URBANICS
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Purpose

URBANICS is committed to an institutional culture grounded in equality, diversity, inclusion, dignity and mutual respect. This policy sets out how the organisation will prevent discrimination, address barriers to participation and promote fair access to opportunities across its governance, employment, research, partnerships and programmes.

URBANICS recognises that exclusion can arise from social, economic and institutional conditions, and that people may face several barriers at once. The policy reflects its commitments to anti-racism, safeguarding and ethical practice. It guides how URBANICS works with colleagues and communities, particularly when deciding whose knowledge is sought, who can take part and whose views influence the outcome.

This policy complements the Gender Justice and Equality Policy. It sets out responsibilities for putting equality, diversity and inclusion into practice, responding to concerns and reviewing progress across the organisation's activities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals and entities associated with URBANICS, regardless of employment status, location, or contractual arrangement. This includes:

- All employees, consultants, interns, fellows and volunteers engaged by URBANICS in any capacity.
- Members of the Board of Trustees and governance bodies responsible for strategic oversight and institutional accountability.
- Partner organisations, subcontractors, collaborators and suppliers working with or representing URBANICS.
- Participants involved in URBANICS research projects, events, workshops, educational activities, community engagements and external collaborations.
- All organisational settings, including offices, fieldwork environments, conferences, online platforms, digital communications and external engagements undertaken in the name of URBANICS.

The policy covers offices, fieldwork, meetings, events, online platforms, digital communications and other settings in which URBANICS operates. It applies to work in the UK and internationally, and to both formal and informal professional interactions.

3. Policy Statement

URBANICS will meet its obligations under applicable equality legislation, including the **Equality Act 2010** where it applies to its activities in Great Britain. In its international work, URBANICS will take account of relevant local law and context while maintaining its commitment to dignity, safety and meaningful participation. Measures intended to address disadvantage or underrepresentation will be considered carefully and proportionately.
URBANICS recognises that discrimination and exclusion can be shaped by institutional practices, unequal access to resources and the ways people are treated in everyday interactions. Experiences

differ according to factors such as race and ethnicity, disability, age, religion or belief, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, income, language, migration status and geographic location. These factors can overlap, creating barriers that may be missed when each is considered separately.

URBANICS adopts an intersectional approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. We will consider who can access our activities, whose knowledge is represented and who has influence over decisions. We will respond to the different circumstances of the people and communities with whom we work.

URBANICS is committed to:

- Preventing discrimination, harassment, bullying, exploitation and abuse.
- Providing fair access to employment, training, partnerships and participation in its activities.
- Identifying and addressing barriers in recruitment, governance, research and community engagement.
- Making reasonable adjustments for disabled people where required and planning activities with accessibility in mind.
- Including a range of perspectives in research and decision-making, particularly those that may be overlooked.
- Using respectful language and representing people and communities accurately in its communications.
- Listening to concerns, taking appropriate action and reviewing how well these commitments are working.

URBANICS recognises that environmental challenges affect communities differently. Its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion therefore informs how it conducts research, shares knowledge and develops responses to those challenges.

4. Guiding Principles

4.1 Equality and Inclusion

URBANICS is committed to fair access to opportunities, resources, professional development and participation in its activities. This applies to its trustees, personnel, partners and the communities with whom it works. Treating everyone in the same way does not always remove barriers to participation. URBANICS will consider people's different circumstances, make reasonable adjustments where required and adapt its activities so that participation is meaningful and accessible.

4.2 Intersectionality

URBANICS recognises that experiences of discrimination and exclusion are shaped by more than one aspect of a person's identity or circumstances. Disability, race, age, religion, income, gender, language and geographic location, for example, may combine to affect someone's access to opportunities or ability to be heard.

The organisation will consider these overlapping factors in its governance, recruitment, research and programmes. It will seek to understand barriers in their specific social and local context rather than assume that everyone within a group has the same experience.

4.3 Zero Tolerance

URBANICS will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, exploitation or abuse in its work. This includes:

- Discriminatory treatment or exclusion.
- Harassment, intimidation or degrading behaviour.
- Abuse of a position of authority or trust.
- Failure to address an identified accessibility barrier where action is required.
- Retaliation against someone who raises a concern, supports another person or participates in an investigation.

Concerns will be taken seriously and handled promptly, fairly and confidentially, with attention to the safety and dignity of everyone involved.

