

23 Non-discrimination & Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy No.	CATALYST\HR\23
Policy Owner	Chief Human Resources Officer
Function	HR & Admin
Approver	Managing Director
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I. Preface:

In December 2019, the Government of India, passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 which for the first time extended constitutional rights to persons identifying as transgender. The policy, and its linked rules which were released later in July 2020, mandate that every establishment (Commercial and Industrial Establishment) publish an Equal Opportunity Policy for transgender persons. Since the Act in its definition of transgender persons includes intersex persons as well, CATALYST policy is titled “No-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy” for Transgender and Intersex Persons. Given this mandate, company has formulated this policy. This Policy will go a long way towards ensuring diversity and inclusivity at CATALYST.

II. Scope:

At CATALYST, we recognize the value of a diverse workforce. We are committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and fostering an inclusive workplace where all employees are treated with respect, equality, and dignity. This policy is applicable for all job applicants, employees of the Company and its subsidiaries.

This policy also applies to all aspects of employment, be it recruitment, training, working conditions, salary, transfers, employment benefits and career advancement etc. The company will not insist on the completion of legal processes or medical procedures as a precondition for the application of this Policy but will apply this policy based on self-identification as transgender or intersex.

This policy is in line with The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 (Act) and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020 (Rules).

III. Guidelines:

CATALYST prohibits any type of treatment of employees or job applicants based on any of the characteristics listed above. This applies to decisions regarding job assignments, hiring, firing, disciplining, training, pay, benefits, promotions, transfers, layoffs, and any other terms and conditions of employment. All employees are encouraged to report any instances of discrimination or harassment

IV. Definition:

The definitions provided here are not intended to label employees but rather to assist in understanding this policy and the legal obligations of employees. Employees may not use these terms to describe themselves.

Discrimination: Refers to any action taken against an employee or job applicant that is based upon any of the characteristics listed above and which adversely affects them in employment.

Harassment: Refers to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct due to any of the characteristics listed above when it affects an individual's work performance or creates a hostile or offensive work environment.

Gender identity: A person's internal, deeply felt sense of being male, female, or something other or in-between, regardless of the sex they were assigned at birth. Everyone has a gender identity.

Gender expression: An individual's characteristics and behaviors (such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions) that may be perceived as masculine or feminine.

Transgender: An umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from their sex assigned at birth.

A person whose sex assigned at birth was female but who identifies as male is a transgender man (also known as female-to-male transgender person, or FTM).

A person whose sex assigned at birth was male but who identifies as female is a transgender woman (also known as male-to-female transgender person, or MTF).

Some people described by this definition don't consider themselves transgender – they may use other words or may identify simply as a man or woman.

A person does not need to identify as transgender in order for an employer's nondiscrimination policies to apply to them.

Gender non-conforming: This term describes people who have, or are perceived to have, gender characteristics and/or behaviors that do not conform to traditional or societal expectations. Keep in mind that these expectations can vary across cultures and have changed over time.

Transition: The process of changing one's gender from the sex assigned at birth to one's gender identity. There are many different ways to transition. For some people, it is a complex process that takes place over a long period of time, while for others it is a one- or two-step process that happens more quickly. Transition may include "coming out" (telling family, friends, and coworkers); changing the name and/or sex on legal documents; and, for many transgender people, accessing medical treatment such as hormones and surgery.

Sexual orientation: A person's physical or emotional attraction to people of the same and/or other gender. Straight, gay, and bisexual are some ways to describe sexual orientation. It is important to note that sexual orientation is distinct from gender identity and expression. Transgender people can be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or straight, just like non-transgender people.

LGBT: A common abbreviation that refers to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.

V. Policy Statement:

CATALYST is committed to eliminating all forms of unlawful discrimination, which includes direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, denial of reasonable accommodation, bullying and harassment of Transgender persons and Intersex persons. At CATALYST, we continuously strive to ensure that all our facilities, technologies, information, and privileges are accessible to Transgender persons.



