



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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ARTICLE 1.0. INTRODUCTION

The Equality and Diversity Policy" is a statement outlining MaSP commitment to treating all individuals fairly and with respect, regardless of their characteristics such as race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, or ethnicity, the policy ensures equal opportunities in various aspects of the organisation such as recruitment/employment, programmes and activities and the overall workplace environment. The policy enhances the promotion of diversity and values the contributions of various individuals from different contextual backgrounds.

The aim of the policy is to have a diverse and equitable workplace which allows coexistence of people with different ideas, and backgrounds sharing common goals and objectives of the organisation. The policy ensures that staff, board of directors, stakeholders and everyone involved in MaSP Business regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity/national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education, disability or religious belief feel valued and respected in the workplace. The policy is geared at promoting and providing equal opportunity in employment and avoiding discrimination at recruitment and during employment and engagement with stakeholders,

MaSP recognizes that drawing experiences from different perspectives and viewpoints of many individuals adds value to the business and operations of the organisation. It further recognizes that creating space for the participation and contribution of everyone is essential for the fair distribution of opportunities and benefits.

ARTICLE 2. KEY PRINCIPLES

This policy is grounded in the following key principles;

- I. Promote a working environment where all employees are treated fairly, with respect and dignity. This includes Board Members, Consultants, Volunteers and Interns;
- II. Prevent discrimination, harassment and victimization. All employees are entitled to a workplace free from harassment and discrimination;
- III. Challenge discriminatory behaviors or attitudes wherever they occur and respond swiftly and sensitively to any incidences of discrimination;
- IV. Promote and foster good relations across the workforce.

- V. Ensure that no-one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance;
- VI. Celebrate a diverse workforce to ensure fair treatment. Respect and value the differences of everyone;
- VII. Promote an inclusive culture.

ARTICLE 3.0. DEFINITIONS

3.1. Equality: Equality refers to a situation where persons have the same status, rights and opportunities, regardless of their primary, secondary or other protected characteristics. 'Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they came from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.

3.2. Equity refers to treatment that is sensitive to the structural barriers faced by different individuals based on these characteristics to promote equality of outcome.

3.3. Diversity: is the collective mixture of differences and similarities that includes individual and organizational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, preferences, behaviors and abilities. **Diversity** means more than just acknowledging and tolerating differences. Diversity means: **Building alliances** across differences so that we can work together to eradicate all forms of discrimination, Practice **mutual respect** for an individual's proclivities and experiences that are different from our own, **understanding** that diversity includes not only ways of being but also ways of knowing, **Recognizing** that personal, cultural and institutionalized discrimination creates and sustains privileges for some while creating and sustaining disadvantages for others, **Understand** and appreciate interdependence of humanity, cultures, and the natural environment

3.4. Inclusion: The action or state of including or being included within a group or structure'. Inclusion is not a one-way street. It works two ways. Organizations need to make sure they instill an inclusive culture facilitating people to proactively engage. Feeling included is a sense of being a part of a community or organization.

ARTICLE 4.0. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to direct employees both full time and part time, board of directors, volunteers, interns, consultants, job applicants, service providers and any other stakeholders engaged directly on MaSP Business.

Where Services are provided by external contractors or third parties on the basis of a specification set by MaSP, these contractors or third parties are responsible for adhering to the MaSP Equality and Diversity Policy whilst providing services on behalf of MaSP.

This policy applies also to sub-contractors and MaSP will monitor the performance of contractors and/or third parties and take all necessary steps to ensure good performance and compliance with appropriate behaviors. However, if any issues become apparent with regards to diversity or equality in relation to any contractor or third party, these will be taken very seriously by MaSP and raised in the strongest possible terms with the contractor or third parties involved.

Everyone engaged in MaSP has personal responsibility for the application of this policy. Everyone is expected to read and familiarize oneself with this policy, ensure that this policy is properly observed and fully complied with and to complete the declaration set out as part of this policy

This policy is particularly relevant to directors, line managers and other employees concerned with recruitment, training, promotion and employment decisions which affect others.