4.4 Participation and Representation

URBANICS seeks the meaningful participation of people with different backgrounds and experiences in its governance, research, partnerships and public activities. It will consider whose perspectives are missing and what may prevent them from taking part. Representation should give people a genuine opportunity to contribute to discussions, shape decisions and see their knowledge reflected accurately in the resulting work.

4.5 Accountability

Equality, diversity and inclusion are shared responsibilities. Trustees, personnel and collaborators are expected to apply this policy in their conduct and decisions, and project leads are responsible for considering its requirements when planning and delivering activities. The Board of Trustees will oversee implementation, review concerns and feedback, and use what it learns to improve organisational practice.

5. Commitments

URBANICS will apply the principles of this policy across its governance, employment, research, partnerships and public activities. The commitments below set out the practical steps the organisation will take to support fair access, respectful conduct and meaningful participation.

5.1 Inclusive Recruitment and Employment

URBANICS is committed to fair and transparent recruitment and employment practices. Decisions will be based on the requirements of each role, while recognising that conventional recruitment processes can exclude people with relevant skills and experience.

To put this into practice, URBANICS will:

- Use clear role descriptions and selection criteria.
- Share opportunities through appropriate channels to reach a range of applicants.
- Assess applicants consistently and take steps to minimise bias.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants and personnel where required, and explain how these can be requested.
- Provide fair access to training, mentoring, progression and opportunities to contribute to decisions.

- Provide reasonable accommodations to support accessibility, inclusion and participation for employees with differing needs and responsibilities.
- Consider flexible working arrangements where feasible, including the needs of people with caring responsibilities.
- Review employment conditions and address unjustified differences when identified.

5.2 Safe and Respectful Working Environments

URBANICS will maintain working relationships and activities in which people are treated with dignity and can raise concerns without fear of retaliation. This commitment applies to offices, fieldwork, events, online meetings and digital communications.

URBANICS will:

- Communicate expectations for professional and respectful conduct to personnel and collaborators.
- Take steps to prevent discrimination, harassment, bullying, exploitation and abuse.
- Provide an accessible and confidential way to raise concerns, including an alternative contact where a concern involves a project lead.
- Respond to concerns promptly, fairly and sensitively.
- Protect complainants, witnesses and others involved in a complaint from retaliation.
- Refer safeguarding concerns through the applicable safeguarding procedure and provide appropriate support to affected people.
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This policy should be read alongside URBANICS's safeguarding, whistleblowing and code of conduct frameworks.

5.3 Inclusive Research and Programmes

URBANICS recognises that choices about research questions, sites, participants and methods affect whose experiences become visible in the findings. Inclusion will therefore be considered from project design through to publication.

URBANICS will:

- Consider who may be excluded from formal stakeholder lists or conventional recruitment methods.
- Plan participation in ways that recognise differences in time, mobility, language, digital access and institutional influence.
- Use participatory methods that allow people to contribute in ways suited to the context and the approved research protocol.
- Create opportunities for participants with less institutional power to express their views and influence how findings are interpreted.
- Avoid treating one person's experience as representative of an entire community.
- Collect information about participation or barriers only where it is necessary, appropriate and consistent with the Data Protection and Privacy Policy.
- Review who has participated and adapt engagement methods when relevant perspectives are missing.

5.4 Accessibility and Participation

URBANICS will consider accessibility when planning meetings, field activities, training and publications. People should be able to identify access needs privately and receive a clear response

about the arrangements available.

URBANICS will:

- Choose venues and formats with attention to physical access, transport and safety.
- Provide clear information in formats and languages appropriate to the intended participants.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled people where required.
- Consider alternative ways to participate when attendance in person or use of a particular digital platform presents a barrier.
- Consider timing, caring responsibilities and the costs of participation when arranging community activities.
- Provide reimbursement or other participation support where appropriate and permitted by the project, without placing pressure on people to take part.
- Make learning materials and public outputs as accessible as practicable to their intended audiences.

5.5 Institutional Learning and Capacity Building

URBANICS recognises that inclusive practice requires ongoing learning and attention to how its commitments are applied in daily work.

