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Acuity Knowledge Partners

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY

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Changes History

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1.0	June 2024	HR	Initial Release	CHRO
1.1	Jan 2025	HR	Addition of sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Inclusive integration of newcomersEducation and TrainingsDifferently Abled (Person with Disabilities) and People with neurodiversityRespect for LGBTQ+ Rights	CHRO

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1. Overview

- We at Acuity Knowledge Partners are committed towards promoting diversity, equity and inclusion within the organization and in the larger communities we partner with. Human capital is the most valuable asset that helps us stand out in an increasingly complex and highly competitive world. We believe that collaborating with others who have different points of view creates a greater mix of ideas and spurs innovation, which is the crux of our reputation.
- We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive workplace where employees feel empowered to contribute, speak up and put in their best efforts every day. Our leaders embrace this culture by fostering an environment where multiple voices are heard, and our decisions reflect the collective talents of our people.
- Acuity's Chief Human Resources Officer or a Designated Approving Authority may approve exceptions to the stated policy.

2. Applicability

- The policy applies to all employees, interns, probationers, consultants, and trainees, among others, at Acuity Knowledge Partners. We strive to create an environment of respect and dignity through the way we work with our vendors, suppliers, contractors, and partners.
- The Policy is applicable—but not limited—to our practices and policies on recruitment and selection; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; promotions; transfers; social and recreational programs; layoffs; terminations; and the ongoing development of an equitable and inclusive work environment.

3. Definitions

- **Diversity:** Diversity comprises an individual's unique experiences, perspectives and skills. It includes a company's workforce – individuals of different genders, ages, religious beliefs, races, ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, personalities and physical abilities.
- **Inclusion:** Inclusion means creating a welcoming culture, where differences are treated as assets and all employees feel free to put in their best efforts. Each person is valued, heard, respected and empowered and feels a true sense of belonging.
- **Equity:** Equity means ensuring fair treatment, access, equality of opportunity and advancement for everyone while also attempting to identify and remove barriers that may have prevented some groups from fully participating.

4. Scope and Purpose

- The purpose of the diversity, equity and inclusion policy (the 'policy') is to set out our commitment to ensuring that our workplace is free from discrimination against employees.
- The policy also sets out Acuity's expectations, where each employee has a responsibility to adhere to and uphold the policy.
- This forward-looking policy sets a vision for diversity and inclusion for businesses across Acuity Knowledge Partners.

5. Objectives

- Provide an environment of equity and respect for all employees and stakeholders (internal and external), along with ensuring equal opportunities for all (irrespective of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family status, religious belief and abilities).
- Ensure an inclusive working environment free of discrimination.
- Ensure fairness – including remuneration, employment terms and conditions, promotions, and training and development opportunities – while building capability to harness the full potential of employees.
- Govern all corporate functions – including recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, compensation, benefits, training, education and relocation – in a fair, impartial and objective manner.

- Give each employee equitable access to employment, professional development and workforce participation opportunities.
- Make all Acuity facilities equitably accessible and available to all employees, as well as provide reasonable accommodation for eligible employees.
- Ensure the workplace is free from all forms of discrimination (direct or associative), harassment (including harassment by a third party) and victimization or bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness or stereotyping.
- Quickly and decisively address any complaints of inappropriate conduct or attitude through an independent and objective body.

6. The DEI Governance Structure

- Our Diversity Council is responsible for driving and promoting our DEI plans and initiatives, creating an ecosystem in which everyone can stand up for who they are, employ their strengths and contribute to the success of their teams by utilizing their unique skills and perspectives.
- The Diversity Council works closely with the DEI team under Human Resources to drive the DEI charter for the organization.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of Diversity Council

- Diversity Council is responsible for supporting Acuity Knowledge Partners to achieve its vision of a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace culture by: -
 - Development and implementation of Acuity Knowledge Partner's diversity and inclusion strategy.
 - Provide strategic guidance to the DEI Team under Human Resources to assist them prioritize and develop policies, processes and initiatives that will be delivered under the strategy.
 - Monitor Acuity Knowledge Partners' progress in achieving a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace culture in collaboration with DEI team under Human Resources function.
 - Provide leadership accountability for diversity and inclusion outcomes at Acuity Knowledge Partners.
 - The DEI team and Diversity Council meet on a regular basis; where they share the strategic plan and improvement actions
 - The Diversity Council has global representatives who are responsible for developing the strategic plan - setting simple, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound objectives for each theme identified in the DEI Policy and assigning them to be executed in collaboration with DEI team. It must also be involved in the periodic review of the Management System.

