

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for Young Sea Changers Scotland (YSCS)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Young Sea Changers Scotland (YSCS) is wholly committed to ensuring and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded across our organisation, and to tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination. YSCS will provide a safe space, and no member of the organisation will face discriminatory treatment due to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, religion or belief, marital status or civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, or disadvantaged by other personal conditions faced by them. YSCS will not tolerate any discriminatory act or attitude in the conduct of our organisation with our members of staff, voluntary members, and whomever we may work with in any capacity. YSCS aims to be representative of all of society, with a focus on the young people we aim to represent and work with , and for any and all members of staff and voluntary members to be and feel respected and able to give their best.

If you think YSCS can improve upon the fairness and protections offered by this policy, please do contact us.

Purpose and Scope

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment across our organisation, including members, employees and members of the Board and Advisory Panel.
2. Never unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
 - i. age
 - ii. disability
 - iii. gender reassignment
 - iv. marriage and civil partnership
 - v. pregnancy and maternity
 - vi. race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - vii. religion or belief
 - viii. sex
 - ix. sexual orientation
3. Oppose all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
 - i. pay and benefits
 - ii. terms and conditions of employment
 - iii. dealing with grievances and discipline
 - iv. dismissal
 - v. redundancy
 - vi. leave for parents

- vii. requests for flexible working
 - viii. selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities
4. This policy sets out YSCS' commitment to equality and our determination to ensure that our policies and practices meet the needs of our employees, voluntary members, and anyone that interacts with and supports our organisation.
5. YSCS aims to ensure that:
- i. All members of staff – inclusive of employees, Board members, and members of the Advisory Panel – alongside any voluntary members and wider stakeholders, are treated fairly and respectfully, throughout their recruitment process, employment and any time spent with YSCS
 - ii. All staff, volunteers and other members of our organisation are protected from discrimination, harassment and bullying of any description, or from any other unwanted behaviour.
 - iii. All staff, volunteers and other members of our organisation are given an equal chance to participate fully in YSCS activities.

Responsibilities

YSCS staff, Trustees, and voluntary members have a shared responsibility to embrace and support our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and to challenge behaviour and attitudes that are discriminatory and could cause harm to individuals and/or the organisation. To achieve this, YSCS will provide necessary support to our employees and volunteers to identify and report discriminatory behaviour.

Commitments

YSCS commits to :

- i. Ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded within our policies and day-to-day practice
- ii. Identifying and addressing occurrences of discrimination against those who work with and support us
- iii. Meeting the current legal duties and requirements, particularly surrounding race, sexuality, disability and gender identity
- iv. Identifying and addressing any internal policies, attitudes or behaviours that are deemed to be discriminatory
- v. Ensuring equal access to our organisation and its services, by reviewing our day-to-day practices and operations and delivering better services for those who engage with us

Tackling and Eliminating Discrimination

1. YSCS will not tolerate any unfair treatment of members of our organisation, including discrimination targeted at any and all of the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010: race, gender identity, disability, age, sexuality, marital or civil partnership status, maternity/paternity, religion or belief, and on socio-economic status or any other factor of difference or minority.
2. Any employee, Trustee or other member of YSCS who feels that they have been subjected to discrimination, including on the grounds of the protected characteristics listed above, or any other form of mistreatment, should raise a complaint to a member of the Board.
3. YSCS will comply with its legislative duties and all legal, moral, and ethical frameworks, guidelines and procedures. Any breaches of these duties will be taken seriously and responded to robustly. Issues reported will be recorded, alongside our response to inform actions to address these issues. Should allegations or complaints be made regarding employees or other members of YSCS, this will be classed as misconduct and appropriate disciplinary action will be undertaken, up to and including dismissal.

Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Within and Across YSCS

1. YSCS will review all aspects of our work to ensure that any barriers to access are removed, addresses any differences in the treatment of our members and the effects, and ensure that everyone is supported in maximising their abilities and contributions to the organisation and our work
2. All members of YSCS are expected to behave fairly and respectfully to others
3. YSCS will commit to raising awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion within and across our organisation, and where necessary, will modify our behaviour and challenge attitudes
4. YSCS employees and Trustees will lead by example in the treatment of members of our organisation
5. Policies and procedures will be put in place to ensure that any discriminatory behaviour or attitudes is dealt with rapidly and effectively, whilst remaining supportive of those who challenge such behaviour
6. Members of the organisation will be involved in the development of equality, diversity and inclusion practice as far as possible
7. YSCS will ensure equality of opportunity and diversity is sought in our recruitment of staff and members of our Board and Advisory Panel
8. Any YSCS induction processes will include raising awareness of our equality, diversity and inclusion policies and procedures

Protections

Gender Identity

1. Members of any gender identity will be fully and properly represented, respected and rewarded for their contributions to the work of our organisation by:
 - vi. Challenging gender stereotypes, sexism, transphobia, and all prejudice or discrimination directed towards gender identity
 - vii. Using preferred pronouns as used by each member of the organisation
 - viii. Supporting members of the organisation in having a healthy, work-life balance
 - ix. Supporting any pregnant members of the organisation and taking active steps to offer support during paternity leave and upon return to involvement with the organisation
 - x. Any members of the organisation who undergo, are undergoing or have undergone, gender-reassignment in any form will be protected from discrimination and harassment and supported throughout
 - xi. Facilitate a welcoming and supportive environment so members can live freely, safely and comfortably within themselves and their gender identity
2. YSCS will actively work to eliminate discrimination and harassment, and promote equality of opportunity for all.

Marital Status

1. All members of the organisation will be treated fairly and equally irrespective of marital, civil partnership or family status.

Race

1. Racial and cultural diversity of the communities that form and work with YSCS will be represented by:
 - i. Challenging racial stereotypes and racism
 - ii. Understanding, respecting and valuing different racial and cultural backgrounds and perspectives
 - iii. Actively continue learning about and tackling racial injustice
2. YSCS will adhere to our equality duties and will work to eliminate racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

Disability

1. Disabled members of the organisation will be treated equally and supported by:
 - i. Respecting and accommodating the needs of members, including making adjustments to and ensuring accessibility of work, event and

meeting venues to allow for disabled members to contribute fully to YSCS. This includes ensuring level or lift access for those using wheelchairs or with limited mobility, and considering external stressors – e.g. loud noises, bright lights – to reduce sensory inputs for those with sensory sensitivities

- ii. Challenging stereotypes about disabilities and ableism
- iii. Eliminate discrimination against disabled people
- iv. Ensure that any media distributed is accessible to screen readers

Age

1. YSCS will challenge ageism and age-related stereotypes
2. YSCS aims to open pathways for young people to engage in marine policy decision making, through providing training and ensuring their voices are elevated and valued. YSCS therefore aims to ensure youth representation on its Board, so that its day-to-day processes are informed by young people, for young people.

Religious Beliefs and Political Opinion

1. Members will be treated fairly within the organisation irrespective of religious beliefs, practices or political opinions, through recognising individuals' rights to freedom of belief and right to protection from intolerance and persecution
2. YSCS will adhere to our duty to tackle and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion, philosophical, or ethical or moral beliefs. Religion or belief covers Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism, Buddhism, Atheism, and further beliefs such as Paganism. It also encompasses life choices such as veganism or vegetarianism.

Sexuality

1. All members will be treated respectfully and equally irrespective of sexuality by:
 - i. Challenging stereotypes and discrimination related to sexuality, including homophobia, queerphobia and prejudice against the wider LGBTQ+ community
 - ii. Facilitate a welcoming and supportive environment so members can live freely, safely and comfortably within themselves and their sexuality

Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the Board of Trustees and Executive Director.

Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures are available upon request by contacting Alan Munro at contact@youthforseas.org.

Document version control

| Version number | Change or update | Author or owner | Date |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1.0 | First version | Caitlin Turner | 18/07/2023 |
| 1.1 | Add logos & grievance procedures | Sophie Plant | 08/05/2024 |
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