

**Updated May 2021**

## **Equality and diversity statement**

Underpinning our strategy and delivery, SEMLEP is committed to promoting equality and eliminating unlawful discrimination in everything we do as an employer and a service provider. Our vision is to embed equality and diversity into our day to day business and create an inclusive working culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity and feels valued. We have a policy and implementation plan which was updated by the Board in May 2021. This covers our governance, employment, strategy and delivery role with 5 clear objectives:

1. We will work towards increasing the diversity of our governance structures so that they are more representative of the SEM area. In particular, we seek to improve the gender balance of our board through a target of 50% women at the end of March 2023.
2. In developing our key strategies we have a firm and relevant evidence base which we will utilise to inform these strategies and ensure that there is a focus on the role that these can play in advancing equality.
3. In relation to funding and implementation of SEMLEP strategies we will aim to ensure that we know who is benefiting from our work, meet the requirements of our funders and provide tangible outcomes in relation to advancing equality.
4. We will seek to attract applications from the widest candidate pool by using a range of media channels to advertise our vacancies and working with organisations who support groups currently underrepresented in our workforce
5. We will advance our commitment to be an inclusive employer by reviewing our employment policies and procedures to ensure they are robust, up to date and bias free. We will then ensure that all managers and staff are aware of the policies and feel confident in using them.

We will continue to review our performance and ensure that we comply fully with legislation and that we maximise inclusion of all parts of our community in our governance, employment and delivery. We are enhancing our staff knowledge of our responsibilities on this agenda so that we can maximise our impact, within the constraints of our resources.

Our Board recruitment aims to generate a diverse and representative group of people committed to taking forward economic growth reflecting the local businesses and communities including our geography and protected interest. We have made good progress towards a more gender balanced board and have an equality Champion on our Board. In 2021/22 we will work with our Champion to deliver revised actions and to strengthen the ethnic diversity of our Board.