EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

1. INTRODUCTION

Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT) Bhopal is committed to provide equal opportunities to all sections of the MANIT community. While doing this, the MANIT casts special attention to the specially- abled persons to provide equal opportunity in availing themselves of the resources of the MANIT. In order to enable this, it has formulated this Equal Opportunity Policy in the light of "The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act)" adopted by the Government of India.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (the "Disabilities Act, 2016") along with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017, together, the "Disability Law" has been enacted by the Indian Government. The new Disability Law gives effect to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Disability Law inter alia seeks to protect disabled persons from various forms of discrimination, increases measures for effective participation and inclusion in the society, and ensures equality of opportunity and adequate accessibility.

MANIT has already implemented several parts of the requirements under the Disabilities Act, 2016/Rules, 2017 to take care of the relevant aspects.

The Equal Opportunity (EO) Policy has been made in conformity with The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

2. PURPOSE

The EO Policy of MANIT is to provide equal opportunities to the specially abled employees and students of the MANIT without any discrimination, on the grounds of age, colour, marital status, physical ability, nationality, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or any other relevant for the purpose.

Based on the above considerations, MANIT shall strive to maintain a working environment that is free from any harassment. This EO Policy is subject to applicable regulations, qualifications, and merit of the individuals concerned. This Policy shall be consistently applied throughout the period of studentship (for students and scholars) and employment of the individual from the recruitment process until superannuation (for employees).

3. DEFINITION

The definitions of different terms used in this Policy will be as per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

4. SCOPE

The EO Policy of MANIT shall cover all persons with disabilities, who come under the administrative control of the MANIT. This would include faculty, staff (regular, ad hoc, part time scholars, contractual, and temporary) and students along with interns and trainees. Further, the employees and students who acquire disability during their engagement with MANIT would also be cover by the present policy.

5. COMMITMENT

As specified in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, MANIT is duty bound to the following:

5.1 Rights and Entitlements

a) Equality & Non-discrimination

(i) MANIT shall ensure that the persons with disability enjoy the right to equality, life with dignity and

respect for his or her integrity with others.

(ii) It will make sure that no persons with any kind of disabilities shall be discriminated on the ground of disability, unless it is shown that the impugned act or omission is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

(iii)No person shall be deprived of his or her personal liberty on the ground of disability.

b) Protection from Abuse, Violence, and Exploitation

MANIT shall take following measures to protect persons with disabilities against abuse, violence, and exploitation:

(i) Create awareness and make available information among the public.

ii) It shall take measures to protect persons with disability from being subjected to harassment and discrimination.

iii) Take cognizance and provide available legal protection to the persons with disabilities in matters relating to abuse, violence and exploitation as per its bye-laws and rules and regulations

c) Leave

The employee with disabilities may avail extra days of special casual leave in addition to regular eight (08) days of casual leave per year as per the provision of GOI leave rules as notified from time to time.

5.2 Education

To provide inclusive education to the students with disabilities the MANIT shall-

(i) Admit the Scholars/Students without discrimination and provide education and opportunities for teaching, sports and recreation activities equally with others.

(ii) Identify specific learning disabilities in students (in terms of course curriculum) at the earliest and take suitable pedagogical and other measures to overcome them.

(iii)Make the entire campus barrier free so that services become accessible to the Persons with Disabilities as far as possible within its infrastructure

(iv)Provide necessary support, individual or otherwise, in creating an environment that would nurture academic and professional potentialities at par.

(v) Ensure that the education to persons who are blind, deaf or both is imparted in the most appropriate (brail/sign) languages and other modes and techniques of communication.

(vi)Monitor participation, progress in terms of attainment levels and completion of education.

(vii) Assist / arrange (if possible) to obtain scholarships in appropriate cases to students with benchmark disability;

(viii) Provide books, other learning materials and appropriate assistive devices to students with benchmark disabilities up to the completion of the degree;

5.3 Special Provisions for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities

Reservation in higher educational institutions:

(i) MANIT shall reserve seats for persons with benchmark disabilities as notified by the Government of India from time to time.

(ii) The persons with benchmark disabilities shall be given an upper age relaxation for admission for higher education as notified by the Government of India from time to time.

5.4 Employment

Non-discrimination in employment

(i) MANIT shall provide reasonable accommodation and appropriate barrier free and conducive environment to the employees with disabilities;

(ii) No promotion shall be denied to a person on the ground of disability;

(iii) MANIT shall not dispense with or reduce in rank, an employee who acquires a disability during his or her service;

a. Provided that, if an employee after acquiring disability is not suitable for the post he/she was holding, shall be shifted to some other post with the same pay scale and service benefits:

b. Provided further that if it is not possible to adjust the employee against any post, he/she may be kept on a supernumerary post until a suitable post is available or he/ she attains the age of superannuation, whichever is earlier.

