

Gender Equality Plan

The Institute is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among its workforce; All RUSI's staff are collectively responsible for promoting non-discriminatory practices and complying with RUSI's Equality and Diversity Policy. This plan applies to all companies controlled by RUSI: RUSI Trading Limited, RUSI Europe AISBL, Royal United Services Institute (Nairobi) Limited and RUSI (US) Foundation.

Public document:

Our Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a publicly accessible document that features RUSI's commitment to fostering an inclusive and balanced environment. Fully endorsed and signed by Director General, Karin von Hippel, the GEP outlines actionable goals for promoting gender equality at all levels of our organisation. It is available on our website for transparency and accountability, ensuring stakeholders and the public are informed of our dedication to gender equity.

This GEP is a key piece of our comprehensive [Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Strategy](#) ensuring RUSI's commitment to inclusivity. We have widely shared these initiatives through our core communication channels with staff, members, and partners, fostering awareness and engagement in our shared mission for a diverse and equitable workplace across London, Brussels and Nairobi.

Dedicated resources:

Everyone has a part to play in creating and promoting inclusivity and ensuring it is at the heart of everything we do. Our aim is to achieve a compliance with the legislative requirements of the UK Government's Equality Act 2010, the EU [Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#) and Kenya's [Gender Equality Plan 2023-2027](#) and to demonstrate best practice and, ultimately, to be an exemplar of DEI in our sector. The table below lists the requirements placed upon RUSI by the UK Government's Equality Act 2010.

Protected Characteristics	Equality Act Obligations
<div><div>Race</div><div>Age</div><div>Sex</div><div>Gender</div><div>Reassignment</div><div>Disability</div></div>	<div>Direct Discrimination</div> <div>Indirect Discrimination</div> <div>Harassment</div> <div>Victimisation</div>

We proactively integrate DEI in our communications, content, events and membership approach to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of our audiences, including non-traditional audiences that are often younger and more diverse. We strive to host new, diverse contributors in our publications and events and work to ensure that all RUSI content – events, digital, multimedia, print – is increasingly accessible. We are also doing more to attract and serve a young, diverse membership – exemplified by the Next Generation programme.

We also consider DEI criteria in research design, in order to ensure that our projects integrate a range of genders and perspectives and from different parts of the world, keeping in mind the need to include non-elite voices. We remain inclusive when making policy recommendations and disseminate the research to the local communities as well as to international audiences.

The same principles apply to our approach to funding and to hiring and employee policies. Embracing DEI in the workplace helps us attract and retain talented people and achieve a more equitable, diverse and inclusive workforce, where DEI is reflected in our values and embedded in our culture, practice and our individual behaviour.

Finally, good governance is fundamental to our success. The Council of Trustees strives to achieve the highest of standards for charity governance, which naturally means meeting best practice related to DEI in a modern charity. RUSI ensure that the training, induction and education provided to incoming Trustees includes information about RUSI's DEI strategy and guidance, as recommended by the Charity Commission. Led by the Director-General, we will focus on diversity in the Board of Trustees' membership over the next five years, as well as among Senior Staff (Management group and Senior Management Team), RUSI Fellows, and Associate Fellows. This includes seeking to recruit experts in DEI at Trustee and management group level when vacant positions arise to ensure that RUSI's governance structures, policies and research are all inclusive and promote best practice on gender equality.

RUSI is committed to supporting an inclusive environment where all staff members can achieve their full potential. We have dedicated resources for several networks that foster community, support, and advocacy within the organisation:

Disability and Neurodiversity Network

This group strives to ensure that disabled and neurodivergent individuals have the resources and support to thrive at RUSI. Open to anyone identifying as disabled or neurodivergent, or those with physical or mental health conditions affecting their workplace needs, this network also invites allies with an interest in these areas. Through confidential discussions and shared resources, the network cultivates a supportive community and raises awareness of the unique challenges faced by disabled and neurodivergent individuals in the workplace.

