



## EQUALITY DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

**SCI is a charity with a purpose to accelerate science out of the laboratory, for the benefit of society. It is a unique multidisciplinary community with members from many different disciplines, organisations and backgrounds.**

**SCI highly values the differences that a diverse community brings and is fully committed to ensuring that it fosters and supports Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) throughout the organisation. SCI will champion EDI values throughout the organization and expects members and other stakeholders to follow the same principles.**

### POLICY

SCI is committed to encouraging and achieving a professional environment which is underpinned by fairness to and respect of all individuals, where diversity is recognised, encouraged and valued, and the concept of individual responsibility is accepted by all.

We value our members for the differences they bring to SCI. These differences - this diversity - is powerful and is a critical enabler to innovation. Fostering an inclusive culture helps each of us to benefit from a wider range of different skills, experiences and perspectives. We believe that this creates a happier, more vibrant and productive environment for members and an environment where innovation can prosper.

To support this inclusive culture, this policy:

- outlines our commitment to members to equality, diversity and inclusion and sets out how we put this commitment into practice;
- explains the behaviours we expect of our members in support of this commitment; and
- sets out the key steps we take to make our culture as inclusive as possible.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of SCI.

### OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

We believe that a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion not only benefits our organisation but supports wellbeing and enables our members to be better because they can be themselves, feel that they belong and that their contributions are valued.

We are committed to promoting an environment based on respect, dignity and trust and one where differences are valued and promoted, and one that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation. We will not treat members less favourably because of their age, disability; gender or sexual orientation; marital or civil partner status; race, racial group, ethnic or national origin, or nationality; religion or belief; pregnancy or maternity/paternity; or socio-economic background.

## WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

We expect all members to treat each other with respect and dignity. We expect members to take personal responsibility for observing, upholding, promoting and applying this policy. Our culture is made in the day-to-day interactions between us so creating the right environment is a responsibility that we all share. There is a danger that areas of difference may translate into biases, and cultivating a positive culture requires ongoing commitment and nurturing.

We expect you to treat your fellow members, our colleagues and other stakeholders fairly and with dignity, trust and respect. This may mean allowing for different views and viewpoints, making space for others to contribute and seeking positive resolution and outcomes at all times.

By embedding such values and constructively challenging inappropriate behaviours, you can help us achieve and maintain a truly inclusive culture.

Any dealings that you have with fellow members, colleagues or third parties must be free from any form of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying. If any of our members is found to have committed, authorised or condoned an act of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying, we will take action in accordance with the member rules. Members should be aware that you can be personally liable for discrimination and harassment.

## DISCRIMINATION

The UK Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination because of certain protected characteristics. These are age, disability, gender or sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity/paternity, and sex.

**Discrimination** can be intentional or unintentional and may occur directly, indirectly, by association, or by perception. Discrimination is not always obvious and can be subtle and unconscious. This stems from a person's general assumptions about the abilities, interests and characteristics of a particular group that influences how they treat those people (known as "unconscious bias"). Such assumptions or prejudices may cause them to apply requirements or conditions that put those in particular groups at a disadvantage.

*There are different types of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 and members should be aware of these, including direct, indirect, by association, by perception and arising from a disability.*

**Harassment** is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating someone else's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone else.

**Sexual harassment** is conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment and less favourable treatment related to sex or gender reassignment that occurs because of a rejection of, or submission to, sexual conduct.

**Victimisation** is treating another person detrimentally either because that person has made a complaint of discrimination or harassment, or because they have supported someone else who has made such a complaint, for example by giving a witness statement that supports the allegations.

**Bullying** There is no legal definition of bullying, however, we regard it as conduct that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting, or an abuse or misuse of power, and usually persistent, that has the effect of undermining, humiliating or injuring the recipient. Bullying can be physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct. It is not necessarily face to face and can be done by email, phone calls, online or on social media. If the bullying relates to a person's protected characteristic, it may also constitute harassment and, therefore, will be unlawful.

## SUPPORT

### Talking about Disability

We appreciate that some people find it hard to discuss their disabilities and that disability can be invisible. Psychological safety, where people feel able to speak up about their experiences without fear of negative consequences, is paramount to ensuring disability inclusion. However, this is only possible if we treat people with dignity, trust and respect and we expect everyone to uphold these values.

We do not tolerate language that is negative, inappropriate or offensive towards people with a disability including that which may take the form of jokes or "banter". If you adopt such language, we will take action against you including in accordance with the member rules.

### Accessibility

If you have a disability, you do not have to tell us. However, we would encourage you to let us know so that we can support you, for example by making adjustments to help you get proper access to meetings. There is a section on our event registration process where you can outline in confidence any assistance needed if you are attending a SCI event. We may need to talk to you or carry out a health and safety assessment in order to assess your needs prior to attendance.

We also make Accessibility Grants available to qualifying members to support them accessing SCI events. For further details, please contact [membership@soci.org](mailto:membership@soci.org).

### Dealing with Questions or Issues

If you have any needs or are experiencing difficulties accessing our facilities or events because of your disability, please contact [membership@soci.org](mailto:membership@soci.org) to discuss potential adjustments that may alleviate or minimise such difficulties. We may need to discuss your needs with you to help us get the right support in place.

If you are experiencing any difficulties with any other SCI member that you are unable to resolve directly with them then please contact us in confidence on [membership@soci.org](mailto:membership@soci.org).

## REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to reflect changes in the law, demographics and internal organisational requirements. We analyse diversity and inclusion data (in compliance with our data protection obligations) on an ongoing basis to assess the effectiveness of this Policy.

Society of Chemical Industry | 14/15 Belgrave Square, SW1X 8PS, London, UK T:  
+44 (0)20 7598 1500 E: [membership@soci.org](mailto:membership@soci.org) [www.soci.org](http://www.soci.org)

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