

Charity No. 1211925



**Effective date:** 18th September 2025

**Approved by:** Board of Trustees

**Review cycle:** Annual

## 1. Introduction & Commitment

Canopy PACT is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across all our activities.

Our aim is to ensure that everyone, regardless of sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion or belief, is treated with dignity and respect, in line with the UK Equality Act 2010, the European Convention on Human Rights as incorporated into UK law, and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights as applicable under Horizon Europe.

We recognise that gender identity and expression is diverse, and includes women, men, trans, non-binary and gender-diverse people. Our organisation is committed to both gender equality and the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people. We recognise that, in some cases, rights or interests may appear to conflict. When this happens, we will approach the issue case by case, guided by UK equality law, with respect for everyone involved. All parties will be heard before decisions are made.

This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a formal, public document, approved by the Board of Trustees, and published on our [website](#). It will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance and effectiveness.

## 2. Governance & Resources

**Oversight:** The **Board of Trustees** has ultimate responsibility for approving the GEP and monitoring compliance.

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**Delivery:** The **Executive Team** (senior staff) is responsible for day-to-day implementation and reporting to the Board.

**GEP Focal Point:** A staff member will be designated to coordinate implementation.

**Resources:** Canopy PACT will dedicate proportionate resources to this work. As the organisation grows (anticipated 10–15 staff by 2026), a **Gender Equality Working Group** will be established.

**External expertise** will be sought if needed.

### 3. Data Collection & Monitoring

As a small organisation, Canopy PACT does not systematically collect personal gender data from its team, as the numbers involved would be too small to allow anonymisation or meaningful analysis. Instead, the Executive Team and Board of Trustees will review annually whether recruitment, pay and promotion practices reflect our commitments to equality and inclusivity. Where appropriate, external benchmarks (e.g. sector-wide workforce statistics) will be used to assess whether our practices are in line with wider standards. If the organisation grows, we will introduce proportionate diversity monitoring processes, ensuring compliance with GDPR and safeguarding individual privacy.

### 4. Training & Awareness

All staff and trustees will receive **training on gender equality, unconscious bias, and inclusive practices**, including awareness of issues affecting trans and non-binary people.

Induction training for new staff; annual refreshers for trustees and senior management.

Evidence of training (materials, attendance lists) will be kept by the Executive Team.

### 5. Prevention of harassment and gender-based violence

We have a **zero-tolerance policy towards harassment**, discrimination, transphobia, or homophobia. “Zero-tolerance” means that substantiated incidents of harassment, discrimination, transphobia, or homophobia will not be ignored or minimised. It does not mean that anyone accused will be automatically sanctioned: there must be a fair process.

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- Harassment: Unwanted conduct (verbal, physical, written, online) that violates someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.
- Discrimination: Less favourable treatment based on a protected characteristic (sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, disability, religion or belief, age).
- Transphobia / Homophobia: Actions or speech that demean, intimidate, or exclude people on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

We operate on a principle of fairness:

- **No assumption of guilt:** allegations are taken seriously but investigated impartially.
- **Context matters:** distinguishing between:
  - Legitimate safeguarding or privacy concerns (e.g., about single-sex services, facilities, or spaces where lawful)
  - Deliberate misgendering, targeted hostility, or exclusionary behaviour.
- **Proportional response:** outcomes should match the severity and intent of the behaviour.

Because our organisation is very small (fewer than 15 people), true anonymity cannot always be guaranteed – in practice, the circumstances of a concern may make it obvious who raised it. Instead of offering anonymous reporting, we commit to:

- **Strict Confidentiality:** Concerns will be shared only with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the issue.
- **Multiple Reporting Routes:** Concerns may be raised with your line manager, the HR lead (if appointed), or the Chair of Trustees.
- **Respectful Handling:** All reports will be acknowledged promptly and handled sensitively, with a fair hearing for all parties.
- **Protection from Retaliation:** No employee, volunteer, or trustee will face adverse treatment for raising a concern in good faith, even if the issue is not substantiated after investigation. Protection also applies to witnesses who cooperate with investigations.

Where a reporter feels uncomfortable raising a concern internally (for example, if it involves senior staff), we can arrange for a trusted external contact – such as a safeguarding adviser or HR consultant – to receive the report and support next steps.

## 5. Focus Areas & Actions

Work–life balance and organisational culture

- Flexible and family-friendly working.
- Hybrid/remote options.
- Respectful, inclusive culture.

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### Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

- Balanced sex and gender representation on the Board and in senior roles.
- Encourage under-represented genders to apply for governance and leadership posts.

### Recruitment and career progression

- Inclusive job adverts and shortlisting.
- Recruitment panels trained in unconscious bias.
- Transparent progression criteria.

### Integration of gender dimension into research and content

- Consider gender roles and equity in conservation, climate finance, and community benefit sharing.

## 6. Accountability & Review

The Executive Team prepares an annual monitoring report on GEP implementation.

The Board of Trustees reviews progress, ensures compliance, and approves updates.

Updates will be published on Canopy PACT's website and reflected in the annual report.

Approved by: Anil Madhavapeddy

Position: Chair of the board of trustees

Date: 09/09/2025

Signed by:  
Signature Anil Madhavapeddy  
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Approved by: Robin Daniels

Position: Chief Executive Officer

Date: 09/09/2025

Signed by:  
Signature Robin Daniels  
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