URBANICS will:

- Introduce trustees, personnel and collaborators to this policy in a way relevant to their responsibilities.
- Provide learning opportunities on discrimination, accessibility, intersectionality and inclusive research and engagement.
- Use examples from URBANICS's governance, working relationships and projects to make training practical.
- Encourage personnel to discuss barriers they encounter and share approaches that have improved participation.
- Review feedback, concerns and project experience to identify where further guidance or specialist input is needed.

The Board of Trustees will consider equality, diversity and inclusion when preparing the organisation's annual training plan. Training and guidance will be proportionate to people's roles and the activities they undertake.

5.6 Representation and Public Engagement

URBANICS will consider who is visible, heard and credited in its publications, events and public communications. Representation should reflect people's contributions accurately and provide genuine opportunities for influence.

Urbanics will:

- Seek a range of perspectives in events, publications, partnerships and public discussions.
- Avoid discriminatory, exclusionary or stereotypical language and imagery.
- Consider access to speaking, authorship and leadership opportunities.
- Credit people's contributions appropriately, subject to consent and research ethics requirements.
- Share findings in formats that relevant communities can understand and use.
- Invite feedback on how people and places are represented, and correct misleading or harmful representations when identified.

6. Governance and Implementation

6.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Leadership
The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for this policy. Those directing URBANICS' work are responsible for applying equality, diversity and inclusion in organisational decisions, governance and project planning. Their responsibilities include:

- Setting expectations for fair and inclusive practice.
- Considering access and participation when approving activities, partnerships and resources.
- Allocating the time, support and expertise needed to implement the policy.
- Reviewing concerns, feedback and evidence of barriers.
- Monitoring progress and agreeing improvements.

Managers and project leads
Managers and project leads put the policy into practice in day-to-day work. They are expected to:

- Create respectful and inclusive working and research environments.
- Plan recruitment, fieldwork, meetings and training with accessibility in mind.
- Make reasonable adjustments where required and respond to access needs raised by participants or personnel.
- Apply fair and transparent processes in recruitment, supervision and the allocation of opportunities.
- Address concerns promptly and follow the relevant reporting or safeguarding procedures.

Employees and Associates
All personnel associated with URBANICS are expected to:

- Treat colleagues, partners and participants with dignity, professionalism and respect.
- Comply with this policy and related institutional frameworks.
- Report misconduct, discrimination or policy violations where observed or experienced.
- Participate in mandatory training and institutional learning initiatives.

6.2 Resources and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Expertise

URBANICS commits to allocating personnel time, organisational support and access to relevant expertise to implement this policy. Resources will support accessible activities, staff learning, the handling of concerns, monitoring and review, in proportion to the organisation's size and work.

The Board of Trustees oversees implementation and the resources it requires. It delegates specific tasks to trustees, personnel or project leads where appropriate, while retaining overall accountability. Project budgets account for relevant access needs, including suitable venues, interpretation, alternative formats and participation support.

URBANICS draws on the knowledge of its trustees and personnel and seeks specialist advice where needed. Expertise in disability access, inclusive research, anti-discrimination and local community contexts informs the identification of barriers, the design of activities and the interpretation of feedback.

URBANICS provides organisational support for these activities through its administrative arrangements, meeting facilities, secure record keeping and access to learning materials. The

Board allocates time within existing responsibilities and approves expenditure needed for training, accessibility or specialist support. Resource needs and allocations are reviewed annually alongside the implementation plan, with decisions recorded through the organisation's governance processes.

6.3 Implementation Planning

The Board of Trustees will prepare an annual implementation plan, translating the commitments in this policy into specific actions, intended outcomes, responsibilities, resources, completion dates and indicators of progress. The plan will cover personnel monitoring, recruitment and governance practices, reporting arrangements and training activities.

URBANICS will retain relevant Board decisions and approval records, implementation and training plans, records of equality, diversity and inclusion expertise and resource allocations, and progress reports. These records will document the activities undertaken and inform subsequent planning and review.

7. Reporting and Complaints

URBANICS maintains accessible and confidential routes for reporting concerns about discrimination, harassment, bullying, abuse, exclusion, accessibility barriers or retaliation. A concern involving a project lead can be raised with a trustee instead.

All complaints will be addressed:

- Promptly and without unnecessary delay.
- Fairly and impartially, with confidentiality maintained as far as the process allows.
- In accordance with relevant legal obligations, safeguarding standards and due process procedures.