Make Work Work: Work-Life Balance Network

Our "Make Work Work" network is a community designed for parents and carers at RUSI. This network provides essential resources, peer support, and guidance to help employees manage work alongside

family and parental responsibilities. By fostering a supportive community, we aim to empower parents and carers, helping them succeed both professionally and personally.

Increasing Access Network for Social Mobility

The Social Mobility network promotes social mobility and inclusion at RUSI, welcoming members from all backgrounds, especially those who have experienced social mobility challenges firsthand. Since September 2022, the network has collaborated with HR and the Senior Management Team (SMT) to advance several initiatives:

1. Internship Programs: Expanding diversity in internship opportunities through partnerships with universities that represent diverse social demographics, including Swansea and Nottingham.
2. Action Plan: Launching a social mobility action plan for 2022–2024, developed in coordination with SMT.
3. Community Partnerships: Establishing connections with social mobility-focused charities, including the Social Mobility Foundation and the Sutton Trust.

Our commitment extends to further outreach with educational institutions and charities to support increased access and to cultivate a more inclusive environment at RUSI.

Staff Committee Network

The purpose of the Staff Committee is to represent the collective view of employees of the Institute. The Committee discusses staff needs and concerns and provides ideas and recommendations to the Management Group (MG) on matters that affect the collective working experience of employees.

Scope and Objectives

Members of the Committee consider new policies and working practices based on staff needs and priorities aimed at improving engagement between employees and management, the working environment, and the way RUSI operates. The Committee makes suggestions and recommendations to the Management Group. Members seek the views of other employees not on the Committee, and the Committee will try to present staff perspectives accurately.

Committee Membership and Representation:

Membership of the Committee is broadly representative of the staff of RUSI. The Committee is composed of no more than 7 members, with Human Resources staff acting in the capacity of observers. Management Group members are not members of the Committee. The proportion of members from Research, Operations, and other Groups (e.g. Membership and Publications) is approximately represent their proportions within RUSI, and there will, where possible, be a mix from each salary band from junior to senior staff roughly in proportion to staff numbers in these bands. The composition:

1. 3 members from the Research Groups
2. 2 members from the Operations Groups with no more than one from any Group;
3. 1 member from other Groups;

4. 1 member from the Nairobi and Brussels offices.

Each member of the Committee, upon election, shall serve on the committee for a maximum period of one year. There is a break of at least 12 months between each 12-month period in which a member serves. In order to be elected, those standing to be Committee members shall be nominated by at least two other members of staff, not including members of the Management Group. They may be nominated by themselves or another member of staff. Where Committee members nominate themselves, they need the agreement of the Group which they represent which will be confirmed by copying at least two members of the Group (who have endorsed them) in the nomination email. If the number of nominations is fewer than the number of vacancies available, and there is no more than one nomination from a particular area, no ballot is required. If more nominations are received than vacancies are available, a direct ballot (or ballots) of relevant employees shall be administered by Human Resources. Management Group members will not participate in this vote, and the voting method will be designed to maximise the need for equitable representation across the teams (for example by only holding an election for those teams that are currently unrepresented). The Committee shall have the right to co-opt representatives of a particular Group affected by a current issue under discussion, but only for the period during which the relevant question is under consideration.

Data Collection and Monitoring

RUSI in Numbers



132

Number of RUSI employees



47.8%

Percentage of RUSI employees who identify as female



46.2%

Percentage of RUSI employees who attended a state-run or state-funded school



35.6%

Percentage of RUSI employees who come from outside the UK

Source: [A Diverse Employer | Royal United Services Institute](#)

RUSI is committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace through ongoing evaluation and transparency. As part of this commitment, RUSI will publish data on its workforce profile every 12 months. This data will be disaggregated by seniority level, research and non-research roles, gender, ethnicity, and other relevant demographics to provide a detailed picture of our workforce composition and to track progress over time.

These regular reports will enable RUSI to identify areas where additional action or resources may be needed to strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Furthermore, this data will support RUSI's broader initiatives in social mobility and representation by informing strategies, programs, and policies aimed at building a more inclusive workplace at all levels.

