



WSA Community Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

Document Control

Document Title	EDI Policy
Version	2.0
Approved By	Director
Approval Date/ Last Review Date	April 2026
Next Review Date	March 2028

1. Purpose

This policy sets out WSA Community's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across all areas of our work. It outlines our commitments, expectations and ways of working, and applies to our engagement with communities, associates, partners and others working on our behalf.

WSA Community is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work, ensuring that our practice is inclusive, equitable and responsive to the needs of diverse communities.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by current UK legislation and guidance relating to equality, diversity and human rights, including the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, and Data Protection and GDPR legislation.

We are guided by principles aligned with the Public Sector Equality Duty, which include eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies protected characteristics, which are legally protected from discrimination:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment (including gender identity)
- Marriage and civil partnership

- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

WSA also recognises that disadvantage extends beyond these characteristics and may include socio-economic factors, health inequalities, and lived experience of multiple needs. We take an intersectional approach to ensure no groups are overlooked.

3. Our Commitment

WSA Community is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across all areas of our work. We recognise that inequality is often systemic and that individuals and communities may face structural barriers that impact their access to opportunities, services, and outcomes.

We are committed to actively addressing these inequalities through our work and ways of working. This includes ensuring that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, that inclusive environments are created, and that discrimination is actively challenged. We seek to promote equity of access and outcomes, ensuring that no individual or group experiences less favourable treatment.

4. Core Principles

Our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion is guided by a set of core principles which underpin all aspects of our work. These principles ensure that our practice is consistent, reflective, and responsive to the needs of communities.

We prioritise:

- **Inclusion**, by actively involving diverse voices and perspectives
- **Equity**, by recognising that different individuals may require different support to achieve fair outcomes
- **Respect**, by valuing the knowledge, experiences and contributions of all individuals
- **Accessibility**, by removing barriers to participation and engagement
- **Accountability**, by taking responsibility for embedding EDI in our work
- **Challenging systemic inequality**, by recognising and addressing power imbalances and structural barriers

5. Working with Communities

WSA is committed to inclusive and meaningful engagement with communities. We recognise that effective community work requires approaches that are responsive, flexible, and grounded in the lived experiences of those involved.

In practice, this means we:

- Design activities that are inclusive and accessible
- Create opportunities for meaningful participation
- Value lived experience and recognise it as a form of expertise
- Where appropriate, support paid roles and opportunities for community members
- Adapt our approaches to reflect the diverse needs of individuals and groups

6. Working with Associates and Partners

As a consultancy working with a network of associates and partners, WSA ensures that expectations around equality, diversity and inclusion are clear and consistently applied.

We work with individuals and organisations who align with our values and are committed to inclusive practice. We promote respectful engagement, encourage diverse perspectives within project teams, and actively seek to broaden recruitment approaches to increase diversity within our network.

We also ensure that individuals working with WSA Community:

- Receive appropriate briefing and guidance on EDI expectations
- Are supported to understand their responsibilities under this policy
- Work in a way that reflects inclusive and equitable practice

Decisions relating to recruitment, selection and opportunities are based on merit, except where lawful positive action is applied to address underrepresentation.

7. Inclusive Practice

WSA Community embeds equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the design and delivery of our work, particularly in evaluation, research, and community engagement.

We aim to ensure that our work is inclusive, proportionate, and responsive. This includes using inclusive methods, ensuring diverse participation, using accessible language, and actively reflecting on and addressing potential bias in our work.

8. Preventing Discrimination

WSA Community has a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination. All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, whether intentional or unintentional.

We are committed to creating environments that are free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Individuals must not engage in behaviour that is discriminatory, exclusionary, or harmful to others. All concerns are taken seriously and addressed appropriately.

We ensure that:

- No individual experiences less favourable treatment
- Respectful and inclusive behaviour is expected at all times
- Concerns relating to discrimination are responded to promptly and appropriately

8.1 Definitions of Discrimination

This section outlines key forms of discrimination as defined in equality legislation and guidance. Understanding these definitions helps ensure that all individuals working with or on behalf of WSA Community are able to recognise, prevent, and appropriately respond to discriminatory behaviour. These definitions apply across all areas of our work, including engagement with communities, partners, and associates.

- **Direct discrimination**
Treating someone less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic. This includes situations where a decision is made explicitly based on a person's identity, such as excluding someone from an opportunity because of their race, disability, gender, or another protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination**
When a policy, practice, or way of working applies to everyone but disproportionately disadvantages people with a particular protected characteristic, and cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- **Harassment**
Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. This can include behaviour that may not have been intended to cause harm but has that effect.

- **Victimisation**

Treating someone unfairly because they have made, supported, or intend to make a complaint about discrimination, or because they have participated in an investigation or process related to equality concerns.

9. Accessibility

WSA Community is committed to removing barriers to participation and ensuring that our work is accessible to all individuals.

We consider accessibility at all stages of our work, including design, delivery, and communication. This includes providing reasonable adjustments, using accessible formats, and adapting approaches to meet individual needs.

10. Continuous Improvement

We recognise that equality, diversity and inclusion is an ongoing process that requires reflection, learning, and adaptation.

WSA Community is committed to continuously improving our practice by:

- Reflecting on our work and identifying areas for improvement
- Learning from feedback, lived experience, and evaluation findings
- Monitoring recruitment, engagement, and delivery processes
- Taking action where inequalities or gaps are identified
- Collecting and using information proportionately to better understand inclusion

This policy is a living document and will evolve in response to learning, feedback, and changes in best practice.

11. Responsibilities

Everyone involved in WSA Community has a role to play in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Director is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and maintained. Associates, partners, and others working with WSA are expected to follow this policy and demonstrate inclusive and respectful practice.

All individuals are personally responsible for their behaviour and may be held accountable for actions that do not align with this policy.

12. Raising Concerns

WSA Community encourages individuals to raise concerns relating to equality, diversity and inclusion where they arise.

Concerns can be raised internally and will be handled appropriately, sensitively, and in a timely manner. We are committed to ensuring that individuals feel safe to raise concerns and that these are taken seriously.

Where breaches of this policy occur, appropriate action will be taken, which may include the termination of contracts or working relationships.