

Gender Equality Policy – Subjective Values Foundation (SVF)

Comprehensive Organisational Policy

Introduction and Organisational Vision

Subjective Values Foundation (SVF), based in Budapest, is committed to fostering an inclusive, safe, and equitable environment in all its activities, both internal and external. As an organisation working in the fields of youth empowerment, intercultural dialogue, diversity, digital literacy, and human rights education, SVF recognises gender equality as a core value and a prerequisite for social justice.

Gender equality is not only a legal obligation but also an essential component of high-quality project implementation, ethical organisational management, and sustainable community impact.

SVF firmly rejects all forms of discrimination based on gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and intersectional characteristics (including ethnicity, disability, age, socio-economic background, migration status, etc.).

Through this policy, SVF aims to:

- embed a gender perspective in all organisational structures and activities;
- ensure equitable participation in decision-making;
- prevent gender-based discrimination and harassment;
- promote a culture of respect, safety, and empowerment;
- meet the highest international standards for gender equality.

This policy applies to staff, volunteers, trainers, board members, project partners, subcontractors, and any individual participating in SVF activities or representing the organisation.

Definitions and Key Concepts

To promote clarity, SVF adopts the following definitions:

Gender

The socially constructed roles, behaviours, and attributes that a society considers appropriate for women, men, and gender-diverse people.

Gender Identity

An individual's deeply felt internal experience of gender.

Gender Expression

How a person communicates gender externally through behaviour, clothing, speech, etc.

Intersectionality

How different forms of discrimination (e.g., sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia) interact and create compounded disadvantage.

Gender Mainstreaming

The systematic integration of gender perspectives into all policies, programmes, and organisational practices.

Gender-Based Harassment

Unwanted conduct related to gender that violates dignity or creates a hostile environment, including sexist remarks, intimidation, or exclusion.

Understanding these terms ensures that all organisational actors share a common framework for equity and inclusion.

Alignment With International and EU Frameworks

This policy is aligned with:

- the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) standards and indicators;
- the European Convention on Human Rights;
- CEDAW (UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women);
- Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy;
- EU Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Erasmus+ and CERV programmes.

SVF commits to updating the policy according to legislative developments and evolving international best practices.

Core Organisational Principles

SVF's work is guided by the following principles:

Equality of opportunity

All genders have equal access to employment, leadership pathways, professional development, and participation in activities.

Non-discrimination

SVF prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Balanced representation

SVF aims for gender-balanced representation in:

- recruitment panels,
- project teams,
- decision-making bodies,
- external representation.

Transparency and accountability

SVF ensures that rules, procedures, and decision-making criteria remain accessible and understandable.

Safety and dignity

All individuals have the right to work and participate in a safe, respectful environment free from harassment.

Governance and Responsibilities

Leadership Responsibilities

Directors and project managers must:

- model gender-sensitive leadership;
- prevent imbalances in power, influence, or workload;
- ensure inclusive communication internally and externally.

Collective Responsibility

Gender equality concerns everyone. All staff, volunteers, and collaborators share responsibility for applying the principles outlined in this policy in their daily work.

Recruitment, Employment, and Professional Development

SVF ensures that organisational growth is equitable and inclusive. To achieve this:

Recruitment Practices

- job advertisements use gender-neutral and inclusive phrasing;
- selection criteria and scoring methods are published internally;
- interview panels aim for gender balance;
- reasonable accommodations are offered for candidates with special needs;

- parental status, caregiving responsibilities, gender identity, or expression may not influence hiring decisions.

Equal Access to Opportunities

All genders must have equal access to:

- internal promotions,
- training programmes,
- leadership roles,
- international mobility opportunities.

Work–Life Balance

SVF encourages flexible arrangements such as:

- remote work when feasible,
- adjusted working hours,
- scheduling that respects caregiving responsibilities,
- respectful acknowledgment of diverse life circumstances.

Fair Remuneration

SVF commits to equal pay for equal work and publishes general pay scales internally.

Safe and Inclusive Working Environment

SVF strives to create a welcoming internal culture that respects diversity. This includes:

Inclusive Communication

- using gender-inclusive language in English and Hungarian;
- avoiding stereotypes in visual materials;
- ensuring representation of diverse genders in publications.

Physical and Digital Safety

- workspaces must be accessible and safe;
- digital platforms must be used respectfully;
- cyberbullying, sexualised comments, or online harassment are strictly prohibited.

Psychological Well-being

- managers must recognise early signs of burnout;
- staff can request confidential support or adjustments;
- team culture prioritises care, respect, and collaboration.

Gender Mainstreaming in SVF Projects

SVF integrates gender considerations at each stage of project design and delivery:

Implementation

- activities must be accessible to all genders;
- timing, location, and format of events must consider gendered barriers;
- visual materials represent gender diversity;
- facilitators receive guidance on gender-sensitive approaches.

Monitoring

- participation data disaggregated by gender and other relevant factors (age, background, etc.);
- evaluation tools include questions on equity and inclusion.

Reporting

Project reports must reflect gender-related findings and improvements.

Prevention of Harassment and Abuse

SVF applies **zero tolerance** for all forms of harassment.

Prohibited Conduct Includes:

- sexual harassment (verbal, non-verbal, physical);
- sexist remarks, jokes, or behaviours;
- discrimination or exclusion based on gender;
- abuse of power, intimidation, or threats;
- unwanted comments on appearance or identity;
- controlling or coercive behaviour.

Reporting Mechanisms

SVF provides multiple channels for reporting:

- confidential email;
- direct report to the Gender Equality Coordinator;
- anonymous reporting form (optional, if SVF wants to implement it).

Reports are handled within 7 days. SVF ensures:

- confidentiality;
- impartial investigation;
- protection against retaliation;
- access to support resources.

Data Collection and Evaluation

SVF collects data ethically and only when relevant. This includes:

- gender-disaggregated participation statistics;
- internal staff composition by gender;
- annual assessments of gender equality progress.

No sensitive personal data will be collected without explicit informed consent.

Partnerships and External Collaboration

SVF expects partners, suppliers, and subcontractors to:

- respect gender equality principles;
- refrain from discriminatory practices;
- ensure a safe environment during joint activities.

SVF may decline partnerships that conflict with its core values.

Visibility and Communication

SVF commits to promoting gender equality visibly by:

- publishing this policy on its website;
- communicating equality commitments in public materials;
- representing a diversity of genders in media outputs;
- using accessible, non-stereotypical images and narratives.

Annual Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

SVF will:

- review this policy annually;
- update procedures based on lessons learned;
- consult staff and volunteers for feedback;
- incorporate new EU standards as they emerge.

Gender equality is an evolving process requiring ongoing learning and adaptation.

Final Statement

SVF believes that gender equality is essential to democracy, human dignity, cultural diversity, and social development. This policy reflects the organisation's long-term commitment to creating a society in which all individuals regardless of gender or identity can participate fully, safely, and freely.