



*Empowering BME Communities in the South East*

# MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA AND RULES

## Membership

The Uni Network is set up to serve its organisational members, and through them, the interests of minority ethnic communities in South East England.

Membership to the network is open to all voluntary and community organisations (VCO) of any size that operates within South East England, that can demonstrate to the Uni Network Board (through its Membership Committee) that they support the aims and objectives of Uni Network, are properly constituted, run activities and meet the criteria stated below. **Membership is free up until the end of March 2012**, at which point the Membership Committee will review the membership policy.

## Criteria for membership

The following criteria are essential for an organisation to be eligible for membership into Uni Network:

- The applicant organisation must be a self-governing body such as being a charity, a company limited by guarantee, a community interest group, etc, with a set of clearly defined rules or constitution, and a management committee or board of trustees in place. *We ask applicants to provide documentary evidence with the application for membership.*
- The applicant organisation must demonstrate how it works for the interest of BME communities by providing a list of its services, support provided and other activities that are provided to BME communities e.g. counselling, advocacy, infrastructure support, community engagement etc.
- The applicant organisation must demonstrate that it supports a combination of the following: reduction of race inequalities; combating all forms of social exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination; addressing poverty; and improving the economic well-being of disadvantaged men, women and children from minority ethnic backgrounds in the region.
- The applicant organisation does not have to be a registered charity, but if it is not, the aims, objectives and methods of the working of the organisation must be written down in a publicly available document. *We ask applicants to provide*

*documentary evidence with the application for membership.*

- The applicant organisation should be open to all members of the community with interests relevant to its publicly stated aims of supporting minority ethnic communities.
- Applicants are expected to support the Uni vision and aims as well as the principles of equal opportunity.
- The applicant organisation must provide evidence that it has been in existence for at least six months prior to its application to become a member of the Uni Network. *We ask applicants to provide documentary evidence with the application for membership.*
- Membership tenure shall be for a period of 2 years and renewal will be automatic by an application/ invitation, subject to significant change in membership policy.

Members will be expected to input to the work of Uni Network by attending the AGM, contributing their views and keeping the organisation informed of issues affecting the voluntary and community sector locally.

Uni Network would reserve the right not to renew membership if circumstances change and the organisation no longer fulfils the criteria on which original membership was granted.

## **Benefits of membership**

By joining Uni Network, members will be supporting a movement which aims to be a voice for the sector, a platform for sharing ideas, developing / influencing policies and decision making for the greater good. Uni Network aims also, within the limits of resources available, to act as a support to as many of our members possible.

Membership would entitle organisations to vote at general meetings and to stand for, or nominate people for election to the Board of committee members.

## **About Uni Network**

Uni champions the development of the South East, actively promoting and pursuing the equalities agenda by enhancing the participation by the Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary Community Sector and their communities in the social, economic and cultural life of the region.

Uni's mission is to work as the regional body to promote, advocate for and support the development of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Third Sector in the South East of England; supporting the development of local capacity.