The findings for 2022 are summarised below, offering a baseline from which RUSI will continue to assess and improve its practices.

RUSI STAFF PROFILE



*RUSI's staff profile metrics for 2022; 55% female, 45% male, 0% non-binary;

The data for RUSI's staff profile metrics will be updated at the end of 2024 with refreshed metrics.

Using Staff and Trustee data, RUSI's HR Team will conduct a mapping exercise to identify gaps and areas for improvement in our approach to DEI and share recommendations with Management Group/SMT. The HR team will create and coordinate a 12-month workplan, with associated owners, to deliver on progress towards goals and report back to Management group on a quarterly basis. Overseen by the Director-General, the HR team will also produce an annual report that details RUSI's progress and outlines ongoing efforts to support an equitable workplace for all employees.

Training:

RUSI provides a comprehensive selection of workshops and training sessions aimed at promoting an inclusive, respectful, and supportive work environment. These programs are designed to equip staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to foster equality, diversity, and dignity in the workplace. RUSI trains all new joiners on DEI and plans to introduce annual refresher courses for all staff that includes a gender equality component. In 2025, RUSI plans to review our institutional training on gender, including initiatives to develop bystander training for all staff and gender-sensitive research training for all research staff. RUSI will continue to mandate that every staff member undertakes compulsory training on anti-bullying and harassment.

Equality and Diversity Essentials

This interactive, mandatory course offers in-depth training on equality, diversity, and inclusion, including legal requirements concerning protected characteristics and effective methods for challenging unacceptable behaviour. All new joiners must complete this e-learning module, which concludes with an assessment that, upon successful completion, results in a certification.

Bullying and Harassment Policy Overview 2024

Recognising the sensitive nature of harassment and bullying complaints, particularly those involving discriminatory behaviours, RUSI offers employees the option to address such concerns outside the formal Grievance Procedure. Employees are encouraged to discuss issues with a Confidential Assistant, a trusted senior colleague, mental health first aider, HR representative, or peer, who can provide support and guidance in addressing these matters.

Confidential Assistant Role and Responsibilities:

A Confidential Assistant serves as a resource for employees experiencing bullying or harassment. Responsibilities include:

1. Challenging disrespectful behaviour and setting a respectful example.
2. Promoting dignity at work to enhance the workplace experience.
3. Providing guidance on best practices and raising concerns about workplace conduct.
4. Listening to employees, and, with their consent, facilitating communication with the involved parties.
5. Advising on available redress options, whether informal or formal, while maintaining strict confidentiality.

Through these programs and support structures, RUSI is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and equitable workplace for all employees.

Work-life balance and organisational culture:

At RUSI, we are committed to fostering a supportive, inclusive, and balanced work environment that prioritises the well-being and professional growth of our staff. As outlined in our public statement on diversity and inclusion, which can be found on our [careers page](#), we actively promote policies that support work-life balance and create an equitable organisational culture.

1. Parental Leave Policy: Providing comprehensive support for parents, our policy includes paid time off for both new mothers and fathers, as well as options for additional leave in certain cases.

2. Maternity Leave Policy: enhanced paid maternity leave to ensure that new mothers can take necessary time away to focus on family needs. Flexible work arrangements, such as part-time or job-sharing, may be available upon return.
3. Flexible Work Policy: we recognise that flexibility is key to supporting staff in managing their personal and professional lives effectively. This includes remote working options, flexible hours, and hybrid work arrangements to adapt to various individual needs.

For example, employees at RUSI are encouraged to discuss flexible start and end times to suit their personal schedules, and we support remote work arrangements to better accommodate family and other commitments. These policies not only enhance productivity but also cultivate a positive, supportive environment where all staff members feel empowered.

RUSI's Events

Speakers: We prioritise a balanced and diverse range of speakers at our events, considering various DEI characteristics. Events will include diverse speakers and contributors wherever possible, with exceptions only in extraordinary circumstances. When addressing specific countries or regions, we seek contributors who possess first-hand knowledge of those geographies and represent the diversity within those societies.

