Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policies

Policy Statement

The Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA), a charitable incorporated organisation, is committed to equity, values diversity, and seeks to promote an open, inclusive and socially representative professional association and scholarly community. The SLSA believes that equity, diversity and inclusion should be promoted as core values in the advancement of research, teaching and the dissemination of knowledge in the field of socio-legal studies. We also acknowledge the contribution of scholars from around the world to our community.

The SLSA is committed to striving for equity and diversity within the discipline and to opposing discrimination on the basis of neurodiversity, ethnicity, nationality, mental health status, caring responsibilities, class, and The Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics. We aim in our policies, processes and governance to achieve inclusion and diversity in demographic, geographic, scholarly, and institutional terms. The SLSA aims to be an equal opportunity employer, and we affirm our commitment to ensuring our policies and practices comply with the Equality Act 2010.

We will:

- strive to identify and remove any structural inequalities and discrimination in the SLSA or any discriminatory impacts stemming from our policies and activities.

- pursue EDI interventions and initiatives that seek to address disadvantage within the socio-legal community.

- promote EDI within the legal academy and in the higher education sector.

- foster productive collaboration with scholars and socio-legal groups and associations in the UK and internationally.

- cherish and promote the international community of socio-legal scholarship from which we draw strength and inspiration.

- strive to defend and enable academic mobility and the exchange of ideas across borders.

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- promote good practice and the principles of equitable partnerships when funding research activities outside the UK, especially research involving partners in resource-poor settings, keeping in mind the possible impact of contextual, societal and cultural differences on the ethical conduct of those activities.

- monitor and highlight the consequences for these values of regulatory initiatives in relation to teaching, publication and research impact.

- maintain an EDI Committee made up of members of the SLSA Board of Trustees to promote the objectives set out in this policy and to monitor their implementation.

- integrate reflection on EDI into all aspects of decision-making in the SLSA.

- review our progress under each of these headings annually.

Policy Implementation and Governance

Through the establishment of an EDI Committee, the SLSA aims to ensure these EDI policies are considered in all its activities and by all committees of the Board of Trustees. This includes the responsibility for committees to operate in a way that reflects these values, and for each committee chair to account for these EDI policies when reporting to the Board of Trustees on decisions made and decision-making processes. Additionally, as and when required, the EDI Committee will provide advice to Board members responsible for making decisions which relate to the allocation of funding to support research activities or events. This ensures that all decisions and activities undertaken or supported by the SLSA are underpinned by these EDI policies. The EDI Committee will provide a summary report on issues arising in relation to EDI to the AGM.

In line with Principle Six of the Charity Governance Code, the SLSA will review its Trustee recruitment processes and monitor Board make-up to ensure the Board is representative of the SLSA's diverse membership.

Meetings, Conferences and Seminars

An important part of the work undertaken by the SLSA is the provision of opportunities for socio-legal scholars to promote and disseminate socio-legal research, and to support socio-legal researchers, scholars and teachers to collaborate and produce innovative new approaches that advance the frontiers of the discipline. The SLSA recognises that an important part of providing this support is to facilitate a culture of diversity and inclusion within the discipline. Therefore, conference organisers, stream convenors, panel chairs and delegates should consider these EDI policies.

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Research Support and Funding Schemes

The SLSA supports socio-legal scholarship through its mentoring scheme, competitive grant schemes and funding and other support for seminars and workshops. In addition, our annual awards for outstanding monographs and articles honour the best current work in the field. We are committed to fairness, inclusion and the promotion of equity in making these awards. Therefore, decision-making procedures in relation to these schemes will comply with the section below on Board of Trustees Committees and Working Groups. We will seek to reflect the diversity of the SLSA's membership and of the socio-legal community more broadly in the membership of the Board of Trustee committees which compile shortlists and award funding and prizes.

Board of Trustees Committees and Working Groups

Actions for Committee Chairs

1. Ensure committee activities and decision-making processes reflect these EDI Policies.

2. Ensure that calls for applications to funding and other award schemes reference the SLSA's EDI commitments.

3. Ensure that all Committee members have been reminded of the need to consider these policies at the outset of any decision-making process.

4. Consult with the SLSA EDI Committee when advice is needed.

5. Report to the Board of Trustees on how EDI issues were addressed in any decision-making process and on any specific issues arising. Provide feedback on best practice, problematic issues, and suggestions for amending these policies.

Data collection and GDPR
The SLSA collects data for EDI monitoring purposes on a voluntary basis from those who apply to our funding schemes, are nominated for prizes, and interact with us in other ways including as conference stream convenors. All data collected is treated confidentially and is held in line with the SLSA's Privacy Policy.

SLSA Conferences

This section sets out specific guidance for implementing the SLSA EDI Policies aimed at:

- Conference Organisers

- Stream Convenors and Panel Chairs

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- Delegates

This guidance should be followed in relation to SLSA events such as the SLSA Annual Conference, the SLSA Postgraduate Conference, and any sponsored or co-sponsored events which receive specific financial support from the SLSA.

Guidance for Conference Organisers

The SLSA requires conference organisers to have due regard to the different characteristics, circumstances and positions of those working within the discipline of socio-legal studies, and to promote and support the equal participation of those attending or seeking to attend SLSA conferences and events. Specific attention should be paid to the potential barriers to attendance or participation in these events which may be faced by particular groups, and how these may be avoided or ameliorated. Conference organisers are also expected to ensure that their events are promoted to a wide range of different audiences, such as through social media as well as to SLSA members through the mailing list.

Specific attention should be paid to organising conferences and events in ways that facilitate diversity and inclusion on a sustainable basis. This should include, at a minimum, consideration of the following:

- hybrid delivery, which should be included in conference cost estimates.

- providing and promoting the availability of bursaries to facilitate in-person or online attendance for particular groups such as postgraduate members and not-for-profit organisations. Creating such bursaries will be a requirement when applying to host future conferences.

- the extent to which minoritised demographics are represented in plenary or speaker invitations.

- accessibility for a diverse range of audiences. This could include, for example, providing seating during breaks, adequate time to move between sessions, quiet spaces across the venue, AV equipment, catering for dietary restrictions, well maintained accessible toilets, and childcare facilities.

Guidance for Stream Convenors and Panel Chairs

Stream convenors should ensure that their stream promotes and supports the equal participation of all delegates participating in that stream. This will involve organising and facilitating the stream in order to promote and support diversity and inclusion, including by considering the extent to which minoritised demographics are represented in the composition of panels.

Stream convenors should ensure that sessions are chaired in a way that promotes and supports the equal participation of those working within the discipline. This may

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involve actively recruiting early career or postgraduate colleagues to chair sessions or seeking their contributions during sessions.

Chairs should be prepared to intervene in order to minimise contributions which are not constructive, are inappropriate, or take up unnecessary time during panels.

Guidance for Delegates

The SLSA requires delegates attending conferences and events to have due regard to the different characteristics, circumstances and positions of those working within the discipline of socio-legal studies and to consider their own role in promoting and supporting the equal participation of those attending SLSA conferences and events.

Delegates are expected to follow the following examples of 'best practice':

- When presenting papers and posters: consider the accessibility needs of other delegates, such as by using appropriate font sizes and background colours, and to keep to allotted timings to avoid impinging on the opportunities of others to contribute.

- When asking questions: to ensure that questions are always framed constructively, are brief in order not to prevent others from participating in discussions, and posed in ways which avoid behaviours that may have exclusionary or degrading effects for particular groups.

Change Record

Date of change	Changed by	Comments
24/01/2025	-	Approved by the Board

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