**Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Statement - 2024**

At HISEZ CIC and Impact Hub Inverness, we value diversity of people and ideas. In fact, that’s what Impact Hub is all about.

A DEI approach has been embedded in our work from the very beginning. And in the last few years, in particular, we have made a concerted effort to progress DEI across all our activities.

We work alongside expert partners to provide ways for the HISEZ team to develop their own knowledge, confidence, and DEI practice. As part of both the Just Enterprise contract and the Impact Hub Global Network, we have been looking at ways to further DEI practices.

As a Scottish Business Pledge signatory, particular focus is placed on ensuring our organisation remains diverse and supports inclusion. This begins at recruitment, ensuringrecruitment and selection processes are open and accessible to individuals from all backgrounds. Membership of our space is open to all, and members include a range of ethnicities and other protected characteristics.

This statement describes why we consider DEI important, our approach, and our aspirations for the future.

**Why is DEI important to us?**

Through the delivery of our contracts and the operation of our coworking space, our aim is to support the growth and development of SMEs and social enterprises in the Highlands and Islands and beyond. Our work aims to make the Highlands and Islands a better place to live, work and do business, and so we are committed to ensuring fair and equitable access to business support and other services is available to all those living in the area.

We seek to minimise harm, maximise positive impacts for people and planet, and contribute solutions to some of society’s biggest challenges. Our vision encompasses equity of access for all and places DEI as a core element of our work. This policy is one of several that sets out how we work towards this wider aim.

**How do we approach DEI?**

We use the following definitions of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

* Diversity - Understanding and valuing the differences between people. Recognising the diversity within our communities and reflecting it in our organisation and services.
* Equality - Ensuring that individuals, or groups of individuals, are afforded equal worth and opportunity and are not treated less favourably because of their protected characteristics.
* Inclusion - Ensuring that our work, language, facilities and activities are open, inclusive and accessible to all.

As an organisation, we recognise and value the contributions and perspectives of all our team members, board, customers and stakeholders and provide ways for them to contribute to DEI conversations and provide feedback.

We recognise our limitations and the need to learn from others so that we develop our DEI practice in an authentic way. We actively seeks out partner organisations and individuals who can help us evolve our practice in this way.

DEI are regularly discussed by the team, and we recognise that it is an ongoing practice and learning journey. We continually strive to find new ways for people to feel comfortable and confident in bringing their full selves to the workplace and their interactions with us.

**Collecting, monitoring and understanding DEI data**

We collect DEI data during recruitment and from our customers to understand where we need to focus future efforts.

We balance our need for data collection with an individual’s right to, and preferences for, privacy and confidentiality. All data is, therefore, collected on an optional, anonymous and confidential basis.

**Our future aspirations**

We will continue to actively pursue this agenda. This is an ongoing journey and remains a priority for us. We are actively engaged in training through the Just Enterprise consortium, and in embedding best practice as developed by the wider Global Impact Hub Network.

We aim to be transparent in our activities, challenges and progress.