8. Supporting Policies

- Acuity have a range of policies and processes in place to ensure that our workforce reflects the society it operates in and is valued and respected. Current examples include:
 - **Dignity at work:** We constantly strive to ensure that our policies and processes are inclusive for all, irrespective of their gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation (e.g., dress code policy, adoption leave policy, paternity leave policy and support for gender reassignment procedure under the corporate Mediclaim program). We recognize the domestic partner of an employee, irrespective of their gender, for all applicable policies and processes (e.g., Mediclaim program).
 - **Work-life balance policies:** These include a range of flexible working initiatives and parental leaves. While we make our best efforts to accommodate requests for flexible/alternative working arrangements, consideration must be given to business priorities.
 - **Diversity awareness training:** We host awareness and sensitization programs on a regular basis for our employees to reinforce our policies around equity and diversity, reminding them about being sensitive to their colleagues and diverse needs of customers.
 - **Recruitment and selection:** The principles of equity and diversity are central to ensuring that we attract the best talent. The methods we use to attract and select candidates are free from bias.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the employee:

- Understand and comply with this policy by completing all relevant training and following the relevant people practices and processes.
- Operate in accordance with this policy to ensure that the workplace remains free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimization, and vilification.
- Treat colleagues and others according to Acuity's code of conduct and this policy, along with supporting standards, guidelines, and procedures
- Respect the dignity and diversity of all people.
- Focus on conscious inclusion to be more intentional with their actions and drive diversity, equity and a sense of belongingness.

Responsibilities of the people manager:

- Take action to continually develop, implement and review plans to create and support a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture, thereby supporting the implementation of this policy
- Build a more diverse workforce through flexible ways of working
- Complete all relevant leader training programs, role model the expected behaviors, and provide advice and guidance to employees
- Identify and address any behavior that is not consistent with Acuity's code of conduct and this policy, supporting standards, guidelines and procedures
- Engage in conscious inclusion and other behaviors that promote equity
- Ensure that employment-related decisions are free from discrimination
- Ensure diverse representation and foster an inclusive environment within their teams
- Mitigate potential unconscious bias in employment-related decisions and talent practices (including performance and development, compensation and hiring)
- Draw from a broad pool of talent in a particular region to inclusively reach talent, create diverse slates and, ultimately, build a workforce that reflects the communities we serve.
- Provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals, such as those with a disability and needs related to their religious beliefs or practices (what constitutes a reasonable accommodation depends on facts and circumstances and is addressed on a case-by-case basis)
- Consistently display inclusive leadership behavior that values all perspectives after listening to diverse points of view.
- Role model inclusive and respectful behavior in the work environment and all work-related activities

Responsibilities of the Human Resources team:

- Develop DEI policies and programs that help create an equitable workplace
- Foster a diverse and inclusive workplace culture for employees
- Monitor and report DEI metrics and progress
- Organize sensitization programs to support employees and eliminate unconscious bias
- Understand employees' needs in terms of DEI
- Support people managers and senior management to become inclusive leaders

10. Equal Opportunity Employer

- Our organization's success has always largely depended on the individual and collective abilities of our employees. The different perspectives, backgrounds and individualities of our people offer great opportunities to add value to the company, and we believe each person's role is vital.
- We believe equal opportunity employment is essential for the continued successful operation of our business. It is beneficial of all when people can realize equal opportunities and the rewards of capitalizing on them. The company recruits, hires, employs, trains, promotes and compensates individuals based on job-related qualifications and abilities.
- We have also had a longstanding policy of fostering a work environment that respects the dignity and worth of each individual and is free from all forms of employment discrimination – including any form of harassment due to race, colour, sexual identity and orientation, gender, age, religion or religious creed, caste, nationality, ancestry, citizenship, marital status, gender expression, genetic information, physical or mental disability, military or veteran status, and any other characteristic protected by law.
- Our goal is to create a workplace that encourages the full participation of our employees who bring their diverse backgrounds and full range of talents, skills and abilities to serve our customers.

Committed to DEI throughout the employee lifecycle

- Over the course of any employee's journey with us, we are committed to ensuring that their thoughts are valued and are provided a vast spectrum of equitable opportunities in all aspects of their work, facilitating an environment optimal for their growth and development.

11. Inclusive integration of newcomers

- Our vision for diversity in the teams and our commitment to inclusion are promoted in our induction programs for new employees.

12. Education and Trainings

- Acuity Knowledge Partners provides targeted education and training for leaders and employees so they can recognize unacceptable and unlawful behavior in the workplace and know what to do if they experience, witness, or become aware of it.
- Acuity Knowledge Partners has set clear expectations for leaders and employees regarding their behavior and conduct in the workplace. To ensure everyone understands what is expected of them, all employees are required to complete relevant trainings.
- All compulsory trainings related to DEI need to be completed by leaders and employees on a timely basis.
- Leaders are responsible for ensuring their team members have completed required training and track their team's compliance status.

