



Registered Charity Number: 1201381

Policy Name	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
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Policy update prepared by	Kirsty Townsend
Policy reviewed by	Trustees
Policy approved by: Chair of Trustees	David Jones
Date:	23.01.2024
Signature:	
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POLICY STATEMENT

This Equality and Diversity Statement and Equality and Diversity Inclusion Policy reflect both the mission and purpose of SSYI and the spirit and intentions of legislation (e.g. the Equality Act 2010) which outlaws discrimination.

SSYI will not unlawfully discriminate or subject any individual to less favourable treatment.

In line with its values, SSYI is committed to ensuring the fair and lawful treatment of its staff, programme participants, volunteers, contractors, consultants and suppliers and the general public. The key legislation underpinning this policy, which SSYI will have ongoing regard to, is outlined in Appendix 1.

SSYI recognises that individuals and groups can encounter discrimination and that this can be damaging to individuals and society at large. SSYI has a responsibility to combat all forms of prejudice including that related to the nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability (whether physical, sensory, learning, mental, or long-term health problem)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including race, colour, ethnic or national origins)
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

All staff members are aware of the importance of understanding and respecting diversity and of the need to support and prepare children and young people for life in a pluralistic society.

It is the responsibility of all members of the SSYI team to ensure the practical application of this policy. SSYI also recognises that certain responsibility will fall on its management to provide appropriate coordination and training.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. AIMS OF THE POLICY

The policy aims to challenge discrimination in all areas of our organisation. We aim to ensure that SSYI reflects and meets the needs of the local community and incorporates equal opportunities into all areas of our work.

2. DEFINITIONS

Discrimination = any unlawful discrimination

Although there may be circumstances justifying different treatment, which are not unlawful (for example to comply with a genuine occupational requirement for a position), SSYI will not tolerate unlawful discrimination and/or harassment on the grounds of an individual's sex, race, marital status, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, religion and other beliefs, pregnancy and maternity, union membership, Union activities, or employment status. Any reference to discrimination in this policy includes all such possible grounds. Indirect discrimination is when there's a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect on some people than others.

3. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Equality Act became law in October, 2010. It replaced previous legislation (such as the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and ensures consistency in what employers and employees need to do to make their workplaces a fair environment and comply with the law.

We are committed to ensuring that no existing or potential user, worker, volunteer, or member receives less favourable treatment or service than any other on the grounds of sex/gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, language, religion/religious belief, marital status, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy/maternity, class, sensory/physical or mental disability, socio-economic/employment status, size, appearance, HIV positive status, inapplicable criminal record, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which are not justified in terms of the job to be done or service to be offered.

We recognise that discrimination occurs when services fail to respond to variations in need arising from these different characteristics directly or indirectly, and when people are denied essential services or training opportunities because of the inability to pay for them. The outcome of such a failure is that people suffer hostility, deprivation, and material disadvantage.

Accordingly, we are strongly committed to counter discrimination in all aspects of our work – in our practice as employers, in the way we work with other organisations, and in all our work with programme participants.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to the whole of SSYI at all levels of the organisation, and across all policies and programme areas especially with regard to:

- Implementation
- Governance
- Employment & Recruitment
- Programme Participant & Community Involvement
- Tackling Discrimination & Harassment
- Programme Planning & Provision of services
- Procurement
- Promoting Social Inclusion & Community Cohesion
- Partnerships
- Responsibilities
- Monitoring & Review
- Complaints & Redress

5. IMPLEMENTATION

We recognise that a policy will not in itself provide equality of opportunity. SSYI therefore intends to implement a positive programme of action to challenge all forms of direct or indirect discrimination in its practices, and in the provision of its services. SSYI will also use its influence to change attitudes and policies that reinforce oppression.

We recognise that active participation of existing or potential participants, workers, volunteers, or members is necessary in order for discrimination to be challenged. SSYI is committed to encouraging active involvement so that all existing or potential programme participants, workers, volunteers, or members of the group are part of the process of defining and directing its work by monitoring its effectiveness in doing this. SSYI will consistently question its approach to practices, its work, and attitudes, to ensure the full involvement of people from oppressed groups.

6 GOVERNANCE

Membership of SSYI is a legal requirement for Trustees as part of our status as a company limited by guarantee. Trustees need to be in accord with SSYI Trust's Mission Statement to hold office.

SSYI will aim to have a governing body and management and accountability structures which understands and reflects the diversity of its local populations and communities.

7 RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

7.1 Staff & Volunteer Recruitment

7.2 SSYI will work to ensure it recruits staff in a fair and open manner to achieve a diverse workforce. SSYI seeks to achieve equality of treatment for job applicants.

After taking into account any genuine occupational requirement, entry into employment and promotion or change of post within SSYI is determined by personal merit, suitability, and ability or potential ability, relevant to the mission and purpose of SSYI

The policy applies to the advertisement of all posts and the recruitment and appointment to these posts unless specifically exempted (see below).

