

## Community Investment Board Equalities Statement

The Community Investment Board encourages diversity and seeks to implement equal opportunities in all areas of our activities and responsibilities. The aim of this statement is to;

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination.
- Ensure a positive culture throughout the activities of the Board.
- Ensure all Board Members are engaged with the development and implementation of this policy.
- Encourage positive action to overcome disadvantage and discrimination and to promote equality.
- Ensure the highest possible standards are achieved in our activities.
- Ensure equity, diversity and inclusion is promoted through our activities, internally and externally.

In valuing equality, diversity, and inclusion, we are committed to legislation around equality including;

- Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Part time working regulations 2000
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 amended 2013 & 2020
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended).

Equality is a term for all activities carried out by an organisation to promote equal opportunities and challenge discrimination. The Board will seek investment that will bring real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need. We expect those we invest in to share our commitment to these principles:

- Promoting accessibility
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Promoting participation
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting inclusive communities
- Reducing disadvantage and exclusion

Protected characteristics refer to groups that are protected under the Equality Act. These are best described as certain attributes that people possess, which should be safeguarded. There are nine protected characteristics; sex, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion/belief, marriage/civil partnership, and gender reassignment.

Equality is about fairness, it is not about treating everyone in the same way, but it recognises that their needs are met in different ways. It is based on the legal obligation to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. Equality protects people from being discriminated against on the grounds of protected characteristics.

The terms equity and equality are sometimes used interchangeably, but while these concepts are related, there are also important distinctions between the two. Equality is defined as treating everyone the same, while equity is giving everyone what they need to be successful. Everyone should have the opportunity to be successful and live a fulfilling life. Unfortunately, we don't all start off in the same situations, or have the same lifestyles, backgrounds, needs, and wants. far too many people, especially those in underserved groups and communities, lack equal access to resources, opportunities, or support systems. To truly promote equity, we must "level the playing field" by identifying and eliminating barriers, and helping to develop solutions and support systems – so that all individuals can successfully realize their potential.

Diversity is about valuing all visible and non-visible differences and recognising and accepting that harnessing differences creates an environment where everyone feels valued. A diverse approach aims to recognise, value and manage differences to enable all to contribute and realise their full potential.

Inclusion involves taking action to remove barriers to participation. It also involves eliminating discrimination and promoting equality.

The Board seek to ensure that where they invest there is an understanding of;

1. The disadvantage that are experienced in our communities
2. How activities will meet the needs of disadvantaged groups, whether protect in law or not
3. How activities will involve disadvantaged groups on a day-to-day basis in their activities

The Board acknowledges and supports that there are activities that are open to disadvantaged groups as well as those which are aimed at a particular group. The investment recipient should consider;

1. How will you reach out to disadvantaged people or groups to find out about their needs?
2. Have you considered the needs of groups in the community that do not use your services at the moment? Are their needs the same as those of the groups that you already know well?
3. How can you make all your target groups feel welcome and understood in your project?

When thinking about equality you may find the following organisations useful:

- NCVO - [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)
- SAVS - <https://savs-southend.org/>

The Board is committed to:

- Developing and maintaining a culture of inclusivity and respect.
- Creating an inclusive environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.
- Creating an environment that promotes dignity and respect for all.
- Implementing safe and inclusive recruitment practices.
- Ensuring development and progression opportunities are available to all.
- Regularly reviewing service provision to ensure it is accessible, fair, and appropriate to appropriate groups in our communities.
- Providing information and training to ensure that they are fully aware of equality issues and their responsibilities relating to these areas.
- Ensuring that this statement is followed.
- Ensuring that no person or group of people will suffer detrimentally in accessing opportunities.
- Monitoring our Board membership so that we can work towards ensuring they reflect the communities we serve.
- Assessing the impact of our practices and actions among different equality groups (protected characteristics).
- Promoting the benefits of embracing equalities internally and externally.
- Embedding equalities into our policies, procedures and everyday practice.
- Ensure the importance of equalities is included within the induction process.
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing this statement to ensure that inclusive practice is embedded.
- Challenging any discriminatory behaviour demonstrated by board members in a constructive manner and taking further action where necessary.

We are committed to;

- Equal opportunities in our activities. We will take every possible step to ensure that no Board Member or applicant will receive less favourable treatment or will be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions that cannot be shown to be justifiable on the grounds of their age, disability (including mental health), sex, gender, gender reassignment, gender identity, race/ethnicity, faith/belief, sexual orientation, marital/civil partnership, socio economic status, family status or trade union membership or other protected characteristic.
- Selection criteria and procedures that are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are selected and treated based on their relevant merits and abilities.
- Ensure our Board is representative of all sections of society. Everyone should feel respected and valued and able to achieve their full potential.
- Value and represent the diversity of our communities.

Complaints of discrimination will be sensitively investigated and, if proven, will result in appropriate action for the perpetrator. Any Board Member suspected to be in breach of this statement could be asked to temporarily leave the Board and continued membership will be questioned (see Board Code of Conduct). Contact the community investment fund coordinator at SAVS using [cib@savs-southend.co.uk](mailto:cib@savs-southend.co.uk) or 01702 356008 with any concerns

Approved by Community Investment Board 3rd December 2021.