13. Differently Abled (Person with Disabilities) and people with neurodiversity

- Acuity Knowledge Partners is an Equal Opportunity Employer and strongly endorses the right of equal opportunity for employees who are differently abled.
- Acuity Knowledge Partners commits to conducting the provisions of the recently enacted Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ("Act") in letter and spirit, including providing specific opportunities in identified positions where they could be employed. While this act applies to India, Acuity Knowledge Partners is committed to ensuring compliance with any and every Act applicable to those who are differently abled across the geographies that it operates in.
- Acuity Knowledge Partners would also provide necessary facilities, amenities and training to support them as required and enable them to effectively discharge their duties for which they are employed.
- The company adopts a transparent selection process based on merit and without any bias to disabilities of the prospective candidate.

- o Employees in India will need to confirm their disability for consideration in above programs with appropriate documentation including certification from appropriate medical/government authorities.
- o Neurodiversity does not refer to a disadvantage, but to the separate ways the human brain functions, highlighting the atypical attitudes they bring with them. People with neurodiversity face some difficulties that can be overcome, with reasonable accommodations in the workplace, which the Acuity Knowledge Partners is committed to activate.

14. Supplier Diversity

- Our company works to create mutually beneficial business relationships with diverse suppliers that strengthen the communities in which we operate. We are committed to developing such relationships with small, minority-owned, women-owned, disadvantaged/disabled, veteran-owned and LGBTQA-owned business enterprises.
- The primary goal of our Supplier Diversity Programme is to provide opportunities to diverse suppliers that meet our procurement and contractual standards, while supporting our customers in achieving their own corporate diversity goals.
- Our sourcing departments are encouraged to identify and include diverse suppliers and service providers in the procurement process. Diverse suppliers that demonstrate the ability to add value and provide high-quality goods and services that are competitively priced, reliable and aligned with our strategic business model may be included in our sourcing and procurement process.
- This policy reflects our desire to create opportunities for suppliers to market their products and services to us and encourage ourselves to offer opportunities to such suppliers.

15. Respect for LGBTQ+ Rights

- Acuity Knowledge Partners promotes human rights respect and inclusion in the work environment and in the communities in which it operates. Specifically, it implements actions aimed at increasing knowledge and awareness to eliminate stereotypes and prejudices against the LGBTQ+ community to promote inclusion at work through sensitization trainings.
- Acuity Knowledge Partners is committed towards building a safe space for the LGBTQ+ community and has provisions in place to protect them from any kind of discrimination, bullying or harassment.

16. Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

- Discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, discriminatory harassment and other workplace conduct prohibited by local law, is not tolerated by our esteemed organization.
- This applies to all discrimination, harassment and bullying affecting the work environment, whether in the office, at customer- or company-related events outside the office or through the use of electronic communication channels (including electronic mail, voice mail and the internet).
- Discrimination and harassment by non-employees (e.g., customers, independent contractors and vendors) are also prohibited if such harassment affects the work environment or interferes our employees' performance of work.
- If an employee informs us that they have been subject to or witnessed discrimination, harassment or bullying in the workplace by a non-employee, the non-employee will be informed of our policy and appropriate actions will be taken.

17. Reporting Instances of Discrimination, Harassment or Bullying

- If you believe that you have been subject to workplace discrimination, harassment or bullying in any form or have witnessed another employee being discriminated, harassed or bullied, you should report the matter to grievancecell@acuitykp.com or the Human Resources department at the earliest.
- We understand that reporting discrimination and harassment can be extremely sensitive, and hence, to the extent reasonably possible, we will keep such reports and all communications concerning them in confidence.

- We will thoroughly, impartially and promptly investigate all such reports. If we determine that discrimination or harassment has occurred, appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action will be taken. As set forth in a more detailed manner in the above non-retaliation policy, we do not permit retaliation against any individual who makes a complaint of a breach of the code in good faith or participates in any workplace investigation.
- We believe in creating a workplace that is free of discrimination, harassment or bullying and where diversity is celebrated, and everyone is respected.

18. Review of the policy

- Chief Human Resource Officer reserves the right to modify, suspend, change or terminate this policy at any time, in accordance with local law. This policy does not create any contractual rights or obligations, whether expressed or implied. Subject to local law, the English-language version will prevail.

19. Exemptions

- No exemptions apply to this policy. Country-level policies should only be developed where there are local legal or regulatory requirements for the same.

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Acuity Knowledge Partners (Acuity) is a leading provider of bespoke research, analytics and technology solutions to the financial services sector, including asset managers, corporate and investment banks, private equity and venture capital firms, hedge funds and consulting firms. Its global network of over 6,000 analysts and industry experts, combined with proprietary technology, supports more than 500 financial institutions and consulting companies to operate more efficiently and unlock their human capital, driving revenue higher and transforming operations. Acuity is headquartered in London and operates from 10 locations worldwide.

Acuity was established as a separate business from Moody's Corporation in 2019, following its acquisition by Equistone Partners Europe (Equistone). In January 2023, funds advised by global private equity firm Permira acquired a majority stake in the business from Equistone, which remains invested as a minority shareholder.

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