

ARTICLE

# An overview of SG Diversity Staff Networks

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Workplace communities are often referred to as networks and can exist in many forms. Scottish Government Diversity Staff Networks are distinct from other staff groups. They align to a characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010 or recognised through the [Fairer Scotland Duty](#).

Joining an SG Diversity Staff Network is an opportunity for colleagues to connect with peers. They remove barriers to participating by encouraging members to help positively shape the culture of the Scottish Government and create safer and more inclusive workplaces. Some may also choose to use their lived experience to increase understanding of the challenges faced by their members to the wider organisation. They may work with corporate teams on action to improve experience at work.

Within a community sharing a protected characteristic there may be a range of needs, interests and experiences, so there may be more than one Diversity Staff Network and their activities can vary. Colleagues can join more than one network, depending on their circumstances.

Diversity Staff Networks are championed by Lesley Fraser, the overall Executive Team Diversity and Inclusion Ally and Chair of the [SG Diversity and Inclusion Governance Group](#). This group oversees implementation of the [SG Employer Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#).


Each community has identified a designated Diversity Staff Network. This is the network which has taken on the additional responsibility of being the collective voice for all Diversity Staff Networks sharing the same characteristic in corporate diversity and inclusion governance.

They are supported by an ally from the Executive Team and at least one Senior Civil Service (SCS) Champion.

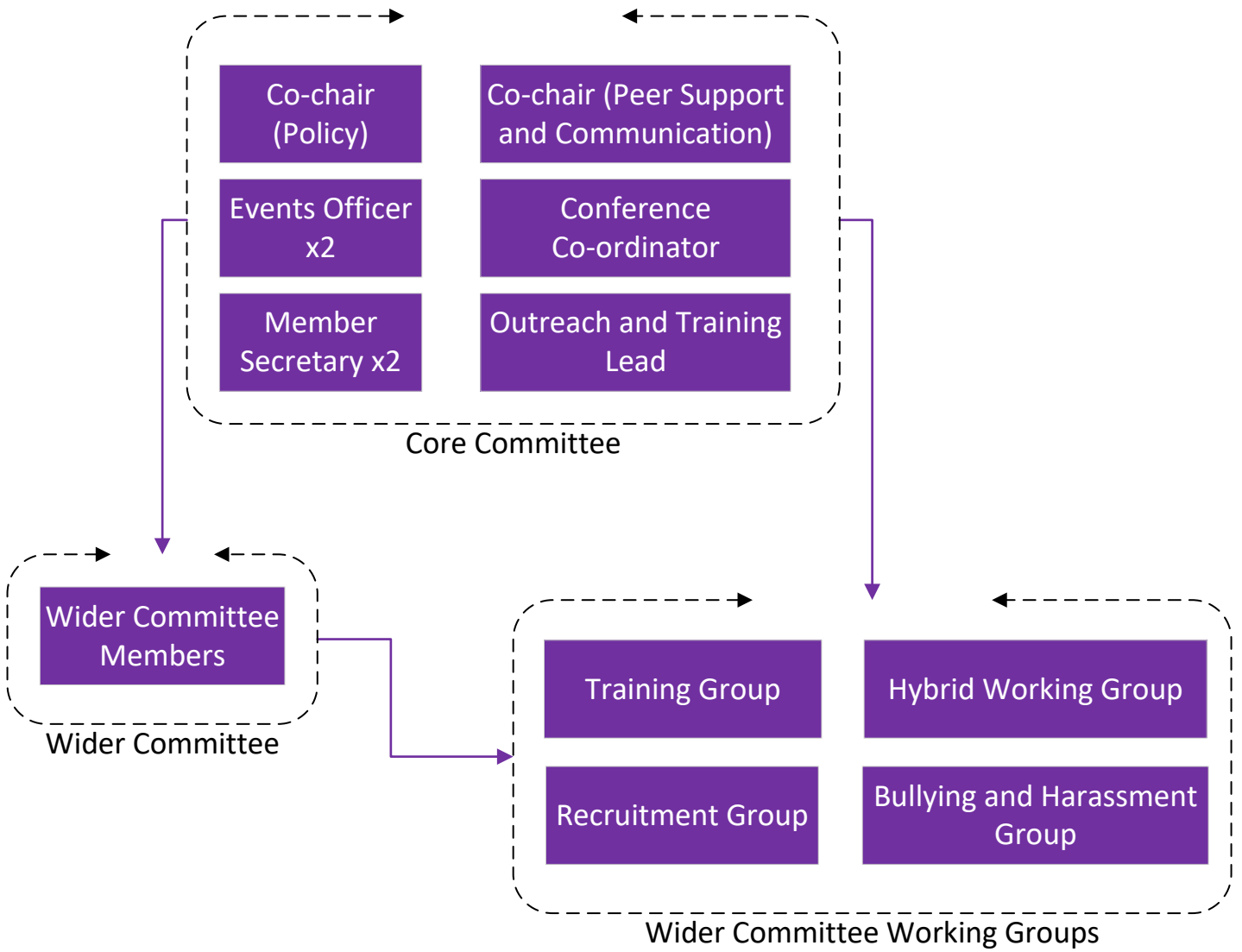
Find out more about the role of Diversity Staff Networks on [Pathways](#), [express your interest in becoming an SCS Champion](#) or explore and connect with other groups on [Viva Engage](#), including: SG Armed Forces and Veterans Network, Carers Network and Modern Apprentice Network.

