



D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership

Equality and Diversity Policy

August 2021



Background

The D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership is one of 38 LEPs across England; private sector-led partnerships including business, local authorities, skills and training providers, and community and voluntary organisations' representatives. They play a central role in deciding their areas' local economic priorities, and in undertaking activities to drive economic growth and create local jobs.

D2N2 was established in 2010. It is responsible for the area of Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

D2N2 is one of the largest and most diverse LEPs in England in terms of area and population. Its area includes more than two million people and has an economic output of over £42.9 billion GVA (Gross Value Added) (source ONS report, February 2016).

A long history of immigration into the D2N2 area from countries such as Pakistan, India and Jamaica, has resulted in a diverse population. Whilst the proportion of the population accounted for by individuals with a BME (black and minority ethnic) background across the area is lower than the national average (13% in the 2011 UK Census), there are significant concentrations in Nottingham City (35% non-White British) and Derby (16% non-White British).

D2N2 also includes a significant rural population, with over a third of D2N2's total employment in predominantly rural local authority areas. In common with other areas of high rural populations, the D2N2 population generally is ageing more rapidly than the population of England as a whole

The D2N2 website can be found at www.d2n2lep.org and that of its D2N2 Growth Hub at www.d2n2growthhub.co.uk for more information.

Our Purpose

D2N2's over-arching target is to support the creation of 55,000 new jobs in D2N2 by 2023. The majority of these jobs will be in the private sector.

Its vision is of a more prosperous, better connected, and increasingly resilient and competitive economy. Its purpose is to support and encourage economic growth in the D2N2 region.

It is a guiding principle of the D2N2 LEP that ALL communities within its area, should share in the economic benefits resulting from its activities and projects. Equality and diversity principles will therefore be built into what we and our partners do.

Like all LEPs, D2N2 is subject to statutory requirements under anti-discriminatory legislation – the Equality Act 2010 (see web link www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga_20100015_en.pdf) - in its roles as both employer and services provider.

What do we mean by equality and diversity?

Equality is about making sure that no person or group we engage with is treated less favourably due to their gender, race, age, disability (mental and physical), sexual orientation, religion or belief. All should have equality of opportunity; the opportunity to make the most of their lives and skills, regardless of their location and background.

Diversity is about respecting and recognising people's differences. These differences mean they come to society and its issues with their own perspectives, talents and barriers. Our local diversity should be celebrated, listened to and harnessed to foster a truly inclusive society.

Our commitment

In delivering its own activities, in its work with partners and in the services it commissions from others the D2N2 LEP will put equality and diversity at the forefront of its thinking; promoting practical measures to ensure equality of opportunity for all communities. As a LEP we will adhere to the principles of the Equality Act 2010 in the treatment of our own staff, customers and service users, contractors and partners, and external organisations.

This will include having in place robust processes by which board members, employees and contractors are selected to work with D2N2; recruiting on merit and with a view to achieving a diversity which reflects the communities of our area.

Projects wholly or jointly funded or promoted by the D2N2 LEP will be expected to advance good social values; actively seeking opportunities to add social, economic and environmental advantages for their area.

Our actions

In engaging with its communities, D2N2 will always seek to be inclusive and open in how it communicates with them.

In the priorities and objectives D2N2 sets – and through the projects it develops, commissions and tenders – the LEP will:

- foster greater equality and equality of opportunity;
- support those groups who traditionally face greater difficulties entering employment (for example young people, older workers, women re-entering or joining the workforce, people with disabilities);
- tackle barriers of social and financial exclusion, especially in low income communities;
- work with local, regional and national partners to improve the economy of our area for all communities;
- give regular information updates on the LEP's progress;
- provide good services backed by knowledgeable staff;
- ensure an open and fair recruitment process for Board, staff and contractor positions, which takes account of the diversity of our area's communities;
- ensure Board members and staff are aware of our Equality and Diversity Policy;
- promote good practice;
- Regularly assess whether we are meeting our equality and diversity ambitions, and change those ambitions if necessary to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Accountability

Responsibility for ensuring that the principles of this D2N2 LEP Equality and Diversity Policy are put into practice will ultimately rest with the LEP's Board. The D2N2 Board must now adhere to the diversity aims as published in the January 2019 refresh of the National Assurance Framework and have at least one third female representation by 2020 and half of its members by 2023.

The LEP Board will be accountable for implementing the Policy (internally and externally) and for addressing any allegations of unfair discrimination brought to its attention, through its direction of its senior officers and staff.

Board members will agree the Equality and Diversity Policy, and review any recommended changes brought to it.