SSYI aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunity to enter employment. In so doing, it will fully consider making reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. In addition, when staff members become disabled in the course of their employment, every effort will be made through reasonable adjustment, retraining or redeployment to enable them to remain in the employment of SSYI.

The recruitment of volunteers will also be in accordance with the main principles of this policy.

7.3 Exemptions

The Memorandum and Articles of SSYI express its ethos as a Christian organisation. Accordingly all those in roles which are assessed to be central in promoting the Organisation's Christian ethos and enabling people to experience, explore and express the faith-based motivation of its work, (where there is a Genuine Occupational Qualification for a particular post) are required to demonstrate a commitment to the Christian faith. However, such exemptions to this policy must be compliant with guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

On occasions, SSYI may be required to restrict recruitment based on other Genuine Occupational Requirements for a particular post (e.g. requiring a particular gender). Again, such exemptions to this policy must be compliant with guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

7.4 Terms, Conditions & Requirements

SSYI is committed to ensuring that rates of pay and other terms and conditions of employment are fairly applied without regard to sex, race, marital status, etc. Unless there can be justification on the grounds of business need, it is unlawful to impose a condition or requirement on any post where such a condition would have an adverse impact on an employee (or prospective employee) on account of their sex, race, marital status etc.

7.5 Staff Support & Development

7.6 SSYI will promote awareness of its Equality and Diversity Policy and of the practices which will advance its implementation. This will include promoting greater awareness of the differing needs of those from different backgrounds (e.g. by the use of positive images, play equipment, games etc), and by valuing different cultural identities through anti-racist activities and resources. Positive anti-sexist and anti-discriminatory values will be integral to all programmes of activities.

Training sessions will be offered to all committee members, volunteers, and staff in these areas. SSYI will offer appropriate and regular supervision and support to all staff and these supervision sessions will include time to discuss any Equality and Diversity matters.

7.6 Reasonable Adjustments for Employees with Disabilities

Employees who are disabled or become disabled in the course of their employment should inform SSYI of the fact. They may also wish to advise SSYI of any reasonable adjustments to their employment or working conditions which they consider necessary, or which they consider would assist them in the performance of their duties. Consideration will be given to such proposals and, where it is reasonably practicable, such adjustments will be made.

8.0 PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

8.1 Programme Participant Feedback

SSYI will ensure that feedback mechanisms (e.g. the compliments and complaints form) are available to all programme participants.

8.2 Programme Participant Involvement (including parents and carers)

SSYI will from time to time inform all programme participants of the opportunities for participation in service delivery and planning. This information will be provided in translation or other formats where there is an identifiable need to do so.

As part of a commitment to service user participation, SSYI will encourage involvement of people from minority communities. Where required, the SSYI will facilitate training or personal development activities to strengthen participation.

8.3 Family and Community Engagement

SSYI wants to be an open and welcoming organisation at the heart of the community where our programme and learning opportunities are accessible and enjoyable for young people, children and those who care for them. We will engage with parents and carers, community groups, voluntary sector organisations, faith groups, local councils, other statutory bodies and wider stakeholders as part of the process of developing and assessing policy and practice.

9.0 TACKLING DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT

It is the responsibility of every individual, both staff and volunteer, to eliminate discrimination by ensuring the practical application of the equal opportunities policy and reporting incidents of discrimination to an appropriate senior person.

Discrimination or Harassment in any form is not acceptable. SSYI will take prompt action to deal with cases brought to its attention. SSYI will offer appropriate support to programme participants and staff experiencing harassment and will undertake to agree to any action with them first.

SSYI will work in partnership with the police, local authorities and other agencies to prevent harassment in the community and to encourage its reporting. SSYI will monitor any harassment for specific discriminatory components, and will report incidents to the Board of Trustees. SSYI will keep a record of incidents concerning discrimination, harassment and racially motivated incidents.

9.1 Discrimination & Harassment of Staff

SSYI will ensure that staff and volunteers feel able to raise complaints of discrimination or harassment and that no individual will be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and made in bad faith. SSYI is committed to protecting staff from harassment by other staff, by programme participants and by others, and will take appropriate action against perpetrators in agreement with staff concerned.

9.2 Discrimination & Harassment by Staff

Any employee who harasses any other employee, volunteer, agent or programme participant, or whose conduct or actions are inconsistent with the SSYI's commitment to equal opportunities, will be subject to the organisation's disciplinary procedure. In serious cases, such behaviour will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and, as such, will result in summary dismissal in the absence of mitigating circumstances.

It is a requirement for all staff to attend any Diversity & Equality training which SSYI organises.

