

# equality agenda

**A handbook  
for staff,  
members and  
representatives**

**tssa**



# TSSA is committed to celebrate, promote and manage diversity

Ten years ago we launched our first Equality Handbook. Since then we've made significant achievements in many areas of equality beyond our expectations.

It is important we lead on equality not just as a member organisation but as an employer.

Our work challenging employers is also something we must do ourselves, through our democracy and our own employment practices. To lead we must not simply be the critic, we need to show we strive for the same outcomes and standards.

We are a Stonewall Diversity Champion. This means we aim

to create workplaces that are inclusive for LGBT+ people and allows people to be their authentic selves at work.

TSSA has built expertise in neurodiversity that supports our members and extends into our own workplace and employment practices.

We have signed a pledge with Time to Change, committing us to breakdown any stigma of mental health that our members and staff may face and focus on improving wellbeing at work.

I am proud that TSSA as an employer has only a 3.3% gender pay gap\*, however we have

to strive to eliminate gender inequality all together in our own workplace and in the workplaces of our members.

Our members and representatives are leading on all our equality work by being positive role models, workplace champions and campaigning for change.

We can win together. We can set the standard in our industries and continue to lead on equality as a trade union.

Manuel Cortes, General Secretary

\*2019 figure



*1907: RCA (Railway Clerks Association was the former name of TSSA) made the formal decision to bring women into membership*

*1910: First woman joined the RCA*

# TSSA's Equality Agenda

TSSA is the union of choice for thousands of people in the transport and travel industries and it's easy to see why.

Our vision is for safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces where people can be their authentic selves. We can only achieve this together. My aim is to lead an agenda through which every TSSA member and employee has the opportunity to engage in equality either through issues that directly affect them, or as an ally or supporter.

The foundation of our equality agenda came from a survey we conducted with academic partners entitled 'Equality in the Rail Industry' (2015), and through consultation with TSSA Equality Representatives and our Self Organised Groups. Our ongoing commitments are to address the key issues through our organising and campaigning, building membership, increasing our relevance with specific communities and ultimately, changing lives.



1915: Mamie Thompson is the first woman delegate to attend annual conference. She campaigned for women's suffrage by organising Memorials to secure War Bonuses for women that had been given to male employees.

## Our ongoing commitments

**Women...** enable progression into management, ensure equal pay and address associated issues

**BAME...** enable progression into management, address unconscious bias, racism and associated issues

**Young Workers...** seek and adopt strategies to attract and engage young workers in our union

**LGBT+...** make the railway inclusive of LGBT+ people by 2025

**Disability...** expand our Neurodiversity Programme, break down the stigma around mental ill-health and build awareness of other hidden disabilities

**Other...** change underlying cultures that fuel inequality, discrimination, bullying and harassment

The work that flows from our equality agenda is linked to key strategies of:

- Self Organised Groups & Networks
- Employer Engagement & Bargaining Standards
- Equality Representatives
- Strategic Partnerships
- Campaigns & Awareness Programmes

Our members are continually coming up with ideas, acting upon these and achieving successful outcomes. Through our focus on equality, we are strengthening our

union, so TSSA will continue to lead the way wherever we can and partner with organisations who can help us change lives.

By 2025, TSSA will have made some significant gains in our equality campaigns and through bargaining with employers to reach our equality gold standards. Email what you want to see happen to [by2025@tssa.org.uk](mailto:by2025@tssa.org.uk).

We welcome your ideas and energy - to find out how you can get involved visit [www.tssa.org.uk/equality](http://www.tssa.org.uk/equality)

Nadine Rae, Organising Director

TSSA has employed women since 1915.

# Definitions

Equality in the workplace is covered under the Equality Act 2010. Here we give you a brief overview of definitions contained within that Act.

Discrimination exists where a person who has a protected characteristic is treated less favourably than others. These characteristics are:

- Age
- Gender Reassignment
- Sex
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Disability
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

**Disability & reasonable adjustments** - to be defined as disabled under the Equality Act, a person must have a mental or physical impairment which not only impacts on their day to day activity but is also likely to impact in this way in the longer term (usually defined as longer than a year).

Employers have a duty to make reasonable and practical adjustments to employees with disabilities to support them in being able to perform at work.

Discrimination can take many forms including bullying, harassment and victimisation.

**Direct Discrimination** - because an individual has a particular protected characteristic, because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic or due to a perceived protected characteristic

**Indirect Discrimination** - this is where an employer's practise, policy or criteria may have an often unintended impact on those who have a protected characteristic.

