



Equal Opportunities Policy

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of SLI and its Management Committee to the promotion of equality of opportunity for all job applicants, employees, volunteers, clients, etc.

It is our policy to provide equality of employment and volunteering to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment.
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Family Status (having or not having dependents).
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Member of the Traveller community.

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All members of the organisation will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions on employment, advancement, training, or any other benefit will be made objectively, without unlawful discrimination, and based on aptitude and ability.

We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in all our activities will benefit the organisation. Our equal opportunities policy will help members to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the members will be utilised fully to maximise the effectiveness of the organisation.

SLI is committed to the principles and practice of Equality. SLI values the diversity of the local population. We want our services, facilities, and resources to be accessible and useful to every citizen regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin, religious belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect a person's opportunities in life. SLI monitors and reviews employment policies and practices to ensure that they do not, directly or indirectly, discriminate unfairly against individual members or staff or particular groups of employees.

SLI recognises that there is a statutory and legal duty to implement an equal opportunities policy. This policy applies to applicants for employment, staff, clients and volunteers of SLI alike.

Compliance

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons.
- Promoting a good and harmonious learning environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment is tolerated.
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice.
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies.
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate.



- » Breaches of our equal opportunities policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to termination of employment.

Implementation

The Manager has a specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. We expect all employees and volunteers to abide by the policy and help to create the equality environment which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy, we shall:

- » Communicate the policy to employees by issuing an induction pamphlet to all existing, and new employees.
- » SLI will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that it will not consciously, or unconsciously, discriminate in the selection or recruitment of applicants.
- » SLI encourages the promotion of a working, learning and social environment where all employees work positively and harmoniously together. SLI is committed to ensuring that the work environment should give all employees the freedom to do their work without having to suffer bullying or intimidation from manager, supervisor, colleague or group of colleagues.
- » Promotion and advancement is made on merit and all decisions relating to this are made within the overall framework and principles of this policy
- » Job descriptions ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy.
- » Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

Complaints

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly, and confidentially.

Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly, and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

Complaints from members of the public will be dealt with under agreed procedures.

Procedure

1. To report suspected breaches approach your manager/supervisor.
2. Your manager will take notes and detailed information of the suspicion and will report to the relevant persons and authorities.
3. Complaints will be taken seriously and will be dealt with sympathetically and in a confidential manner (except where the Company deems it is necessary to disclose information in order to properly deal with the complaint).
4. Investigation into the report will commence. There will be continued communication with parties involved.
5. If the claim is found to be substantiated, SLI will act in accordance with its Disciplinary & Termination and Misconduct Policies.
6. Please note that any worker found to have fabricated a complaint may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary & Termination Policy, up to and including termination of employment.

The Equal Opportunities Policy will be reviewed in June 2025, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.



Signed:  (John Hawkes, SLI Board Chair)

This policy was approved by SLI's Management Committee, June 2023.