9.3 Discrimination & Harassment of Programme Participants

SSYI will ensure that programme participants feel able to raise complaints of discrimination or harassment and that there are no barriers for minority groups to do so. Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints procedure.

SSYI is committed to protecting service users from harassment by others and will take appropriate action in agreement with the programme participant(s) concerned under the Disciplinary policy (where staff are the perpetrators). Where perpetrators have no formal link to the association, we will work with other agencies to ensure our programme participants are protected from further incidents.

9.4 Racist Incidents

SSYI accepts the definition of racist incidents as contained in Home Office guidance. A racist incident is one which is perceived as being such by the person experiencing it or witnessing it. As with all forms of harassment, SSYI will not tolerate racist incidents against its staff, agents or programme participants and we will work with those experiencing racially motivated behaviour such as abuse, intimidation, harassment or violence. SSYI will keep a record of any racial motivated incidents and how they have been dealt with.

10.0 PROGRAMME PLANNING & PROVISION

SSYI will provide activities and services appropriate to the diverse needs of individuals in the community and is committed to ensuring fair access and fair treatment for all programme participants and potential programme participants, irrespective of background. Ensuring ease of access to premises and to programme, for those with disabilities, will be particularly taken into consideration. Where possible, office premises will endeavour to respect and acknowledge the need for staff to have a private place for privacy, prayer or quiet contemplation.

Proactive engagement with programme participants (including parents and carers), representatives from minority groups will be encouraged in the designing and planning of programmes and services.

Where the profile of programme participants for a particular activity or service is at variance with the local community, action will be taken to address any imbalance.

10.1 Positive Activities, Support & Education

SSYI is committed to ensuring equality of access to its activities and services and is also committed to ensuring that they are appropriately tailored to an individual's needs. We will ensure that referral agencies, community groups and the general public have access to information about our services.

All children are encouraged to become responsible for their own learning. The support and activities we provide are responsive to participants' different learning styles in order to engage all.

Staff ensure that the rooms are an inclusive environment in which young people feel all contributions are valued. Where groups or individuals are marginalised, staff take positive steps to include them.

Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that young people appreciate the value of working together. All participants' are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.

Staff challenge stereotypes and foster participants' critical awareness and concepts of fairness.

Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of participants promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all areas. All resources are reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect the inclusive ethos of SSYI.

10.2 Reviewing Services

Service reviews will take into account race equality and fair access to services. Wherever possible, programme participants particularly those from minority groups, will be encouraged to give their views and identify their priorities for service delivery and improvement.

11.0 PROCUREMENT

Where relevant, we will advise partners, consultants and other agencies working for SSYI of our commitment to equal opportunities and we will request details of their own equal opportunities policy and practices, or an undertaking that they agree to abide by SSYI Equalities & Diversity Policy. SSYI requires that all partners and their subcontractors, and contractors and consultants, who are employed by SSYI, treat staff and programme participants in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

Complaints of discrimination or harassment by a partner, consultant, or other agency staff, against a programme participant or a member of SSYI staff will be brought to the attention of the Chair of Trustees. If the complaint is founded, SSYI will insist that the perpetrator does not work within any of the programme.

12.0 PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION & COMMUNITY COHESION

SSYI is committed to promoting social inclusion and will actively seek to work with individuals, communities and organisations to integrate marginalised people back into society so that they can fulfil their potential.

SSYI is also committed to promoting community cohesion in the areas where it operates. Factors such as age, wealth, ethnicity, religion and political ideology, sexual orientation can create divisions in communities. SSYI has an important role to play to work with its partners to promote interaction between people and foster positive community relations. SSYI will also seek to promote the needs of local minority groups in its contribution to local community strategies. SSYI will endeavour to work with bodies representing minority groups in order to develop services and promote race equality.

13.0 PARTNERSHIPS

Where SSYI wishes to provide services in partnership with other agencies, any contracting or service level agreements or management agreements will cover Equality & Diversity issues at all levels of service delivery.

14.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Our Trustees are responsible for:

- making sure the organisation complies with all current equality legislation
- approving and adopting the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy for SSYI,
- overseeing the evaluation of its work as an employer of workers and volunteers and as a service provider.

The Chair of Trustees is responsible for:

- making sure the policy is readily available and that the trustees, staff and programme participants know about it
- ensuring that the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy and procedures are carried out
- producing regular information for staff and trustees about the policy and how it is working and arranging training for them on the policy, if necessary
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination

All our staff are responsible for:

- functional responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the policy
- dealing with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- promoting equality and good community relations
- avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic circumstances
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- knowing and following our Equality and Diversity Policy

Immediate responsibility for overseeing equality practices at SSYI lies with a named member of staff and a Trustee. Responsibilities include:

- coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents)
- monitoring the progress and attainment of vulnerable groups of young people, children and families

The persons currently responsible for championing equality are David Jones (Chair of Trustees) and Zac Britton (Lead Youth Worker)

15.0 MONITORING & REVIEW

The Board will receive reports on the effectiveness of this policy with regard to:

- Harassment and racist incidents
- Satisfaction levels

The composition of job applicants and the workforce will be monitored on an ongoing basis. As required, the Chair of Trustees will report to the Personnel Committee on equal opportunities performance issues including:

- Response to applications
- Appointments
- Promotion
- Retention
- Harassment
- Grievance and disciplinary issues
- Employee satisfaction

All proposals for forming or changing policies will take into account the implications for promoting or maintaining equality for programme participants and workers/volunteers.

