

# Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy



<b>Intended users</b>	All staff members and trustees
<b>Overall accountability</b>	Trustee board, with a specific named trustee designated.
<b>Overall responsibility for implementation</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Responsibility for maintenance</b>	Director of Finance and Operations
<b>Next review date</b>	August 2024

This Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy is designed to implement the commitment of the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) (the Employer) to equity, diversity & inclusion. It is the responsibility of every employee to ensure their own conduct conforms to the expected standards and reflects these policy statements.

The aim of the policy is to encourage harmony and respect amongst individuals so as to promote good working practices with a view to maximising the performance and the return to the Employer and the employees.

CSE is committed to preventing unlawful discrimination, harassment victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. This requires CSE to not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief / lack of religion or belief, sexual orientation or contractual status (fixed term / full or part time). This applies to all those who work or wish to work for CSE as a paid employee or as a volunteer, as well as to all our interactions with, customers, clients, partners, beneficiaries, funders and any other members of the public.

CSE has decided to go beyond Equality and focus on Equity<sup>1</sup>. Taking an equity, diversity and inclusion approach entails being pro-active and going beyond meeting our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. In practice this means CSE commits to actively reducing inequity, valuing diversity, enabling inclusion, and ensuring all employees and people we engage with are treated with dignity and respect. In line with this CSE is proactive in addressing inequity and discrimination, and supporting underrepresented groups. For example, taking an anti-racism stance rather than simply ensuring we comply with the Equality Act on race.

If equal opportunities are not applied, then valuable talent and potential are wasted. Moreover, when unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation takes place, they bring about a climate of fear, insecurity and poor work performance. As well as being unlawful it affects profitability and morale. It is therefore vital that every employee understands their responsibilities. Equity is taken very seriously by CSE and wilful failure to apply the policies or evidence of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation will result in disciplinary action which may include dismissal.

CSE's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion cross-team working group identifies opportunities and makes recommendations for CSE to improve its practices. All staff are required to undertake Equity, Diversity and inclusion training. The role and responsibilities of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion working group

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<sup>1</sup> Equality is providing the same level of support and assistance to all segments of society. Equity is providing various levels of support and assistance, depending on the specific needs and abilities of people.

are set out in Appendix 1, and the roles and responsibilities of trustees and senior leadership team in Appendix 2.

This policy is reviewed annually and forms part of the staff handbook, which is available to staff on the shared server and forms part of staff inductions. Staff are alerted to any revisions by email and through staff meetings.

### **Equal opportunities and diversity**

- CSE recognises and accepts its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Under this Act, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation are protected characteristics. Employees, other workers and applicants for employment who have one or more of these characteristics are protected from all forms of unlawful discrimination in the workplace, including: direct and indirect discrimination; discrimination by association; discrimination by perception; discrimination arising from disability; harassment; and victimisation.
- CSE seeks to employ a workforce that reflects the diverse community at large because we value the individual contribution of people irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- CSE will use its best endeavours to provide a working environment free from unlawful discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- CSE undertakes to review its employment practices, policies and procedures, including opportunities for training and promotion, pay and benefits, discipline, selection for redundancy and retirement, to ensure that it avoids all forms of unlawful discrimination in the workplace.
- All employees will be treated with dignity and respect. The Employer recognises that harassment, bullying and victimisation are forms of unlawful discrimination and has a separate section in the policy on dignity at work, which deals with these issues (see below).
- CSE will not tolerate acts which breach this policy and all instances of such behaviour or alleged behaviour will be taken seriously, fully investigated and may be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the Employer. The Employer further seeks to ensure equal opportunities for all employees and encouragement to progress within the organisation by implementing a positive action plan.
- CSE will provide training in equal opportunities and undertakes to distribute and publicise this policy statement to all employees and elsewhere from time to time as appropriate.
- CSE will monitor and review the operation of this policy and will implement any changes required by law or to improve its effectiveness.
- Any employee who believes that they may have been subjected to treatment that breaches this policy may raise the matter through the grievance procedure of CSE.