Audience: We aim to cultivate an inclusive audience, drawing from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. To reach these audiences, we will collaborate with partners across different sectors and communities.

Membership

Expanding diversity within our membership aligns with RUSI's organisational values and enhances our collective impact. To accelerate progress toward a more inclusive membership, we are focusing on these initiatives:

Next Generation Programme: We launched a new initiative aimed at engaging younger individuals interested in security and global affairs.

Targeted Outreach: We actively seek to attract members from communities currently underrepresented within RUSI.

Data-Driven Monitoring: Membership DEI data will be collected and tracked, enabling us to monitor and report on our progress.

Specialised Events and Publications: We will host events and release publications that focus specifically on DEI issues within defence and security, partnering with other organisations to reach new audiences.

Communications

Understanding our audience is crucial, and we are dedicated to identifying and addressing the diverse needs and interests of our stakeholders. Our communication strategy includes reaching out to younger and more diverse audiences, ensuring they feel represented and included in our activities and goals.

While RUSI's content maintains a strong international presence, much of our audience remains concentrated in the UK, US, Australia, and India. To diversify, we work closely with the Publications Department and the Events team to commission themes and authors that enhance our global reach.

Accessibility and inclusivity are integral to our content. To support cognitive, learning, and neurological diversity, we are increasingly offering short-form content and multimedia alternatives. For instance, we provide transcripts for podcast episodes to accommodate users with hearing impairments and enhance accessibility across digital and print media. Our website meets accessibility standards, including colour contrast for readability, screen reader compatibility, and keyboard navigation for users with visual, physical, and motor impairments.

RUSI remains committed to advancing an organisational culture that values and upholds work-life balance and inclusivity as core priorities.

Gender balance in leadership and decision making:

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are foundational principles that guide our governance, leadership, and research initiatives. We believe that fostering an inclusive and balanced environment—particularly at leadership and decision-making levels—enhances the quality and impact of our work in defence and security.

In alignment with best practices and Charity Commission recommendations, RUSI's Board of Trustees, Advisory Board, and Senior Management Team (SMT) actively uphold our DEI strategy. Gender balance is a priority in our leadership composition, and we are committed to making meaningful strides toward gender equality at the senior level. Additionally, RUSI is committed to ensuring that the Board of Trustees, Advisory Board, and SMT have the necessary skills to guide and support DEI policy and practice development. As part of this, our Director-General has proposed that the Nominations Committee adopt measurable targets for increasing diversity in line with the UK's full demographic diversity, as defined by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), over the next five years.

To support this initiative, we will:

1. Collaborate closely with the Nominations Committee to establish and commit to gender and diversity targets for Trustees, the Advisory Board, and RUSI Fellows.
2. Share RUSI's DEI strategy with all new Trustees to ensure their alignment with our inclusivity goals from the start.

3. Solicit staff and external support to broaden the diversity of our Advisory Board and new Fellows, helping us bring in a wide range of perspectives and expertise.
4. Consider appointing one or more Trustees with specific DEI, gender mainstreaming, and/or HR experience.

Our Council of Trustees and Advisory Board aim to embody the highest standards of governance, with a commitment to DEI that reflects modern practices and our strategic values as a charity. Through this ongoing dedication to inclusivity, RUSI ensures that our leadership represents the diversity of the society we serve, driving impactful and responsible research.

Gender Equality in recruitment and career progression:

At RUSI, we are dedicated to fostering gender equality and diversity, equity, and inclusion across all levels of recruitment and career advancement. Our recruitment policy emphasises DEI principles, ensuring that we attract, hire, and develop talent reflective of a diverse workforce.

To uphold this commitment, we:

1. Require gender-balanced interview panels to bring diverse perspectives to the selection process.
2. Advise recruiting managers to prioritise balanced shortlisting, helping to mitigate unconscious bias and promote equitable opportunities.
3. Support continuous development and career progression pathways that allow all employees to advance on an equitable basis, aligning with RUSI's values and strategic goals.
4. Additionally, HR will report regularly to SMT on the DEI data of job applicants.