SSYI will consult with those who have a particular knowledge and understanding of the issues, including people who are potential victims of discrimination, on how to make our work more relevant to those facing discrimination.

16.0 COMPLAINTS & REDRESS

SSYI is committed to taking positive action to address potential discrimination or any barriers to service access. Staff, prospective staff, programme participants and others have the right to take complaints of unfair treatment or failure to follow legal or regulatory obligations to an appropriate external body, once complaints have been fully investigated internally.

APPENDIX 1: LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING THIS POLICY

SSYI will have regard to all legal and regulatory duties concerning Equality & Diversity in carrying out its activities.

Equality Act 2010

A new Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010. The Equality Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up a new Act that provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act simplifies, strengthens and harmonises the current legislation to provide Britain with a new discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

This Act makes provision to require Ministers of the Crown and others when making strategic decisions about the exercise of their functions to have regard to the desirability of reducing socio-economic inequalities; to reform and harmonise equality law and restate the greater part of the enactments relating to discrimination and harassment related to certain personal characteristics; to enable certain employers to be required to publish information about the differences in pay between male and female employees; to prohibit victimisation in certain circumstances; to require the exercise of certain functions to be with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and other prohibited conduct; to enable duties to be imposed in relation to the exercise of public procurement functions; to increase equality of opportunity; to amend the law relating to rights and responsibilities in family relationships; and for connected purposes. Government guidance on the Equality Act is referred to at <https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>.

Race Relations Acts 1976 and 2000

Romsey Mill and its staff have a duty under the Act not to discriminate on racial grounds as an employer or as a provider of services.

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 & 2008 amendment regulations

Romsey Mill and its staff have a duty under the Act not to discriminate as an employer or in the provision of services by treating a person less favourably than another on the grounds of their sex. The 2008 regulations outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and childbirth, in service delivery and some employment provisions.

Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 & 2005

Romsey Mill has a duty under the 1995 Act not to discriminate as an employer or in the provision of services by treating a person less favourably than another on the grounds of their disability. The 2005 Act extends legal protection to those with diagnosed or progressive conditions such as AIDS, MS or cancer.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Under this Act, prospective employees do not have to declare criminal convictions which attracted a prison sentence or suspended sentence of less than two and a half years, once the conviction becomes spent. However, Romsey Mill, in providing services to children, young people and vulnerable adults is exempt from the Act and ALL convictions must be declared.

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

This allows for civil or criminal proceedings to be taken in cases of harassment.

Human Rights Act 1998

Whilst the application of this Act to charitable organisations is not always clear cut, many contracts under which we provide services require the association to protect the rights of clients enshrined in the Act. Article 6 (Right to a Fair Trial), Article 8 (Right to Respect for Private & Family Life), Article 9 (Freedom of Religion), Article 10 (Freedom of Expression), Article 12 (Right to Marry & Found a Family) and Article 14 (Prohibition of Discrimination) are of particular relevance.

Gender Recognition Act 2004

This sets out the legal framework for the recognition of individuals who undergo complete gender reassignment. The Act also contains provisions to outlaw discrimination of people at any stage of gender reassignment, particularly in the workplace.

Mental Capacity Act 2005

The Act governs decision-making on behalf of adults who lack mental capacity, both where they lose capacity at some point in their lives, and where the incapacitating condition has been present since birth. It covers all decisions, including personal welfare and financial matters, and covers decision-making on their behalf by attorneys, or court-appointed "deputies". It also clarifies the position if a formal process has not been adopted.

Equality Act 2006

This act creates a single commission, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, replacing the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC). It also makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of religion/belief or sexual orientation, in the provision of goods, services and facilities.

Racial & Religious Hatred Act 2006

This act outlaws the use of threatening words, behaviour or written material if the person intends to stir up religious hatred. This can apply to both individuals and companies.

Equality in Employment Regulations

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations and the Employment Equality (Religion or Faith) Regulations came into force in December 2003 and it is unlawful to discriminate on these grounds in the workplace. The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations came into force in October 2007 to make it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of age.

Regulatory & Contractual Responsibilities

Romsey Mill will also have regard to any regulatory requirements of relevant organisations involved in the commissioning and/or regulation of our services.