The following table lists recognised Diversity Staff Networks and staff groups they collaborate with. Follow links for information on more specific activities for each.

Characteristic	Diversity staff networks	SCS champion(s)	Executive Team ally
Impairment, condition or disability	<a href="#">Mental Health and Wellbeing Network</a> <a href="#">Neurodiversity Network</a> <a href="#">Neurodiversity Peer Support Network</a> Designated Diversity Staff Network: <a href="#">Disabled Staff</a>	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

Characteristic	Diversity staff networks	SCS champion(s)	Executive Team ally
	<p><a href="#">Network</a></p> <p>Related staff interest groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Blind and Visually Impaired Staff Forum</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">ME - Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Network</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">ME/CFS/Long Covid and Post Viral Fatigue Network</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">IBS Network</a></li> </ul>		
Race, nationality and national origins	<p><a href="#">Black Identity Group</a></p> <p><a href="#">Minority Ethnic Women's Group</a></p> <p><a href="#">EU Nationals Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Race Allies Network</a></p> <p>Designated Diversity Staff Network: <a href="#">Race Equality Network</a></p>		
Religion and belief	<p><a href="#">Christian Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Faith and Belief Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Jewish Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Muslim Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Pagan Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sikh Network</a></p> <p>Designated Diversity Staff Network: <a href="#">Faith and Belief Network</a></p>		
Sex	<p><a href="#">Minority Ethnic Women's Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Men's Mental Health Network</a></p> <p>Designated Diversity Staff Network: <a href="#">Women's Development Network</a></p> <p>Related staff interest groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Menopause Warriors</li> </ul>		
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment	<p>Designated Diversity Staff Network: <a href="#">LGBTI+ Network</a></p>		
Socio-economic background	<p>Designated Diversity Staff Network: <a href="#">Socio-Economic Diversity Network</a></p>		

There are no active Diversity Staff Networks affiliated with the protected characteristics of age; marriage and civil partnership; or pregnancy and maternity. If you are interested in supporting a Diversity Staff Network in one of these areas, [contact the network mailbox](#).



# How we got to this constitution.



## Process.

Over 18 months a process of analysing and reviewing other staff network structures and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector constitutions took place including Stonewall.



Each section of the constitution was discussed by the network committee alternatives option offered and democratically voted on.



The constitution is to improve the overall governance and structure of the group and to allow for us to protect committee members and share the work of the committee more fairly.



The constitution was approved by the Network committee October 2023.

# Section 1.0



- The name of the organisation is the **(Scottish Government LGBTI+ Staff network)** (hereafter referred to as **SG LGBTI+ staff network**).

## Section 2.0

The SG LGBTI+ network is a group within Scottish Government that supports civil servants who have a minority sexual orientation or gender identity in central government departments, agencies, and their associated public bodies.

SG LGBTI+ network operates a membership system for individuals who are civil servants in central government departments, agencies and their associated public bodies.

The focus of **SG LGBTI+** network is on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity.

**SG LGBTI+** network is an independent group that is neither affiliated with the management of the Civil Service nor the staff unions and is independent of both.



## Section 3.0

The aim of **SGLGBTI+ Staff Network** is to work to create a safe and inclusive working environment in the Scottish Government, encouraging a culture which supports workplace equality and engages with LGBTI+ civil servants.

To provide and support internal positive activism within the confines of the civil service code of conduct.

