of experience within the community in which we operate and aspire to have a workforce that reflects this.

### 2. Definitions

“EcoNorth” or “we” or “us” or “our” means EcoNorth Ltd.

“Discrimination” may be direct or indirect, and can take different forms, eg:

- treating any individual less favourably than others on the grounds of their sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, colour, marital status, race, nationality or ethnic origin, religious belief, political beliefs, disability, dietary choices, age or membership or non-membership of a trade union;
- expecting a person, solely on the grounds stated above, to comply with requirements that are different to the requirements for others, for any reason whatsoever;
- imposing on an individual, requirements that are in effect more onerous than they are on others. For example, this would include applying a condition (which is not warranted by the requirements of the position) which makes it more difficult for members of a particular group to comply than others not of that group;

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- victimisation;
- harassment; or
- any other act or omission of an act, which has the effect of disadvantaging one person against another, purely on the above grounds.

### 3. Responsibility for this Policy

The overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy rests with EcoNorth's Executive Director. Senior Managers also have a crucial role to play in promoting equality of opportunity in their own areas of responsibility.

On all occasions where Line Managers are required to make judgements about other employees eg disciplinary matters, selection for training, promotion, pay increases, awards and so on, it is essential that merit, experience, skills and temperament are considered as objectively as possible.

All staff, irrespective of their job or seniority, will be given guidance and instruction, through our induction process and other training, as to their responsibilities and role in promoting equality of opportunity and not discriminating unfairly or harassing colleagues, job applicants, interns or subcontractors, nor encouraging others to do so or tolerating such behaviour. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, may be taken against any employee found guilty of unfair discrimination or harassment.

### 4. Recruitment and Selection

EcoNorth aims, through written instruction, appropriate training and supervision, to ensure that all staff who are responsible for recruitment and selection are familiar with this policy and apply it.

Selection will be conducted on an objective basis and will focus only on the applicants' suitability for the job and their ability to fulfil the job requirements. Our interest is in the skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude and potential of individuals to do their jobs effectively. Furthermore, shortlisting is undertaken on a name, address and gender-blind process.

Person specifications will be reviewed to ensure that criteria are not applied which are discriminatory, either directly or indirectly, and that they do not impose any condition or requirement which cannot be justified by the demands of the post. Questions asked of candidates will relate to information that will help assess their ability to do the job. Questions which may give rise to suspicions of unlawful discrimination will not be asked. Selection tests will be specifically related to the job and measure an individual's actual, or inherent, ability to do or train for the job.

Job advertisements should encourage applications from all types of candidates and should not be stereotyped. All adverts will state: "EcoNorth is an equal opportunities employer and values diversity".

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## **5. Training and Development**

EcoNorth recognises that equal opportunity responsibilities do not end at selection and is committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, all staff receive the widest possible range of development opportunities for advancement.

All employees will be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their Line Manager. Opportunities for promotion and training will be communicated and made available to all staff on a fair and equal basis.

The provision of training will be reviewed to ensure that this is made where necessary to enable part-time workers, shift or remote workers or those returning to work following a break to benefit from training. No age limits apply for entry to training or development schemes which are open to all employees.

## **6. Terms and Conditions of Employment**

EcoNorth will ensure that all of our policies including compensation, benefits and any other relevant issues associated with Terms and Conditions of Employment, are formulated and applied without regard to sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, colour, marital status, race, nationality or ethnic origin, religious belief, political beliefs, disability, dietary choices, age, membership or non-membership of a trade union, or any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job.

## **7. Grievances, Disputes and Disciplinary Procedure**

Staff who believe they have been discriminated against, directly or indirectly, and have not been able to resolve this informally, are advised to use EcoNorth's internal grievance procedure (as set out in section 4.7 of the Staff Handbook). An employee who brings a complaint of discrimination must not be less favourably treated. When dealing with general disciplinary matters, care is to be taken that members of one group are not dismissed or disciplined for performance or behaviour which could be overlooked or condoned in other groups.

## **8. Communication of this Policy**

All staff will be made aware of this policy and provided with a copy of the policy during the induction process. This policy is also available to our clients (and potential clients). In addition, staff will be reminded of the policy through such means as advertisements, job descriptions, equal opportunity forms, training courses and other internal documents.

## **9. Policies and Procedures**

EcoNorth's policies and procedures will be reviewed regularly to improve, amend or adapt current practices to promote equality of opportunity within our business.

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## 10. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

EcoNorth's Executive Director has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed on a regular basis and may be updated from time to time.

Relevant data will be collected to enable this. Personal details provided by employees, job applicants or interns for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring are confidential and will be kept apart from all other records and not used for any other purpose.

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to EcoNorth's Executive Director.



John Thompson  
Executive Director  
14.02.20