**Bullying** - persistent unwanted behaviour from one person to another which the recipient feels degrades or undermines them.

**Harassment** - this is any behaviour towards someone that is unwanted and inappropriate and related to a protected characteristic or has sexual undertones.

**Victimisation** - this is where an employee suffers a disadvantage, termed a detriment, related to an act of discrimination.

If you need to know more about the legalities of equality, you can:

Talk to your Equality Rep or other workplace representative

Visit our website [www.tssa.org.uk/equality](http://www.tssa.org.uk/equality)

Contact our Helpdesk run by Morrish, our solicitors (0800 3282673)

The Equality Act 2010 covers England, Scotland and Wales. For differences in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland, contact our [helpdesk@tssa.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@tssa.org.uk) or our Irish office [enquiries@tssa.ie](mailto:enquiries@tssa.ie)

We have Policy Advisors and other staff with expertise in equality. You can access them through your TSSA Organiser, or by attending an education seminar. You can arrange a lunchtime education session for your members on any equality topic through your TSSA Organiser. Contact our Helpdesk to get in touch with your workplace representatives or Organiser.

Discrimination takes more forms than is recognised in our legal system. We recognise that there are other forms of discrimination such as being victimised for being a trade union member. That's why TSSA works towards a wider agenda. Even though the law is a very useful tool it is the strength of a union in a workplace which most often determines whether it is obeyed. That is why building workplace strength is a key aspect of ensuring equality in the workplace.



## TSSA Self Organised Groups & Networks

Self-Organised Groups (known as SOGs) are a part of our Equality Agenda. They are groups of members with a shared characteristic who come together to increase participation of members from their group in our union.

They are part of TSSA's agenda for change in their workplaces. We also have informal networks of people who want to be active on campaigns.

Our SOGs and Networks are:

- Women in Focus for women members
- Future TSSA for young members
- Disability Working Group for disabled members
- E-Mix for Black & Minority Ethnic members
- LGBT+ Network for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender members and others
- Retired Members Group for retired members

SOGs and networks determine their own activities to enable the growth of TSSA and strengthen our overall programme of equality work for the group of members they support. To find out more or get involved join a SOG or 'interest group' through MyTSSA or contact Nadine Rae on [raen@tssa.org.uk](mailto:raen@tssa.org.uk)

*At the end of WWI there were 25,000 women railway clerks of whom 13,655 were members of the RCA.*

# Employer Engagement & Bargaining Standards

To grow our union, TSSA members are active and visible on equality issues and show leadership at all levels of the union. When planning what work needs to be done on equalities with any one employer, the following assessment should be made. Where can we:

- 1 Participate in employer led initiatives in accordance with their equality strategy;
- 2 Influence employer led initiatives to produce TSSA desired outcomes;
- 3 Challenge issues where the employer is not acknowledging or addressing an issue, or meeting our standards or other best practice.

TSSA Equality Bargaining Standards help our Workplace Representatives secure equality and diversity outcomes through collective bargaining, that benefit our members and potential members.

A bargaining standard includes clearly identified outcomes and practical mechanisms by which to reach them. Our members will work with employers to audit themselves against the standard and identify areas for improvement.

Employers can then identify practical actions from our standard to work on with TSSA that best fit their circumstances.

We have introduced three levels in our bargaining standards; bronze, silver and gold. This allows all employers to work towards a standard, whatever their size and capacity, and be recognised for their input.

We aim to have employers reach Gold Standard within five years of committing to working with us.

Find our bargaining standards by visiting [www.tssa.org.uk/equality](http://www.tssa.org.uk/equality)



## Equality Representatives

A way for us to be active and visible within workplaces and with employers is through negotiating for Equality Representatives in workplaces. Recognition for Equality Representatives is included in our Bargaining Standards. We aim to have major rail employers recognising Equality Representatives by 2025.