# Section 4

The **SGLGBTI+ Staff network** exists to: Ensure LGBTI+ staff feel safe to be themselves in the workplace. Ensure no one experiences, or be fearful of experiencing, discrimination, harassment or bullying because they have a minority sexual orientation or gender identity.

We believe that you will be more effective if you can be yourself at work.

Support the Civil Service to be the most inclusive employer in Scotland. Help enable a culture that supports workplace equality and engages with LGBTQIA+ civil servants.

# Section 5

The objectives of **SG LGBTI+ Staff Network** are

To connect LGBTI+ civil servants across government and create a community for sharing support, learning and social events.

Support network members and committee members to undertake positive internal activism around workplace equality or other issues affecting LGBTI+ staff, including engagement and influencing of corporate policy and actions.

To provide informal peer support to individual civil servants where this is requested by their local LGBTI+ network, or, by the individual themselves, and signposting to other sources of support and advice as necessary

To function as a centre of expertise about sexual orientation and gender identity issues and lived experience of staff within the Scottish Government – using this knowledge to shape Civil Service policy and practice

To amplify access to learning and development opportunities for LGBTI+ civil servants

By us, for us.

Foster better allyship through our interactions within the network and corporate structures.

# Section 6

The membership of **SG LGBTI+ Staff Network** is made up of three categories: Committee Members and Individual Members.

## **Committee Members**

Committee Members are LGBTIA+ civil servants within the Civil Service departments, agencies and non-departmental public bodies who have been voted into the committee by a nomination from Individual member and then a majority vote of the committee as it is constituted .

Committee members are volunteers and free to leave their role at any point, they may do so by notifying the other committee members via email or at a committee meeting with their choice recorded in the minutes.

# Section 6 continued.

## **Individual Members**

Individual Members are LGBTI+ Civil Servants who requested to join the network.

Individual members can leave the network by writing to the Committee to express their desire to leave and remove themselves, or be removed by the Committee, from shared committee spaces such as Viva once a request to leave has been obtained.

## **Allyship & Subject matter experts.**

At times it may be appropriate to engage SG LGBTI+ allies or subject matter experts for project work or committee work where a need is identified by the committee. This will be time limited, and a simple majority vote will begin the process and end the process

# Section 7

**SGLGBTI+ Staff Network** is run by volunteers taken from the membership. As such a formal committee with elected posts is impractical; the only elected posts will be the Co-Leads who will organise the available volunteers to support the mission statement of the organisation.

The elected Co-Leads will have a 1-year term of office or will remain in post for the length of time that they feel they can fulfil the role effectively if less than 1 years unless either:

most of the membership is unhappy with their leadership, or they have been in post for 1 years at which point an election must be held anyway.

After the completion of a 2-year term of office a Co-Lead must step down.

If most of the membership (51%) are unhappy with the leadership of the organisation a vote to this effect will take place.

The formal vote of 'no confidence' will take place at the next members meeting to give each member the opportunity to vote. The vote of 'no confidence' will then operate on a 'one member, one vote' basis.

Should a vote of 'no confidence' be carried, then an election is deemed to have been called. The timescales for this election will be agreed in the same member's meeting as the vote of 'no confidence'. Again, this will occur based on 'one member one vote'.

For non - election issues, any votes in a member's meeting are conducted based on one member one vote.

## Co Leads

- **SG LGBT+** is run by volunteers taken from the membership. As such a formal committee with elected posts is impractical.
- The only elected post will be the **Co Leads** who will organise the available volunteers to support the mission statement of the organisation. The roles are designed to be committee administrative roles to help us organise ourselves as a collective, NOT network Chairs in the more traditional sense, and committee members will still lead on different work strands.
- The elected roles will have a term length of one year and there is an expectation that they will serve the entire term length. An individual cannot hold the position of for more than two successive terms. A break must occur after 2 terms before the individual can be nominated again.
- A deputy position to the roles will be selected from within the committee, acting as 'first amongst equals' for any situations or projects where the roles needs to deputise.
- **Elections**
- Anyone from the committee can nominate themselves but requires a 2<sup>nd</sup> for the nomination to go to a vote
- A simple majority vote will take place amongst the committee. If a majority is reached of the available committee, then the roles will be awarded, and the term shall begin.
- Should a simple majority not be achieved from the available committee members then a special meeting shall be called of all committee members and revote will take place until a majority can be reached.
- Should a role resign before the end of the term then the other role will continue to complete the term of office.