### **Disability Discrimination**

- Any employee who is disabled or becomes disabled in the course of their employment with CSE, is encouraged to tell us about their disability to enable us to support them as much as possible.
- Should they believe that there are reasonable adjustments that could be made to their working conditions or duties of their job which could assist with the performance of their duties, they should discuss this with their line manager and Human Resources. CSE may wish to consult with them and their medical adviser(s) about possible reasonable adjustments.

- Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and where possible and proportionate to the needs of their job they will be accommodated. There may be circumstances however where it will not be reasonable to accommodate the suggested adjustments. In this instance information will be provided as to the basis of the decision not to make any adjustments.
- CSE is a member of Disability Confident.

### **Recruitment & Selection**

- CSE's recruitment process is an anonymised process, we aim to ensure that no applicant receives less favourable treatment because of any of the protected characteristics.
- CSE will make reasonable adjustments to its recruitment and selection arrangements and procedures to ensure that no applicant for employment is disadvantaged because of a disability.
- CSE undertakes to review periodically its recruitment and selection criteria and procedures to maintain a system where individuals are selected, solely on the basis of their merits and abilities.
- CSE shall take steps to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches a wide and diverse labour market and where relevant groups underrepresented in the company. Where appropriate, use may be made of the lawful exemptions to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups.

### **Dignity at work**

- CSE believes that the dignity of every person must be respected. Harassment and victimisation are forms of unlawful discrimination, which are unacceptable and will be regarded as gross misconduct. The highest standards of conduct are required of everyone regardless of seniority.
- Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Unwanted conduct of this nature can constitute harassment of an individual even if it is directed at another person. Harassment can take a number of forms:
  - Harassment may be unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic. However, a person does not have to possess a protected characteristic to be a victim of harassment. Individuals who are subjected to harassment because of their association with someone who has a protected characteristic can also be victims. It is also possible for someone to be subjected to harassment because colleagues wrongly believe they have a protected characteristic. Unwanted conduct can include any kind of action or inaction, behaviour, exclusion, written or spoken words, jokes, imagery, or physical contact that the victim finds objectionable or offensive. The test of harassment is, at least in part, subjective.
  - Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. This can include any unsolicited or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, such as: making sexual advances; touching; staring; making inappropriate comments; telling sexual jokes; displaying or sending pornographic photographs or other materials of a sexual nature.
  - Harassment can also be less favourable treatment of someone because they have rejected or submitted to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or conduct related to sex or gender reassignment.

- Condoning any form of harassment may be harassment in itself.
- CSE regards the harassment of its employees by third parties, such as clients, customers and visitors as unacceptable behaviour, which will not be condoned. CSE will take such steps as are appropriate and reasonably practicable to protect employees from such behaviour. Employees are required to report any incidents of third-party harassment immediately to their manager or supervisor.
- Victimisation occurs when someone is subjected to detrimental treatment because they have (or are thought to have) brought proceedings under the Equality Act, given evidence or information in support of proceedings or made allegations about any breach of the Act.
- Harassment and victimisation will be regarded as gross misconduct for disciplinary purposes. Accordingly, employees guilty of harassment or victimisation run a serious risk of summary dismissal.
- Equally, an allegation of harassment must not be made lightly. If it is found that an individual has made an allegation of harassment without foundation and maliciously or has given false evidence or information in relation to an allegation, then this will also be regarded as gross misconduct for disciplinary purposes.
- All complaints of harassment or victimisation should be made in line with the grievance procedure.

This policy statement also applies to the provision of services by CSE and the treatment of our volunteers, funders, clients and customers in our day-to-day work. The Employer therefore requires employees to understand and apply the principles and policies outlined here in their work and we provide training where necessary to enable them to do so.



Simon Roberts  
Chief Executive

## Appendix 1

### Equity, Diversity and Inclusion working group role:

The working group is made up of representatives from teams across the organisation and the Director of Finance and Operations and HR Manager. The group's responsibilities are:

- *Facilitating and supporting EDI initiatives*

Responsible for supporting set-up of topic focussed groups, e.g. racialised colleagues, disability inclusion, LGBTQ+, neurodiversity – as identified as being required.