ARTICLE 5. POLICY STATEMENT

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality and respect for all. **MaSP** will not tolerate any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against an employee, director, contractor, job applicant or visitor because of sex, Gender, Race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin);, Disability, Sexual orientation, Religion and or belief, socioeconomic status and Age among other characteristics.

MaSP will also not tolerate discrimination on the basis of work pattern (part-time working, fixed term contract, flexible working).

All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development and progression opportunities in MaSP. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If one believes that he/she may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, one should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with the line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority.

One may also decide in the alternative to raise the matter through MaSP Grievance Procedure. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. MaSP will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimized or treated less favorably by MaSP as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under MaSP's Discipline Policy. A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under MaSP's Discipline Policy. Employees may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.

As part of employee induction, new employees are expected to read and familiarize themselves with this policy, ensure that this policy is properly observed and fully complied with. This policy is also of particular relevance to directors, line managers and other employees concerned with recruitment, training and promotion procedures and employment decisions which affect others.

MaSP is committed to creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognized and valued.

MaSP will ensure that Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.

MaSP will from time to time review all employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness at all times

Breaches of our equality and diversity policy will be regarded as misconduct and will lead to disciplinary proceedings.

MaSP recognize that despite the organization best intentions, circumstances may arise where we fail to provide an appropriate and professional service to people,

consistent with the aims of this policy, we are committed to take action in such circumstances.

ARTICLE 6.0. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICE

6.1. MaSP believes that commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion at work creates a positive environment that makes full use of the wide range of talents and resources of its staff. By providing the right environment it will also encourage effective employee relations within the organisation.

6.2. MaSP aim is to make equal opportunities a natural and integral part of management. This means improving the quality of judgements made and actions taken by removing bias, prejudice and stereotyping.

6.3. MaSP seeks the support and co-operation of all staff in making the policy work. All managers should be aware of their role in setting standards, creating the right environment for equality of opportunity and ensuring commitment to the policy. Further, Managers will ensure that:

- I. Standards referred to in this policy are adhered to within their own area of responsibility
- II. Bring the details of the policy to the attention of their team's members
- III. Ensure that information on equity, diversity and inclusion is included in all induction processes
- IV. Ensure that their team members are available to attend relevant equality training programmes. The Finance and Admin department is responsible for ensuring that this policy is effectively communicated to all employees and all those involved with the organisation at whatever level or position, and for providing advice and guidance where appropriate. It will in particular provide training and induction on equal opportunities to all new employees. In addition, upon any significant update, the policy will be presented to all staff or via department/office meetings.
- V. The following is an outline of expectations from MaSP staff regarding this policy.

- Every employee is expected to comply with all measures introduced to promote equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination.
- All employees are expected to be familiar with MaSP Diversity and Equality policies and share in the responsibility of upholding them.
- Employees must respect the dignity and diversity of all people by creating an inclusive environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying. This includes being mindful of unconscious bias and how it can hinder collaboration and inclusivity.
- Individuals responsible for managing others are expected to apply processes related to training, career advancement, performance management, and other employment decisions without bias or discrimination.
- All employees are encouraged to be conscious of their actions and practice active inclusion. This involves listening to diverse perspectives, collaborating effectively, and fostering a culture of respect and belonging.
- Employees should not induce or attempt to induce others, including management to discriminate.
- Any behavior that is inconsistent with MaSP principles should be reported, and employees are encouraged to bring any concerns to the attention of the Admin and Finance Officer or any responsible officer, a member of the Board of Directors relevant committee, or relevant leadership.
- Employees must not victimize or retaliate against anyone who raises concerns or provides information about discrimination or harassment. We expect all employees to support colleagues who experience such issues and to role-model inclusive and respectful behavior in all work-related activities.
- If an employee notices that a section of the MaSP policy is not being upheld, they should immediately bring it to the attention of the relevant authorities for action.
- Creating a safe and respectful work environment is a shared responsibility. Employees are encouraged to contribute to MaSP initiatives, suggest improvements, and be vigilant in maintaining the principles outlined in this policy

ARTICLE 7.0. APPLICATION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN MaSP EMPLOYMENT PROCESSES.