VI. Principles:

The Company further affirms its commitment to promoting the following principles in all its policies and interaction with Transgender Persons.

- Dignity while treating those Transgender people and Intersex persons as customers and clients who areas valued and deserving of effective and full service as any other customer.
- Independence- freedom from control or influence of others; freedom to make your own choice.
- Integration- allowing Transgender person and Intersex persons to fully benefit from the same services, in the same policy and in the same or similar ways as others.
- Equal Opportunity- having the same chances, options, benefits, and results as others.

VII. Objectives:

In accordance with the principles, the Company strives to attain the following objectives:

- A framework for the adoption of and compliance with all regulatory requirements under the Act.
- Equal access to our goods, services, and facilities to all persons working in the organization.
- A work and business environment that is free of discrimination.
- The continual improvement of access to the Company property, facilities, and services.
- Quality services- both what we deliver and how we deliver services to all members of the Company's community.

VIII. Identification of Posts in Appointment:

- CATALYST shall not discriminate against any Transgender Person in any matter relating to employment.
- CATALYST shall identify posts that can be held by respective categories of Transgender Persons.
- Vacancies earmarked for Transgender People mentioning the category of Transgender persons and Intersex persons will be clearly indicated in the Recruitment advertisement.

IX. Infrastructure Provision

The Company is committed to providing equal access to facilities and amenities. The Company is committed to ensuring that all employees have equal access to amenities, including locker rooms, break rooms, and other areas that are generally available to all employees.

Office Safety: The measures for safety undertaken to ensure the safety and security of employees will be extended to transgender and intersex employees.

CATALYST Policy for sexual harassment at the workplace will be made inclusive of people of all gender identities and expressions.

Washrooms:

- a) As a general principle, persons can use the washroom consistent with their gender identity. This will be displayed prominently outside the washrooms.
- b) Where there is gender-segregated washrooms, an additional gender-inclusive or unisex washroom will be provided.
- c) However, it will not be mandatory for transgender employees to only use the gender-inclusive washroom.



X. Recruitment

CATALYST will strive to ensure that its workforce is diverse and representative by proactively recruiting from the transgender and intersex communities, where possible.

- a) During its recruitment process and while framing the terms of reference, CATALYST may consider the complexity of the experiences of transgender and intersex persons, including caste-related discrimination, bullying and harassment in educational institutions, lack of social support, and vulnerability to mental illness.
- b) The application form will indicate an option to provide a person's self-identified name and gender, and pronouns, in addition to their legal name and gender. Any disclosure made by the applicant regarding their transgender or intersex identity will be voluntary, and, if made, will be treated as confidential and only disclosed to those persons considering the application.
- c) The staff in the recruitment team must comprise at least one person who has undergone sensitivity training organized under this Policy. During the interview process, the interviewer will not initiate any discussion with the applicant regarding their gender identity, sexual orientation, or sex characteristics, or ask intrusive questions, which do not have any relevance to the job for which the recruitment is being carried out.
- d) The applicant will be referred to by their chosen name and pronouns as indicated in the application form.
- e) Applicants will be permitted to present documentation, including, government-issued identity cards, school, and university certificates, with their name and gender assigned at birth, even if it differs from their chosen name and gender. Applicants may be asked to provide documents, which link their chosen name to their legal documentation in order to confirm the certificates relating to them, such as the gazette notification regarding their name and gender change or the certificate issued under the Transgender Persons Act, 2019.

XI. Confidentiality:

The Company recognizes the need to maintain individual privacy and confidentiality when discussing Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination policies. Any information discussed concerning Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and should not be used for any purpose other than conducting a legitimate and lawful part of the Company's business.

XII. Sensitization & Training:

Regular training and sensitization workshops on the rights of transgender and intersex persons, and the provisions of this Policy, will be conducted for all employees, at all levels of the organization including the management officials and the extended workforce.

All new employees will undergo training specifically focused on gender identity and sexual orientation at the time of their induction.