To find out more about what our Equality Reps do and how you can become one, visit [www.tssa.org.uk/equalityreps](http://www.tssa.org.uk/equalityreps)

*'For over 5 Years I have supported NWR teams as an Equality Rep and NWR Diversity and Inclusion Champion. When contacted by colleagues whom have equality related issues, I arrange meetings with them to understand the situation in depth and work with them and their line managers on finding solutions. I share useful information and distribute union materials to members, offering guidance to my fellow team members based at our London and York Offices. I also attend events and actively participate in groups such as Neurodiversity, NWR D&I Working Group, Multi- Faith Network, LGBT+ Rights and Equal pay.'*



Jakeer Mohammad, Network Rail, London Construction Manager, Asset Management, LNE Equality Representative

*In 1941 Mary Longhorn, a short-hand typist, was the first woman to be appointed as clerk at the LNER section "on a male rate of pay"*

I try to encourage all LGBT+ people to be out at work if it is safe to do so. TSSA's association with Stonewall helps build that visibility and, as a union member, it's good to know we are building discrimination-free workplaces.

Aneurin (Nye).  
Amey, TSSA Member



[www.tssa.org.uk/join](http://www.tssa.org.uk/join)

## TSSA's Strategic Vision includes building partnerships with organisations that share the aspirations of our members.

Our work on equality is strengthened by forming partnerships that help us in two ways – we can benefit from their expertise and knowledge for our campaigning work and in turn we can work together to influence employers to deliver on the aims of both our organisations.

### Stonewall

In 2017 we became a Stonewall Diversity Champion. Our relationship with Stonewall is as an employer and as a trade union aiming to influence employers.

### Inclusive Rail Campaign

Inclusive Rail is our campaign for LGBT+ people in rail. We aim for the railway to be inclusive of LGBT+ people by 2025. As part of the campaign we have created an Industry Forum of Employers who have committed in writing to working with TSSA, are Stonewall Diversity Champions or considering becoming one.

Our strategic partnership with Stonewall has enabled us to bring the forum together to help achieve TSSA's Gold Standard and Inclusive Rail campaign aim [www.tssa.org.uk/inclusiverail](http://www.tssa.org.uk/inclusiverail)

### Time to Change

In 2018 we signed the Time to Change Pledge to work with our staff, our members and their employers to challenge stigma of

mental ill-health and raise awareness of the importance of wellbeing in the workplace. We pledge to change the way we think about mental health at work. Many rail employers have signed a Time to Change Pledge also.

Working with Time to Change is part of our Mental Health & Wellbeing Campaign and general work on hidden disabilities.

Mick Carney, President of TSSA, Chair of the Disability Working Group, said:

*"I am proud that TSSA has committed to the Time to Change Pledge. Mental health continues to be a misunderstood condition in many workplaces and once again we are at the forefront of leading change to maintain and improve the well-being of our members"*

To find out more visit:  
[www.tssa.org.uk/timetotalk](http://www.tssa.org.uk/timetotalk)



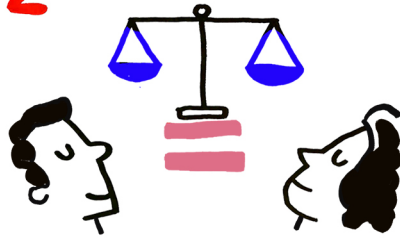
*Throughout the Second World War, and even during the Blitz, the RCA divisional councils held women's weekend schools, attended by 50 women members.*

# 10 REASONS TO JOIN & SUPPORT EQUALITY

## 1 SETTING THE STANDARD



## 2 FAIR & EQUAL PAY



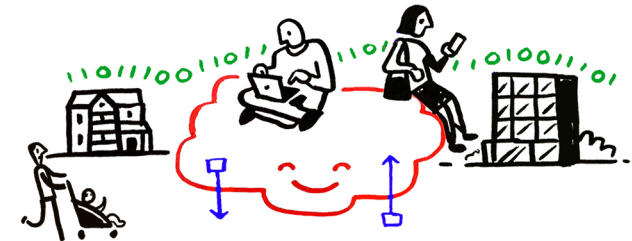
## 3 DIVERSE WORKPLACES



## 4 NEURODIVERSITY



## 8 FLEXIBLE WORKING



## 5 INCLUSIVE



## 9 EVERYONE CAN GET INVOLVED IN TSSA



## 6 #NOBYSTANDERS CAMPAIGN



## 7 MENTAL HEALTH



## 10 THE TSSA IS ABOUT YOU

**FIND OUT MORE:**  
[WWW.TSSA.ORG.UK/EQUALITY](http://WWW.TSSA.ORG.UK/EQUALITY)

# Campaigns & Awareness Programmes

Campaigns are a series of visible activities that lead towards defined aims or achievements in a specific timeframe. A programme comprises of workstreams that make up a programme of work with some defined desirable outcomes, but is typically ongoing. Both campaigns and programmes provide ways for TSSA representatives and members to get involved in our equality agenda, generate support and recruit new members to achieve our aims. Our campaigns include:

- Inclusive Rail, for LGBT+ people
- Mental Health & Wellbeing

## TSSA Neurodiversity Programme

Our most well known awareness programme is our Neurodiversity Programme.

