



## STaSS Equality and Diversity Policy

MAY 2015

This policy describes the commitment by STaSS to combat direct and indirect discrimination within its remit.

### 1.0 Definitions

**1.1 Equality** means creating an even platform to enable everyone to access the same opportunities and is enforced through legislation to prevent discrimination based on prejudice. To put it simply, everyone has a right to equal treatment.

**1.2 Diversity** means understanding and valuing the differences in people and believing that these differences will create a productive environment and an enriching life experience where talents are fully utilised and goals are met.

Common grounds for discrimination are [this list is not exhaustive]:

- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Gender, marital status or caring responsibility
- Sexuality
- Age
- Pregnant women/nursing mothers
- Physical or mental disability
- Political or religious belief
- Class
- HIV status
- Employment status

### 2.0 The Policy

Valuing diversity means valuing the qualities that different people bring to their roles, to the resolution of problems and to the development of opportunities - rather than judging people's ideas by the extent to which they conform to our existing values or personal preference.

Managing diversity means recognising that our staff, students, volunteers and those who use our services are from differing cultural, ethnic, racial and gender backgrounds and have different religions or beliefs, nationalities, sexual orientations, gender identities, ages, physical and mental abilities etc. This means in practice that STaSS is committed to: Ensuring equality means giving all staff and volunteers the opportunity to achieve their full potential, within the limits of the organisation, by striving to eliminate unfairness, discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying at work.

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Staff and volunteers will be dealt with solely on the basis of merit and without prejudice, thus ensuring fair, reasonable and dignified treatment for all in:

- Recruitment
- Performance/appraisal
- Access to learning
- Career development
- Job allocation
- Promotion
- Grievance and discipline

Providing support and encouragement to all staff, students and volunteers to enable them to give of their best, but with special consideration for members of staff and volunteers with particular needs such as those with domestic responsibilities or with disabilities.

STaSS will therefore ensure that it has measures in place to combat direct or indirect discrimination in its employment practices and its provision of services. It aims to ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or organisation/individual to whom it comes into contact will be discriminated against.

### 3.0 The Aim of the Policy is:

- To ensure all volunteers and staff are afforded equality of opportunity
- To ensure all employees have equality of access to promotion and equal pay
- To attract a diverse workforce and utilise the skills, knowledge and abilities available
- To create a positive image as an employer and service provider
- To increase efficiency, and prevent disciplinary and grievance procedures
- To ensure all STaSS policies reflect the values and principles of equality and diversity
- To make unacceptable breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy. All instances of alleged breaches will be investigated under the STaSS Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- To recognise the diversity of the residents of Milton Keynes and elsewhere as well as their diverse backgrounds, culture and needs and to ensure that services are delivered appropriately
- To endeavour to remove any barriers to the services STaSS provides

### 4.0 What STaSS will do:

STaSS will uphold the values and principles of equality and diversity:

- By developing policies which ensure that no job applicant, employee, student, volunteer or service user is unfairly discriminated against on the basis of their gender, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, age, physical or mental capabilities, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation or social background.
- Services will be delivered in an appropriate, sensitive and impartial manner.

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- A co-operative working environment will be fostered which will be free from harassment and victimisation and which will promote good relations among staff enabling them to reach their full potential

STaSS will not discriminate by imposing any conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable.

STaSS recognises that certain groups in society may currently suffer discrimination and are denied equality of opportunity. STaSS makes a positive commitment to opposing all forms of discrimination within its organisation.

## **5.0 Policy Implementation**

### **5.1 Legislation**

STaSS will comply with all the appropriate and relevant legislation

### **5.2 Responsibilities**

All trustees, employees, students and volunteers will be responsible for ensuring the practical application of the policy, which extends to the treatment of the trustees, employees and volunteers.

The Director has overall responsibility for the operation of this policy, subject to the direction of the trustees.

### **5.3 Employment**

The Director will be responsible for ensuring that fair and adequate arrangements exist for handling and recording all aspects of employment including recruitment.

### **5.4 Training**

STaSS will endeavour to provide in-depth training for its trustees, staff, students and volunteers on equality and diversity issues.

### **5.5 In Practice**

All members of staff have an individual responsibility to ensure this policy is actively implemented. The policy will be circulated to all STaSS's trustees, employees and volunteers.

STaSS encourages individual members of staff or volunteers who feel they have suffered in any way from, been disadvantaged by, been discriminated against unlawfully or subjected to harassment to report these incidents to the Board of Trustees. In the same way, members of staff who witness an act of discrimination or harassment against a fellow employee, volunteer or visitor should report this.

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An employee or student found to have acted in a discriminatory way in relation to colleagues; volunteers or visitors to STaSS will be dealt with in accordance with STaSS's disciplinary procedure.

### **6.0 Who is covered by this commitment to diversity and equality of opportunity?**

All trustees, staff, students, volunteers, visitors and all outside contractors are covered by this

commitment and have a right to fair, reasonable and considerate treatment at all times.

STaSS opposes all forms of discrimination. We recognise that discrimination creates barriers to achieving equality for all people.

In implementing this policy, STaSS will ensure that it meets all necessary legal requirements and it will strive to set standards of good practice that others will follow.

This policy was explained to me and I have also read and understood its content. I promise to abide by it now and after my engagement with STaSS.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Policy Review**

The Director and Board of Trustees are responsible for reviewing this policy annually and ensuring that it is compliant with current legislation and good practice.

**REVIEWED MAY 2015, NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW MAY 2016**

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