

NSSC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

We want to ensure that NSSC creates accessible and inclusive activities for our members as far as we are able. This means we need to ensure we provide equal opportunities for participation tackle disadvantage and challenge discrimination in all that we do. This policy is not a comprehensive statement of all the issues involved in working towards equalities, diversity and inclusion but provides us with a set of guiding principles. We will promote and work towards:

- accessibility
- inclusion
- participation
- cultural diversity
- equality of opportunity

Definitions

NSSC aims to prevent direct, indirect, associative, and perceptive discrimination.

Direct Discrimination is treating a person less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of age, disability, race (including colour, ethnic origin or nationality), gender reassignment, sex, sexual orientation, responsibility for dependants (including pregnancy and maternity), religion/belief, marital status or HIV/AIDS status (all these will be described as protected characteristics in this document from this point onwards).

Indirect Discrimination is an unjustifiable requirement or condition which appears to apply equally to everyone, but which has a discriminatory effect on people who possess protected characteristic.

Associative Discrimination is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perceptive Discrimination is direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a protected characteristic.

Our policy also covers harassment, third-party harassment, and victimisation.

Harassment is defined as any uninvited, unwelcome or unreciprocated behaviour which is offensive to a person (even if it is not directed at them) and causes that person to feel threatened, intimidated, humiliated or embarrassed or creates an environment which is hostile or offensive to that person. Third-party harassment is defined as harassment by members, members of the public, suppliers). Victimation is defined as harassment that occurs as a result of a member making or supporting a complaint, or raising a grievance, or because they are suspected of having done so.

The Equality Act 2010

We will be led by the Equality Act 2010. This provides legal protection for individuals with certain protected characteristics against prohibited conduct such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimization; and a duty to make adjustments for disabled people in certain circumstances. These protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

To ensure that we comply with the principles and duties imposed by the Equality Act 2010, we embed equality into all our planning, decision making and actions we take as an organisation. Equality law requires us to do this. However, we also believe we have a moral obligation to do this because we value diversity and strive to be inclusive in all aspects of our activities.

Key values of NSSC

1. We recognise and support the contribution that being inclusive brings to enriching our organisation. We also recognise that some people experience disadvantage or vulnerability as a result of other characteristics and that certain specific characteristics tend to be overlooked. We include those that are socio-economically disadvantaged in our definition of protected characteristics.
2. We recognise that the society in which we live is diverse. We aim to reflect the diversity in all that we undertake as an organisation as far as is reasonably practicable and irrespective of a person's personal characteristics. We value individual attributes, such as skills, knowledge and background, in all our members. We respect differences.
3. We value and celebrate the diversity that exists in our membership and are committed to creating an environment in which everyone has the opportunity to take full part and feels safe to do so. We aim to undertake all that we do without discriminating on the basis of a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation, or any aspect of an individual's background or heritage which is used as justification for unfair treatment or exclusion.
4. We believe our organisation will be better, more creative and innovative as a result of including people in a way that gets the best from their diversity, values their different perspectives and individual backgrounds, and integrates fairness and equity into every aspect of our activities.

Practical steps towards inclusion

We will work towards improving inclusion by:

- Including a commitment to working within an equality and diversity framework in all roles we offer
- Recruiting, attracting, developing and retaining members and valuing the varied skills and experiences people bring to our organisation

- Assessing our reach and the extent to which individuals and groups who identify with the protected characteristic are enabled to access our activities
- Developing imaginative and open ways of including new members and encouraging membership from all sections of our community and ensures that we address any barriers they might face to inclusion.
- Providing a safe and accessible environment
- Ensuring that our members understand their rights and responsibilities concerning discrimination, bullying and harassment, so that everyone feels part of our organisation and not marginalised
- Making sure that we treat seriously, behaviour that is deliberately contrary to our inclusive principles and take appropriate action
- Dealing with all complaints made seriously, promptly and confidentially
- Undertaking outreach to individuals and groups who identify with the protected characteristics
- Involving individuals and groups who identify with the protected characteristics in our consultations and planning