Neurodiversity is an umbrella term referring to a group of diverse brain processing conditions such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia aka Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), Attention Deficit Disorders (ADD/ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) aka Autism and Asperger's syndrome.

In 2012 TSSA launched our 'Neurodiversity in the Transport Industry' research report, conducted by Heriot-Watt University, highlighting the challenges faced by our members who are neurodiverse. Since then we have built a programme that will help us achieve our vision.

Our programme is based on the recommendations from the research report. It involves:

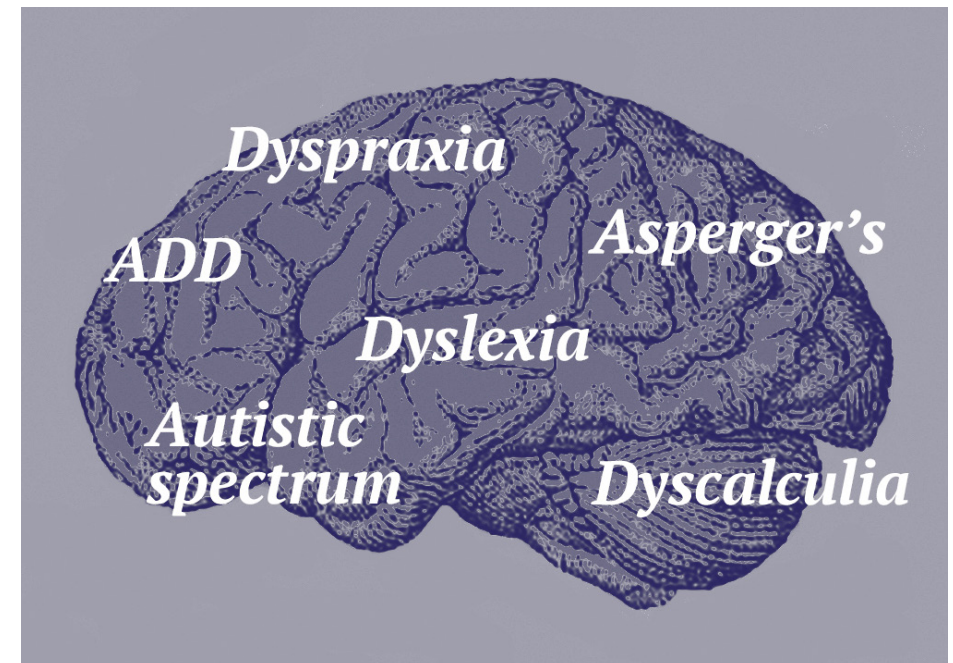
1. awareness building in the workplace, development of training and materials
2. specialised employer and line manager training
3. negotiating policies across the industry that cater for the needs of neurodiverse employees

Our Neurodiversity Programme continues to develop. In April 2019 we released our report on the experiences and support needs of Line Managers who manage people who are neurodivergent. We also launched our equality bargaining standard, Neurodiverse Workplaces.

By the end of 2022 we aim to have 100 trained TSSA Representatives as Neurodiversity Specialists leading on neurodiversity in their workplaces.

Neil Lucock works for Network Rail in Manchester. Neil is a LNW Signalling Inspector and a TSSA Equality Representative. He is also a TSSA Neurodiversity Specialist.

*"The most important thing as an Equality Rep is to be visible to other people, so wearing the diversity and inclusion lanyard and the TSSA rainbow badge shows others what you stand for. I run 'Lunch & Learn' sessions on neurodiverse conditions such as autism and ADHD. I also support the Network Rail Everyone Week initiative. I represent members, particularly when they feel excluded or need support gaining reasonable adjustments."*



# Neurodiversity

celebrating our differences

*1957: TSSA Conference expressed regret for racist incidents that had occurred on the railways and affirmed its opposition to racial discrimination*

*In 1960 TSSA Conference called on its members to boycott goods from South Africa in response to their policy of Apartheid.*

# Other programmes of work

## Future of Rail

As the railway is changing, so are the people who are the future of rail. Employers have set targets for increasing the number of women, black people and people of minority ethnicities in the rail sector. Many of those people will enter the industry through apprenticeships. Our union is looking to the future by organising apprentices and campaigning for development opportunities for all members, including women and BAME.

