

## **ABTC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement**

**Diversity:** The representation of different identities, characteristics, experiences, backgrounds and perspectives, which make us all unique.

**Equity:** Giving everyone what they need to succeed by increasing access, reasonable resources, and opportunities for all. Equity recognizes that each person may require different resources and opportunities to reach an equal outcome.

**Inclusion:** A culture in which differences are celebrated and everyone is valued, respected, and able to reach their full potential, irrespective of their identity, characteristics, experiences, background and perspectives.

### **The Value of DEI**

The ABTC are committed to improving diversity, equity, and inclusivity within their own organisation, and throughout the animal welfare and training sphere. DEI reflects our attitudes and beliefs that all people should be treated fairly, kindly and with empathy. It is vital for the wellbeing of members and the wider community, especially those who have previously felt disadvantaged, unheard, under-represented and undervalued.

DEI also brings substantial benefits to our work. By embracing the broad array of practitioners, we represent, and encouraging others to join us; we all benefit from their knowledge, unique perspectives and insights. This helps improve the way in which we work both with our colleagues and the public. The better we can relate and connect, the better we can educate and inform, increasing our reach and improving our outcomes. This in turn benefits practitioners, clients, and the animals in their care.

DEI is also essential to attract and retain those individuals with the talent, compassion, and skills the animal behaviour and training industry requires. If people do not feel represented and supported, the industry will have a shrinking pool of potential colleagues and be worse off for it.

### **Actionable Steps**

- Survey members to get baseline data on practitioner demographics, as well as hosting roundtable events to discuss the findings. This will enable us to accurately assess the current situation and create targeted plans. Repeating surveys in the future will enable monitoring and give an indication of the impact interventions may have had.
- APEL process aims to help those who previously have not been able to achieve the academic requirements to become a practitioner. We acknowledge that this may be for a variety of reasons, not least socio-economic factors which are themselves commonly influenced by protected characteristics.

- Actively encouraging underrepresented members to take part in social media events, the council and the board of trustees.
- Welcoming feedback from those with lived experience regarding why the animal behaviour, and animal sciences field in general suffers from a marked lack of diversity, and how we can work to improve this. As well as listening to those who have had successful and positive experiences within the field, so we can learn from these examples.

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