This approach underscores our commitment to a fair and inclusive work environment, enabling us to harness the strengths of a diverse team for impactful research in defence and security.

Consideration of gender in RUSI's research:

At RUSI, we are committed to mainstreaming gender and promoting diversity in our research. Gender mainstreaming our work in defence and security is important and we are working to ensure that more of our research projects consider gender dynamics and inclusive perspectives. This commitment strengthens our analysis and fosters a more comprehensive understanding of the global challenges we address.

Our "[Rebalancing Expertise in Defence and Security](#)" project highlights this approach. This initiative examines the importance of gender balance in defence sectors, advocating for policies that support diversity and equitable representation.

Additionally, RUSI projects and outputs have and continue to emphasise the importance of gender

diversity within our sector, such as:

- [Challenges to Gender Equality in the Security Sector](#)
- [Organised Crime and Gender](#)
- [The Impact of Gendered Narratives in the Conflict in Ukraine](#)
- [Gender in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism](#)

RUSI teams prioritise engaging a diverse and representative cross-section of stakeholders in project research and activities, including across age, ethnic groups, nationality, gender identity, and specialisation. In our experience, this approach has often proven to be highly effective at facilitating meaningful peer-exchanges that shed light on practical approaches and good practices in challenging contexts, which then feed into our research outputs.

When conducting stakeholder interviews or organising dissemination activities, RUSI aims to have sufficient female and minority group representation. This commitment will ensure that the experiences of women and minority groups can be directly fed into the conversation and inform our research and that specific policy issues that affect these groups can be discussed.

RUSI will actively promote gender diversity in recruitment, particularly for senior research positions, through outreach and targeted recruitment efforts aimed at underrepresented groups. Additionally, support career development and mentorship programs for junior research fellows, creating pathways for progression that address potential gender disparities.

Reflecting gender diversity in RUSI's publications and marketing materials is necessary for portraying an inclusive and representative image of our research efforts and insights. This can help to reach and resonate with a broader audience while reinforcing our commitment to diversity.

By incorporating gender diversity and analysis into our research frameworks, RUSI aims to contribute meaningfully to inclusive policy developments across defence and security fields.

Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment:

RUSI is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive workplace. We have robust policies in place to protect against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, and to promote an environment free from bullying and harassment.

All RUSI staff are required to comply with Anti-Bullying and Harassment policy, which has recently been updated to clarify the role and responsibilities of Confidential Assistants. Confidential Assistants offer guidance and support to any staff member experiencing harassment or other workplace issues, ensuring a trusted resource is always available. Furthermore, RUSI has a dedicated policy for Safeguarding and Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH), establishing the principles which RUSI has adopted to minimise the risks of harm and SEAH occurring in

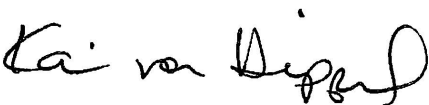
interactions between its staff and subcontractors as well as with project partners, project participants and other stakeholders.

To reinforce these policies, RUSI mandates that every staff member undertakes compulsory training on bullying and harassment. Recently, our HR team led an organisation-wide presentation during a staff meeting to highlight the importance of these measures, addressing ways to recognise, prevent, and address harassment effectively.

Additional efforts to promote accountability and continuous improvement in our culture include:

1. Ongoing discussions regarding 180- or 360-degree feedback in appraisals, as detailed in recent Management Group updates in the monthly newsletter.
2. Responding to staff requests for more communication on workplace policies and norms; HR is working with SMT to plan future workshops to ensure staff are consistently informed and up-to-date on all policies and procedures.

Through these policies, training, and feedback mechanisms, RUSI ensures that anti-harassment standards are upheld organisation-wide, providing a safe and supportive workplace for everyone.

Signature: 

Name: Karin von Hippel

Title: Director General