The Complaint Officer appointed under this Policy will undergo additional training on bias-free adjudication of complaints with the assistance of an outreach community organization specializing in issues related to the transgender community.

XIII. Complaint Officer:

One senior-level staff member at each location will be designated as the Complaint Officer, who will be responsible for the implementation of this Policy as well as the provisions of the Transgender Persons



(Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

XIII. Complaint Process:

- a) The person making the complaint is referred to as the Complainant. The person against whom the complaint is made is referred respondent.
- b) The complainant may submit a written and signed complaint to the Complaint Officer or send an email to the designated email ID (Complainant officer's details are available on notice board).
- c) If the complainant is unable to make the complaint themselves, on account of disability, mental illness or for any other reason, the Complaint Officer may depute a person to assist them in making the complaint and guide them through the process or permit the complainant to take the assistance of a person of their choice, such as their friend, partner, colleague, or a counsellor, to assist them in this regard.
- d) The Complaint Officer may act on anonymous complaints if they are of a nature, which may be inquired into without requiring the participation of the complainant. These may relate to structural Issues, employment conditions or policies.
- e) The complaint should be submitted within six months from the incident, and in case of multiple incidents, within six months from the latest incident. In case of any reasonable circumstances, the Complaint Officer may relax this requirement, and extend the time for filing a complaint. CATALYST will strive to create an environment where transgender employees will feel safe to complain under this policy, in case of discrimination.
- f) The Complaint Officer will ensure that the identity of the Complainant and their witnesses are kept confidential.

XIV. Redressal Mechanism:

- a) The Complaint Officer will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint in writing.
- b) Within two working days of receiving the complaint, the Complaint Officer will inform the respondent in writing that a complaint has been received and provide them with a copy. The complaint officer shall enquire into the complaints received within a maximum of fifteen days from the date of receipt of such complaints. The respondent will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint in writing within three working days.
- c) If the complainant consents, the Complaint Officer may initiate a conciliatory process between the complainant and the respondent. The complainant should not be pressured directly or indirectly into entering conciliation. No monetary settlement will be made as a basis of conciliation. The Complaint Officer will then follow a non-adversarial process and seek to arrive at a fair conclusion that is agreeable to both parties. The resulting agreement will then be communicated to the senior administration official and be acted upon, and no further inquiry will be made by the Complaint Officer into the matter.
- d) If conciliation is not possible or a settlement cannot be arrived at, the Complaint Officer will call upon the complainant and the respondent to submit all supporting documents and statements of their witnesses in writing within seven working days.
- e) The Complaint Officer may ask either party to submit clarifications in writing by putting to them specific questions that are respectful, especially for the Complainant and their witnesses, where they feel safe and comfortable and are not humiliated or threatened.
- f) The Complaint Officer will then hold a meeting where the Complainant and the Respondent may address brief oral submissions. This may be done separately if the complainant expresses that they may



be triggered by the presence of the respondent. The meeting will be done ensuring utmost visual and auditory privacy. No advocates or lawyers for either party will be present during the proceedings of the inquiry.

- g) The Complaint Officer will take into consideration the power dynamics between the complainant and the respondent, both within the organization as well as professional circles, and ensure that the process it follows protects the complainant from any intimidation or coercion.
- h) During the pendency of the inquiry, on request by the complainant, the Complaint Officer may recommend with reason, that the relevant administrative staff:

- a. transfer the respondent to another workplace, team, or project to minimize the interaction between the parties.
- b. modify team structures such that the respondent is not evaluating the work or performance of the complainant.
- c. take other measures to provide a conducive environment of safety and protection to the complainant against retaliation and victimization as a consequence of making a complaint.

In making its recommendation, the Complaint Officer will ensure that the interim measures do not have the direct or indirect effect of penalizing the complainant for making the complaint.

XIV. Amendments of the policy:

The Company is committed to continuously reviewing and updating its policies and procedures. Accordingly, this policy is subject to modification and updates. This policy shall be reviewed once in three (3) years.

The Management, may its discretion, review this policy periodically and make modifications as necessary from time to time.

