

UK Board Diversity and Inclusivity Statement and Policy
Médecins Sans Frontières UK

Approved on 4 December 2020
(Document history¹)

MSF UK is part of a global movement whose purpose is to save lives and ease suffering by providing medical humanitarian assistance to populations in distress, to victims of natural or man-made disasters and to victims of armed conflict.

Our work inherently puts us on the frontlines of some of the deepest power imbalances in the world. This has many consequences, one of which is a responsibility to be even more deliberate in our actions to promote equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Board of MSF UK is committed to diversity and promoting equal opportunities in all areas of our work because we recognise the inherent benefits of having a diverse board and workforce and the negative impact of discrimination on us and the communities MSF serves. We work within the spirit and practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and proactively combatting behaviours and barriers that can lead to discrimination.

We recognise our responsibility to champion and cultivate diversity and inclusivity in MSF UK and throughout the movement by:

- i) Modelling a culture of diversity and inclusivity within the Board, including setting board composition rules and performance metrics.
- ii) Ensuring that organisational strategy, culture, policies and practices of MSF UK reflect our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusivity.
- iii) Enabling an associative culture where diverse backgrounds and perspectives are valued and all are able to participate and contribute.

Purpose and scope

This policy sets out the approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for the Board of Trustees of MSF UK. This policy does not apply to the wider MSF movement, although the Board of MSF UK will champion this approach to diversity and inclusivity throughout the MSF movement. For further information on MSF UK's approach to equality and diversity in our workforce, please see: *[links to employee E&D policy as well as any other relevant policies e.g. anti-bullying and harassment policies to be inserted.]*

Composition of the Board

In its own composition, the Board recognises and embraces the benefits of greater diversity and is committed to ensuring that the Trustees bring a wide range of skills, knowledge, experience, background and perspectives, including those without MSF organisational experience.

The Board recognise diversity characteristics may be divided into observable and non-observable characteristics. Examples of observable characteristics include gender, origin, ethnicity and age. Examples of non-observable include sexual orientation, sexual identity, education, functional background, organisational tenure, socioeconomic background, personality, religion and disability. ²

The skills and diversity collectively represented on the Board should reflect the diverse nature of the environment in which MSF UK and our operational partners work. This will improve the Board's effectiveness through diversity of thought and approach.

¹ Approved by the Board on 4 December 2020 -
Reviewed and approved by [date]-

² Some of the characteristics listed here are not included in the list of "Protected Characteristics" defined under the Equality Act 2010, however, MSF UK wishes to take a broad approach to the interpretation of diversity in relation to the Board and to take all of the above characteristics into consideration in this context.

Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee must annually review the structure, size and composition of the Board, including the balance of skills, knowledge, and experience, and make recommendations to the Board for any changes, based on a review of the board's skill matrix, which will reflect diversity characteristics identified above.

The Nomination Committee will actively seek out candidates from a diverse background.

Appointment to the Board

All appointments to the Board are made through election by the association or co-option by the Board. The Nominations Committee review all expressions of interest for election and make recommendations to the association ahead of the election at the Annual General Assembly.

All recommendations will be made based on merit, taking into account the specific skills and lived experience, independence and knowledge needed to ensure a rounded Board. Diversity generally will be taken into consideration to understand the benefits each candidate would bring to overall board composition.

Co-option is pursued where it is judged that the composition of the elected board is lacking in the overall balance of skills and backgrounds needed to maintain effectiveness. The same principles as above apply when selecting candidates. Appointments are made based on evaluation against objective criteria, in the context of the overall balance of skills and backgrounds that the Board deems its lacking.

Recruitment process for Co-option

When recruiting candidates for co-option to the Board, recruitment will use an open and transparent process, proactively promoting opportunities through diverse networks, media and social media and inclusive recruitment processes that provide opportunities for diverse candidates to be considered for appointment.

Succession planning

The nomination committee is responsible for formulating succession plans for Trustees. This includes consideration of whether to recommend Trustees for re-election/re-appointment to the Board at the end of each fixed term. In carrying out these responsibilities, the nomination committee shall have regard to this policy and the composition and skills requirement of the Board at that time.

Development and mentoring

The Board will create clear pathways for diverse individuals from the MSF UK Association to develop the skills and experience they need to be able to be eligible to take on Trustee responsibilities. In 2021, the Board will establish a mentorship programme to proactively identify association members from underrepresented groups.

The Board will ensure that a bespoke and comprehensive induction programme is provided to each new Trustee which aims to address any gaps in a new Trustee's knowledge. This will be achieved through the Chair assigning appropriate mentors for each new Trustee within one month of their election or co-option to the Board.

Accountability, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

The nomination committee will report annually, in the corporate governance section of the Trustee's Annual Report, on the process it has used in relation to Board appointments. The report may include a summary of this policy.

The Board also places a high emphasis on ensuring the development of diversity in the senior management roles within MSF UK and supports and oversees MSF UK's diversity objectives through annual monitoring and evaluation of MSF UK's EDI strategy, which will be established in 2021.

The Chair will ensure that diversity is considered as part of the annual evaluation of the Board's effectiveness.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. This review will include an assessment of the effectiveness of the policy and recommend any revisions to the Board for approval.

Policy Governance

This policy is maintained by the Executive Office and approved by the Board of Trustees.