The following sections describe how the policy is applied throughout MaSP employment processes. Failure to comply with the policy, procedures and practices outlined below will be considered within the framework of MaSP's disciplinary procedure.

7.1. Publicizing and Advertising Vacancies

All recruitment material and processes, including advertisements will be available, or be offered, in a variety of media that reflects the basic requirements of the post. Use shall be made of local media, job centers and careers offices. Potential applicants shall be given clear and accurate information about posts through a job description and person specification that includes only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance for the job. Advertisements in printed media shall adhere to clear print guidelines. All recruitment advertisements shall draw attention to MaSP Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, and that any applicant for a post who wishes to declare that they have a disability and who satisfies the job description and person specification will be offered an interview.

7.2. Recruitment

Selection for employment at MaSP will be on the basis of aptitude and ability and recruitment practice and procedures shall be as open and as barrier free as possible.

Application forms and other supporting material shall be free of personal questions or requests for information from which inferences could be drawn as to the status of an individual that are irrelevant to the job description.

Selection criteria shall be kept under review to ensure that they are justifiable for the effective execution of the job.

More than one person shall be involved in short listing and selection for interview, and all involved shall have received training in equality and diversity.

Assessment shall be conducted on an objective basis and shall deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job and ability to meet the job requirements.

Questions and selection tests shall relate to the requirements of the job and shall be carried out by staff trained in carrying out the tests and the assessment of results.

No applicant shall be disadvantaged by an interview's timing, location or facilities.

Reasons for selection or rejection of applicants shall be recorded.

All applications shall be subject to confidential monitoring system using only the approved form.

7.3. Training and Development

MaSP's policy of equality and diversity extends to training and this covers its general training programme and training in disability awareness, equality and diversity.

MaSP will ensure that employees participate in training and development activities from time to time, to encourage the promotion of the principles of this policy.

Each employee has the right to expect not to be unreasonably discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, in the opportunities to be trained, in how it is provided, where it is provided and through what medium.

All new employees shall receive induction training within one month of starting work to give them a good understanding of the organization and its policies and practices.

Regular and appropriate training will be provided to all staff to enable them to perform their jobs effectively and to ensure that they have the best opportunities for advancement

All staff involved in selection or interviewing shall be trained to ensure that appointments are made on an objective basis.

7.4. Promotion

All promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit, and will not be influenced by any of the protected characteristics listed above. Promotion opportunities will be monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers to promotion. Promotion will not be overlooked due to disability, gender or sexuality among other reasons.

7.5. During employment

The benefits, terms and conditions of employment and facilities available to MaSP employees will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that access is not restricted by unlawful means and to provide appropriate conditions to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

Both male and female workers will be paid the same wages for doing the same job. Physical disabilities will not prevent staff from carrying out their role and MaSP will ensure that those with disabilities are provided with the necessary support, tools and materials to carry out their duties effectively.

ARTICLE 8: REVIEW OF THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

These policies and procedures are reviewed after every two years. Memos and other circulars maybe issued to update these policies and procedures in event that a policy changes before the two years have elapsed.

ARTICLE 9.0. CONTACTS

For further comments and questions regarding MaSP commitment to its Equality and Diversity Policy please feel free to contact the following:

The Chief Executive Officer

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ARTICLE 10. APPROVAL HISTORY

Version	1
Approval Date	28/02/2025

Approved By	Lucky MBENE 
Designation	CHAIRPERSON AFHAR
Date of next Review	July 2027