

AIKYA

Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Approach to Diversity & Inclusion

Aikya is committed to encouraging diversity and inclusion, at both a company and industry level.

As an organisation that invests in Emerging Markets, we appreciate the need to bring together people from different cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. Having a diverse range of skills and perspectives in our team not only helps decision making, meaning it is good for business, but it also helps our industry better reflect the investors, communities, and people we serve.

We aim for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best. We believe that when team members feel empowered to bring their whole self to work, they perform at their best.

We are also committed to incrementally improving the diversity of the team over time, which is factored into recruitment decisions. We want Aikya to reflect the multi-faceted nature of social identities – whether that is gender, ethnicity, socio economic or the many other forms of self-identification.

In addition, we have a role to play helping advance our industry. So far, we have worked with a couple of industry-level programs that encourage female industry participation. In the years ahead we intend to support other initiatives that promote systematic change within the industry.

The purpose of this policy is to reinforce Aikya's commitment to diversity and equality, and to elaborate on our efforts.

Fostering an inclusive culture where personal development is encouraged

- We believe that if Aikya is to succeed as a business then we must provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time, or full-time.
- The business is governed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and we oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms & conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.
- Moreover, we have adopted industry market leading benefits when it comes to important topics such as maternity/paternity leave and annual leave.
- When it comes to flexible working, we understand that employees live busy lives outside of work and need to alter schedules to fit around personal demands. We are especially cognisant of the needs of parents to balance childcare with professional commitments.
- Investment management is very much a people-centric business, and Aikya will only flourish if team members are motivated to continuously improve. In this context, we are happy to financially support team members with their personal development goals, which might include qualifications, courses, or access to specific people or resources.

Recruitment of diverse talent

- It is critical for the health of our business that we recruit people from a diverse range of cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. We aim to improve our diversity over time and are committed to appealing to a broad range of candidates.
- To help broaden our appeal, we have advertised recruitment opportunities through selected channels that encourage diverse applicants. We intend to broaden this approach in the years ahead to appeal to different groups that are underrepresented within the industry.

- As a relatively young business, we are continually trying to improve our recruitment process in order to attract applications from a diverse range of candidates.

Our role in helping improve the industry and the companies in which we invest

- We have participated in a couple of industry-wide initiatives that encourage women participation within the industry. Aikya's commitment involves paid internships to female candidates looking for their first step into the industry, as well as presentations to undergraduate students.
- We intend to broaden our scope to support other initiatives that promote systematic change within the industry.
- Aikya's investment philosophy is also very well aligned on the topic of diversity & inclusion. We only invest in companies with strong stewardship, and so we track various data points related to organisational culture. We then engage with businesses that are not doing enough in terms of diversity & inclusion, be it topics around gender balance, female representation in management, or gender pay disclosure.

Grievances

- We take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
- Employees can raise grievances with either their line manager or another member of Aikya's leadership if they feel more comfortable.
- Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.
- Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.
- Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures will not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Reviewing our efforts periodically

- The Diversity & Inclusion Policy is fully supported by senior management.
- We periodically review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- We also monitor the make-up of the team regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background and disability in encouraging diversity & inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the Diversity & Inclusion Policy.
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the Diversity & Inclusion Policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.