

## **Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy**

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### **Regional Studies Association**

Updated September 2023

This document contains information about:

- Overview
- Equal opportunities for members and staff
- Diversity policy
- Diversity monitoring
- Principles of diversity adopted by the RSA

The Regional Studies Association is a Company Limited by Guarantee  
Company Number 04116288, Registered Charity Number 1084165.

## **Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy**

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### **GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

This Policy has been introduced by the Regional Studies Association Board in recognition of its commitment to the fair treatment of its members, Board, staff and the wider community that the Association serves.

We operate in an increasingly diverse community, and we understand that our staff and members have diverse characteristics and different experiences, needs and aspirations. Understanding and valuing these differences will produce greater participation, and result in a strong and vibrant Association.

The Association accepts that it needs to be vigilant to ensure that it does not deliberately or inadvertently perpetuate discrimination and oppression. Staff employed by the Association, and its Honorary Officers will always treat all members, all other employees and all members of the public with equal courtesy and consideration.

The Board of the Association will review this policy and its operation annually.

### **1. Equal Opportunities**

The Regional Studies Association is committed to equal opportunities in all aspects of its work, in relation to its members and to its employees.

This Equal Opportunities policy relate to gender, disability, race/ethnicity, faith and beliefs, sexual orientation, age, gender identity and gender expression. We recognise and accept that:

- oppression, disadvantage, and discrimination exist in society;
- some people are unfairly denied equal access to services and/or employment; and
- people often experience layers of discrimination.

Equal treatment involves much more than simply treating everyone alike; it requires recognition that some groups and individuals have particular and specific requirements that need to be met if they are to enjoy equal access to the opportunities available.

The Association will ensure that the content of any of its advertisements, publications, informational or other materials will be free of statements which imply inequality of opportunity and will conform with Advertising Standards Authority guidelines.

The Association is committed to enabling all members to provide a voice within the organisation. All elections within the Association require advertisement, nomination and vote. Advertisements will be publicised to all members equally and will be dealt with impartially. Voting will take place in accordance with the requirements of our Articles of Association and in circumstances free from influence and bias.

Members of the Association should contact the Chief Executive Officer or the Chair of the RSA Board if they consider that the Association or any of its employees have breached the terms or the spirit of this policy.

All employees of the Association will be appointed using open methods and will be treated on a fair basis, bearing in mind their skills, qualifications and contribution to the Association.

The Association will not tolerate harassment in any form. Harassment may be regarded as gross misconduct. Please see the Dignity at Work policy and the Code of Conduct for further information.

## **2. Diversity Policy**

The RSA seeks to attract members regardless of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexuality or religious affiliation. The Association is a Company Limited by Guarantee in the UK but sees a further responsibility as having balance in its international membership.

The RSA is a learned society that, by its nature, will draw its membership from a limited pool. As a bare minimum the society will seek to have a membership that reflects that pool; in addition, it intends that its activities will address inequality

wherever possible. Submitted papers for journals and magazines will continue to be reviewed fairly and anonymously and assessed purely on the basis of their quality in accordance with the Association's aims as an educational charity.

### **3. Diversity Monitoring**

Since 2015 the RSA has taken indicative samples of gender diversity in different university departments in universities in and outside Europe. In general, the level of female representation has been found to be around 30%. This reflects the female representation in economic academia in economics of 26% according to the UK Royal Economic Society's 2021 Silver Anniversary Women's Committee Report: The Gender Imbalance in UK Economics, by Bateman et al.

The RSA strives for a gender balance on all its committees, panels and groups of at least equivalent to this and greater where possible. In 2021 the RSA Board agreed to set the RSA's gender diversity target at 50% going forward. However, it was noted that this may take some time to achieve and aiming for more women to take on roles from a smaller population was asking them to take on a disproportionate amount of work.

Current membership monitoring includes gender and country of residence. The composition of the membership on the basis of this monitoring is shown below.

