



Sound Sense

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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1. Introduction

Sound Sense is the UK association of those involved or interested in community and participatory music. It promotes the significance and value of community music and assists in its members' professional development.

Community music involves musicians working with people to enable them to actively enjoy and participate in music. This can happen anywhere and with anyone, because a 'community' doesn't have to be a geographical one. It can be a group of people who share common interests, experiences, and backgrounds. It is about co-creating musical and social experiences in which everyone's input is valued and everyone is included.

Equity, diversity and inclusion are therefore central to community music practice, and Sound Sense champions these values. With this policy, we commit to proactively promote and protect these values, as well as working against discrimination, inequality and exclusion of all kinds.

We see opportunities the promotion of these values through:

- Our staff
- Our members
- The services we provide

And we also recognise that there may be balances and constraints in the practical application of this policy. The responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy rests with the Board of Trustees.

2. How does this policy apply to Sound Sense Staff?

Staff here includes employees, contractors, volunteers and trustees.

We have the following expectations of all staff:

- To value staff as individuals, and to treat others with dignity and respect
- To recognise that people from different backgrounds or with different personal characteristics can bring change and a different approach which can make the way we work more efficient, creative and innovative

- To actively promote a harmonious working environment free from bullying, harassment, intimidation or victimisation
- To speak up when they feel improvements need to be made
- To comply with legislation on discrimination and equity

In turn, Sound Sense fulfils its commitment to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion by:

- Actively ensuring that all aspects of Sound Sense's work include voices which are reflective and representative of the communities which it serves, by actively seeking out as diverse a range of voices and perspectives as possible and practical, particularly in relation to Trustee recruitment
- Ensuring fair and transparent recruitment procedures based on good practice, which should include engaging candidates in conversations around inclusion
- Ensuring no staff member or job applicant is treated less favourably than others based on any protected characteristics
- Recognising our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and associated law

We have the same expectations of any organisation or individual with whom we work in partnership, and expect all partners to make an explicit commitment to this policy and the values of equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-discrimination.

Concerns about staff, trustees, volunteers or partners not meeting the expectations set out in this policy will be treated as serious grievances, and action will be taken by Sound Sense in accordance with its own grievance procedures, best practices, and the law.

3. How does this policy apply to Sound Sense members?

Sound Sense members are our association, and we commit to actively ensuring that we are representative of all voices within our community. In turn, we expect members to cooperate in promoting a harmonious environment free from harassment, intimidation or victimisation.

We therefore have the same expectations as staff, as laid out in Section 2, of all Sound Sense members where they are interacting with our organisation and our work, whether that be attending an in-person or virtual event, making use of our website or resources, representing the organisation in any way, or interacting with our staff, members or partners in-person or online.

4. Sound Sense services

We are committed to making our services and resources available to as many people as possible. We work to address barriers to accessing our offer, including in the following ways:

- Keeping fees as affordable to members as possible, including a low-cost membership package for students
- Prioritising requests for advice concerning issues around disability or access
- Ensuring our digital output, including our website and social media content, complies with best practice in digital accessibility
- Ensuring that venues or spaces we use for Sound Sense events are accessible to all
- Championing as wide a range of voices and perspectives as possible to our publications, including *Sounding Board* journal, and ensuring that these voices are reflective of, and relevant to, its readership.

5. Policy review

This policy is subject to annual review and is updated accordingly in line with best practice.

This policy was last reviewed in March 2023.