Responsible for offering general EDI 'champion' advice to all staff in person or through the EDI email: addressing questions and issues raised by colleagues, treating these confidentially if requested and referring them to HR, SLT, Trustee if required.

Responsible for liaising with mental health first aiders to understand what EDI issues are coming up in their role and how they are supporting people.

Responsible for liaising with employee voice to coordinate relevant issues and activities jointly.

Responsible for liaising with comms team to plan internal awareness raising of specific EDI topics, activities, etc. with timely, appealing, communication materials.

- *EDI policy and plans*

Responsible for process to engage colleagues in process to address EDI issues identified through the staff perceptions 'baseline' survey, e.g. through EDI town hall or smaller group discussions and identifying prominent issues which should be priorities for the EDI topic groups.

Consulted on findings of EDI staff perceptions 'baseline' survey and make recommendations to SLT for addressing through policy, strategy and action plans.

Consulted by SLT on review of EDI policy to ensure it goes beyond legal requirements and incorporates best practice from the EDI field.

Consulted by SLT on annual action plans for delivering EDI.

Responsible for monitoring progress with delivery of EDI action plans, possibly including implementing an approach to monitoring and evaluation of EDI initiatives.

Consulted by SLT on how CSE's demographic data is monitored and reported on.

Consulted on new initiatives to improve recruitment and retention, e.g. improvements to our employee recruitment and induction processes.

- *Knowledge sharing*

Responsible for using EDI knowledge and being committed to further personal development in EDI where opportunities arise.

Responsible for collating useful resources and sharing these appropriately, e.g. at weekly all staff meetings, periodic lunch-time meetings, through teams channel, through internal communications.

Responsible for participating in key EDI learning and development opportunities.

## Appendix 2

The following sets out the allocation of roles and responsibilities for setting EDI policy and plans across Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team.

- *Designated Trustee*

The trustee board has overall accountability for EDI. Alongside this a specific trustee will be designated to have responsibility for equity, diversity and inclusion and join the EDI working group. Attendance at all meetings will not be required, so the trustee will also be provided with group papers and updates to feedback on. The trustee will act as a critical friend and drive system change at governance level (Trustee tbc).

- *All trustees*

Accountable for using their position as leaders setting organisational direction, strategy, budgets & priorities to ensure CEO and SLT are given clear direction and authority to implement EDI policy and action plans.

Accountable for ensuring organisational culture and behaviour align with delivering EDI policy and strategy.

Accountable for ensuring CSE is delivering on its EDI obligations as a charity and is adhering to the Charity Governance Code best practice on EDI.

Informed regarding EDI strategy and action plans, statistics and survey findings regarding staff perceptions and collection of demographic data.

- *Chief Executive*

Accountable to the Board of Trustees for the implementation of EDI policy and action plans.

Accountable for ensuring the commitments the policy and action plans make are reflected in all areas of the business in both policy and practice.

Accountable for updating equity, diversity and inclusion policy, action plan and budget annually as part of the organisational planning process.

Accountable for ensuring EDI policy and strategy is appropriately reflected in CSE's overall strategy.

- *Senior Leadership Team*

Accountability for the implementation of the EDI policy, strategy and action plan in their area of the organisation.

Act as EDI role models and have collective responsibility for promoting a culture of respect, tolerance and inclusiveness within CSE.

Accountability for specific areas of EDI policy and practice are distributed amongst appropriate members of the Senior Leadership Team; these will be identified in the EDI action plan.

Consulted in development of EDI policy, strategy, action plans and budgets prior to approval by CEO and trustees.

Responsible for ensuring EDI policy and strategy is appropriately reflected in CSE's overall strategy.

Accountable for identifying quality and cost-efficient delivery of consultancy support as required.

Accountable for ensuring EDI is considered and appropriately addressed in all CSE's external projects and activities.

In addition the roles and responsibilities for implementing EDI policy and plans have been assigned to the Director of Finance and Operations, HR Manager, Heads of team and line managers, and all staff and volunteers.