#### *3.1 Gender Diversity*

Below are snapshots of gender diversity on the RSA Board since 2008:

- December 2008 - 14 members, 2 females (14%), 12 males (86%)
- December 2011 - 21 members, 2 females (9.5%), 19 males (90.5%)
- December 2014 - 19 members, 3 females (16%), 16 males (84%)
- February 2017 - 22 members, 5 females (23%), 17 males (77%)
- October 2018 - 22 members, 8 females (36%), 14 males (64%)
- December 2019 - 22 members, 7 females (32%), 16 males (68%)
- October 2020 - 23 members, 9 females (39%), 14 males (61%)
- October 2021 - 21 members, 10 females (48%), 11 males (52%)
- October 2022 - 23 members, 11 females (48%), 12 males (52%)
- September 2023 - 23 members, 11 females (48%), 12 males (52%)

The available evidence suggests that we are addressing gender balance on the Association's Board and will continue to do so.

Below are snapshots of gender diversity in RSA Membership since 2008:

- December 2008 (not all data available) – Female 21%, Male 79%
- December 2011 (not all data available) – Female 26%, Male 84%
- January 2015 – Female 35%, Male 65%
- March 2017 - Female 36%, Male 64%
- October 2018 – Female 37%, Male 63%
- December 2019 – Female 39%, Male 61 %
- October 2020 – Female 40%, Male 60%
- October 2021 – Female 38%, Male 62%
- October 2022 – Female 41.5%, Male 58%
- September 2023 - Female 42.6% Male 56.9%

A breakdown by membership category as of September 2023 is below:

<b>OCT Categories (including China Division)</b>	<b>22 UK Male per Category (%)</b>	<b>Non UK Male per Category (%)</b>	<b>Total Male per Category (%)</b>	<b>UK Female per Category (%)</b>	<b>Non UK Female per Category (%)</b>	<b>Total Female per Category (%)</b>
Honorary	17	11	28	56	17	72
Emeritus	51	35	86	11	3	14
Individual	17	45	62	9	29	38
EC	13	40	53	13	34	47
Student	9	41	50	11	39	50
% UK/non UK	26	74		26	74	

### 3.2 Geographical Diversity

Below are snapshots of geographical diversity in RSA Membership since 2008:

- 2008 – UK resident 58%, Non-UK resident 42%
- 2011 - UK resident 66%, Non-UK resident 34%
- 2017 - UK resident 23%, Non-UK resident 77%
- 2018 - UK resident 25%, Non-UK resident 75%
- 2019 - UK resident 24%, Non-UK resident 76%
- 2020 - UK resident 25%, Non-UK resident 75%
- 2021 - UK resident 26%, Non-UK resident 74%
- 2022 - UK resident 25%, Non-UK resident 75%
- 2023 - UK resident 26% Non-UK resident 74%

The status of and trends in international balance has dramatically shifted from a UK led membership in 2008 to a non-UK one in 2023. This will continue to be monitored and reviewed, especially in relation to the annual European and Global conferences.

#### **4. Principles**

Based on present knowledge, the Association adopts the following principles:

- The Association would normally aim for a gender balance on all committees and groups in excess of the pool. A balance of national representatives is sought wherever practical and appropriate.
- The Association intends to monitor gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexuality and religious affiliation profiles where possible with the aim of informing where action is needed.
- Events of specific interest are actively promoted to relevant groups. The European and the Global Annual Conferences will continue to be the main means of attracting membership from outside the United Kingdom. The effectiveness in doing so will continue to be monitored.
- The RSA ensures that, *ceteris paribus*, referees for articles submitted to its journals reflect an appropriate diversity.
- Regional Studies Association events are only to be held in venues that are accessible to people with disabilities, and this will be monitored on event feedback forms.
- Continue with our territorial membership and pricing to ensure fair pricing to all countries and access for all to our membership and events.
- Travel bursaries are made available to address the under-representation of particular groups at events.
- A named Board member is responsible for ensuring diversity issues are addressed, and to whom complaints may be addressed.

This policy will be reviewed annually.