(iv) MANIT shall organize various in-house programmes such as orientation, capacity building and other programmes as may be deemed appropriate and suitable for the enhancement of skills for employees with disabilities.

5.5 Maintenance of Records

MANIT shall maintain records of the persons with disability in relation to the matter of employment, enrolment of students, facilities provided and other necessary information in compliance with the provisions, in such format and manner as may be prescribed by the GOI from time to time.

5.6 Grievance Redressal Cell and Grievance Redressal Officer

As per the mandate of The Rights of Persons with Disability Act, MANIT shall appoint a Grievance Redressal Officer.

5.6.1 The Duties and Responsibilities of the Grievance Redressal Officer

(i) Ensuring employees and students are aware of the Equal Opportunity Policy;

(ii) Taking initiative and providing the requisite support to realize the goals of an inclusive and accessible workplace along with accommodation;

(iii) Addressing grievances of persons with benchmark disabilities;

(iv) To maintain a register of complaints in the manner as may be prescribed by the GOI time to time. Complaint shall be inquired within two weeks of its registration. If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the action taken on his or her complaint, he or she may approach the high Level Committee on disability;

(v) Implementing the action plan and developing proactive strategies to prevent discrimination and harassment;

(vi) The Grievance Redressal Officer will share the quarterly report with MANIT authority.

(vii) Creating an environment where all employees and students are encouraged to report any incidents of violation of rights of the persons with disabilities to the concern authority.

5.7 Social Security, Health, Culture, Recreation & Sports Activities

Social Security will be provided as per the rules of Government of India time to time.

Health care services/ facilities will be provided as per the rules of Government of India time to time, applicable to the MANIT.

Culture and Recreation services would include facilities, support and sponsorship to pursue their interest and talents. MANIT, within the limit of its economic capacity, would work to develop technology, assistive devices, equipment to facilitate, and inclusion of persons with disabilities in

cultural and recreational activities.

Sports and other Activities, MANIT, within the limit of its economic capacity, shall take following steps:

a) shall take measures to ensure effective participation of persons with disabilities in sports activities;

b) shall accord due recognition to the rights of persons with disabilities and shall make due provisions for promotion and development of their sporting talents;

c) without prejudice to the provisions mentioned under (a) & (b) above, the competent authority and the sport's authority shall take measures to-

(i) restructure courses and programmes to ensure access, inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in all sporting activities;

(ii) redesign and support infrastructure facilities of all sports activities for persons with disabilities;

(iii) develop technology to enhance potential, talent, capacity and ability in sports activities of all persons with disabilities;

(iv) provide multi-sensory essentials and features in all sporting activities to ensure effective participation of persons with disabilities;

(v) allocate funds for development of sport facilities for training of persons with disabilities;

(vi) promote and organise disability specific sport events for persons with disabilities and also facilitate awards to the winners and other participants of such sporting events.

5.8 Infrastructure

MANIT shall follow the instructions given by GOI time to time in this regard

5.8.1 Digital

MANIT shall follow the Standards for Information and Communication Technology as given in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017, such as-

(i) Website Standards: Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW), as adopted by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India, shall be followed.

(ii) Documents/Standards: Electronic Publication (ePUB) or Optical Character Reader (OCR) based pdf formats shall be provided.

5.8.2 Other Infrastructure Development/Assistive Aids Required Locomotors

(i) Ramps with railings/ lifts in all buildings up to the top floor including public utility areas.

(ii) Wheelchair facilities.

(iii) Special need-based furniture.

(iv) Availability of barrier free wash/ rest rooms facilities (at least one in every building preferably ground floor).

5.8.3 Additional provisions for Visually Impaired (VI)

(i) Braille books, software (JAWS) and other reading assistive devices.

(ii) Tactile pavers on corridors and other passages.

(iii) Special ATMs

(iv) Availability of White Canes

5.9 Reservation

As per the rules of Government of India, time to time, applicable to the MANIT.

5.10 Guidelines for Conducting Written Examination/Interviews for Persons With Benchmark Disabilities

MANIT shall follow the guidelines applicable to all PwD Candidates as issued by Department of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, GOI, OM, dated 29th Aug, 2018 and modified time to time.

5.11 Mandatory Observance of Accessibility Norms

MANIT shall ensure that all physical infrastructures including buildings, furniture, facilities and services in the building/campus are as per the accessibility Standards given in the Harmonised Guidelines and Space Standards for Barrier Free Environment for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly Persons, 2016 and the National Building Code, 2016.

Further, it is noted that this policy will get updated whenever there is any amendment in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules 2017.