URBANICS protects the rights, safety and wellbeing of complainants, affected individuals, witnesses and respondents throughout the process. No person is penalised for raising a concern in good faith, even if it is not substantiated. Knowingly false or malicious allegations may be addressed under the relevant conduct procedures.

8. Monitoring and Accountability

URBANICS is committed to monitoring its progress on equality, diversity and inclusion and using what it learns to improve its practices. Findings will inform the implementation plan and any necessary corrective action.

The organisation will:

- Periodically review progress against its equality, diversity and inclusion objectives.
- Collect and analyse relevant data where appropriate, lawful and ethically feasible, while protecting individuals' privacy.
- Review policies, procedures and activities to identify barriers to access and participation.
- Communicate institutional progress and lessons learned where feasible.
- Review and update this policy to reflect changes in applicable law, organisational needs and relevant practice.

8.1 Personnel Information

URBANICS will maintain a confidential personnel register covering employees and, where applicable, trustees, researchers, fellows, interns and volunteers. Each group will be recorded separately to establish a baseline for reviewing representation across roles and levels of responsibility. The baseline will be established after adoption of this policy and reviewed annually.

Where appropriate, URBANICS may invite people to provide information relevant to equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring. Providing this information will be voluntary, with an option not to disclose it. URBANICS will explain why it is requested, collect only what is necessary and use it solely for equality monitoring. Personal characteristics will not be inferred from names or appearance. Access to the information will be restricted, and findings will be reported in a way that avoids identifying individuals, particularly where numbers are small.

8.2 Indicators and Assessment

URBANICS will use a proportionate set of indicators to assess progress on equality, diversity and inclusion. These will draw on the personnel information described in Section 8.1 and will be reviewed annually. Indicators will include:

- Representation across roles and levels of responsibility, including the Board of Trustees, where information has been voluntarily provided and can be reported without identifying individuals.
- Recruitment, appointment and progression outcomes, where recruitment or progression has taken place.
- Pay and working arrangements, where comparisons are meaningful in light of roles and contractual arrangements.
- Participation in equality, diversity and inclusion training by personnel and decision-makers.
- Accessibility needs identified and adjustments made in organisational activities, where this can be recorded without disclosing personal information.
- Completion of actions in the implementation plan and progress towards their intended outcomes.

Where an indicator does not apply, the monitoring record will say so. Feedback from personnel, partners and participants will help identify barriers that numerical information may not reveal. URBANICS will avoid reporting small groups in ways that could identify individuals.

8.3 Progress Reporting

URBANICS will prepare an equality, diversity and inclusion progress report every two years, beginning two years after adoption of this policy. The report will compare relevant indicators with the baseline or previous reporting period, assess completed actions, identify remaining barriers and set out the next actions, responsible persons and completion dates.

The Board of Trustees will review the findings and approve any changes to the implementation plan or resources. An appropriate summary will be shared with personnel and published alongside the policy, without disclosing information that could identify individuals. Supporting records will be stored securely and accessible only to authorised persons. The Board will check implementation annually between reporting cycles. The formal review of this policy is addressed in Section 11.

9. Policy Breaches

A breach of this policy will be addressed fairly and proportionately, in line with the person's role, the circumstances and applicable procedures. Action may include:

- Formal warnings or disciplinary procedures.
- Suspension or termination of employment, contracts or partnerships.
- Referral to relevant authorities where legally required or appropriate.

URBANICS will address breaches proportionately, fairly and consistently. URBANICS will consider reports of alleged breaches promptly and protect those who raise concerns in good faith from retaliation.

10. Related Policies and Frameworks

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant organisational policies and frameworks, including:

- Gender Justice and Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Recruitment and Human Resources Policies
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- Research Ethics Framework

These policies form part of URBANICS's broader institutional commitment to ethical, inclusive and accountable practice.

11. Review

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years, or sooner where monitoring findings or organisational, operational, legal or contextual developments indicate that changes are needed. The formal policy review is separate from annual implementation planning and the progress report prepared every two years.

The review will consider the effectiveness of the actions, feedback from personnel and partners, and the adequacy of resources and expertise. Any amendments will be approved by the Board and communicated to those covered by the policy.

12. Approval

Approved by:

Name	Position	Signature	Date
Amir Gohar	Chairman		14 June 2026

Ahmad Dissouki	Trustee		15 June 2026
Hadwa Mohamed	Trustee	Hadwa Mohamed	15 June 2026