

The British Society of Soil Science (BSSS) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our employees, contractors, volunteers and members. We aim to foster inclusivity that reflects the disciplinary, human, and geographic diversity of the soil community and of the breadth of society soils research supports. We recognise that many groups are under-represented in soil science, including women, diverse ethnic backgrounds, and socially disadvantaged populations, and we are committed to increasing diversity and inclusion.

There is a moral case for building a fairer and more diverse organisation: regardless of our identity, background or circumstance, we all deserve the opportunity to develop our skills and talents to our full potential, work in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment, be fairly rewarded and recognised for our work and have a meaningful voice on matters that affect us.

We all benefit when we embrace and value the diversity of thoughts, ideas and ways of working that people from different backgrounds, experiences and identities bring.

We aim for our membership to be truly representative of all sections of society, and for each employee, contractor and member to feel included and respected. We are also committed to ensuring there is no place for any unlawful discrimination within the society, or by its members or volunteers.

We recognise the difference between equity, diversity and inclusion:

**Equity** takes difference into account to ensure a fair process and a fair outcome, recognising that some groups were (and are) disadvantaged in accessing opportunities and should therefore receive additional support.

**Diversity** recognises the differences between us: having a range of perspectives in decision-making allows us to fully represent our discipline and members and foster positive relationships with the public.

**Inclusion** is where we value the differences between people and use these to enable everyone to thrive within BSSS. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they are able to perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances.

### *This policy covers:*

- All BSSS employees and volunteers
- BSSS members.

### *The policy's purpose is to:*

- provide equity, fairness and respect for all those who work for, or with, the Society
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination, related to employment and contracting, and in any relationship with members or contractors.

BSSS does not employ any staff. Its staff are seconded from Cranfield University who have a number of [diversity and inclusion policies](#) in place, are members of Athena Swan and committed to the Disability Confident Scheme, amongst others.

## *BSSS commit to:*

- Encouraging equity, diversity and inclusion amongst our membership, including when planning events and in publishing research, to showcase the talent of our entire membership and provide positive role models from all walks of life
- Ensuring its annual strategy includes deliverables which support this diversity and inclusion policy
- Having a dedicated Board and Council, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion champion
- Ensuring each committee's Terms of Reference requires a member to act as Equity, Diversity and Inclusion champion
- Actively seeking the views of staff and members on diversity and inclusion and implementing feedback, where appropriate
- Creating an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff and volunteers are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and volunteers about their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help BSSS provide equal opportunities and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff and volunteers should understand they, as well as BSSS, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, against fellow employees, contractors, volunteers, members, customers, suppliers and the public

- Taking seriously any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the course of the organisation's work activities.

In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic, is a criminal offence.

Any reported acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken.

- Making opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff and volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Making decisions concerning staff and volunteers based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

Reviewing volunteer recruitment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Monitoring the make-up of volunteers and members annually regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion. The information will be requested voluntarily and there will be no requirement to provide it. Collecting and monitoring this information will identify

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barriers and solutions and support BSSS in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equity, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting strategy deliverables, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

We recognise that when working internationally, we will need to take into account local legislation, norms and social issues and the ways that individual working styles and personal preferences are influenced by national cultures. We recognise that some countries or organisations may not take the same approach to diversity and inclusion as we do. Our Trustees will carefully consider whether our values can be upheld when working internationally, by reviewing any commitments they have to diversity and inclusion.

The equity, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by BSSS Trustees and Council.

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