Our members are at the forefront of technological change designed to serve the needs of passengers. With TSSA's combined commitment for leadership in our industries and to equality and diversity, our union is a key part of the change towards a people focused future of rail.

## Anti-Racism

Our union has called upon other trade unions and community groups to join us in united efforts to tackle racism in the workplace. TSSA members have formed a network for BAME members that meets regularly and aims to address bullying, harassment, career progression and development, the ethnicity pay gap and unconscious bias, amongst other issues that contribute to a culture that allows racism to exist and thrive.



## Preparing for Retirement

Our Retired Members Group (RMG) hold several courses each year to help our members prepare for retirement. This is a unique course developed and delivered by members of the RMG who themselves are retired, and guest experts, all of whom advise on topics such as health and wellbeing, relationships, as well as what you need to consider when deciding where and when to retire. Partners are welcome at this course, to help you work through key questions with your loved ones.

## Men's issues

TSSA is also engaging with our male members on issues that specifically affect them such as fair pay, flexible working, shared parental leave, mental health and wellbeing, training and development. More and more male members of TSSA are stepping up to be allies for women, LGBT+ and speaking out against bullying, harassment, racism and aspects of workplace culture that allows these things to occur. Many male members also have genuine concerns about the changes in the rail industry and want to know their voice is heard. Our 'You and Me' campaign reaches out to all TSSA members who want to discuss how their experience fits with our commitments to equality, fairness and other traditional trade union values. To find out more, visit [www.tssa.org.uk/youandme](http://www.tssa.org.uk/youandme)

# FUTURE OF RAIL

[www.tssa.org.uk/future-of-rail](http://www.tssa.org.uk/future-of-rail)

**tssa**

*The first Black member to be elected to a railway union EC was Claude James who represented TSSA's North London Divisional Council from 1982 – 1990.*

*In 1987 Brenda Hanks became the first woman President of TSSA.*

# Equal Pay

## What is Equal Pay?

Equal pay is a right under the Equality Act 2010. It asks that all employees receive the same (equal) pay, terms and conditions as another employee of the opposite gender who is doing the same or equally valuable work. There are three grounds on which equal pay can be claimed:

- like work – the same job or one that is broadly similar
- work graded the same in a non-discriminatory job evaluation system
- work of equal value

Equal Pay Claims not resolved through workplace internal processes can go to an employment tribunal (ET). The ET will look at any differences in the

work being done (or for the level of performance) and seek explanations for them.

Pay is only one element of contractual equality covered by the legislation. If two jobs are determined to be of equal value, then every term and condition within the contract of employment must be equal.

If an ET claim for equal pay is successful then the employee with the lower rate of pay must have their pay brought up to the higher rate immediately – and they may be awarded up to six years back pay. The tribunal can also make a wider recommendation which means it can order the employer to take steps to amend their practices across the whole organisation.

## Fair Pay, Equal Pay Bargaining Standard

Our Fair Pay, Equal Pay Equality Bargaining Standard is a tool for our workplace representatives to negotiate with employers not just on pay, but on the mechanisms that lead to a pay system being fair.

The poor design of a pay system can lead to discrimination such as unequal pay or contribute to the gender and ethnicity pay gap.

If you are interested in fair and equal pay, contact [raen@tssa.org.uk](mailto:raen@tssa.org.uk) to find out what you can do.

**Between 2012-2014 we issued 40 equal pay claims before the tribunal for members at Network Rail. These were settled.**

## Network Rail Case Study

In Network Rail (NWR), we issued around 40 equal pay claims before the tribunal, which were then settled. As a result of launching those claims NWR began talks with us on the development of an equality compliant pay and grading structure for their management grades. After four years hard work we reached an agreement on an improvement to their previous pay structure for management grades.

We aim to replicate this system for the bands beneath this. We do this via a joint working party made up of senior

TSSA reps, full time officers and senior pay and rewards managers in NWR. There was an appeal processes introduced for those who felt their jobs were not assigned to the correct part of the framework or their pay was still not fair.

TSSA reps also sit on the Job Evaluation panel at NWR meaning TSSA has a key role in equality of pay within this company. However this is not the end and we continue to work towards further improvements to pay and grading within NWR and all other companies where we have members.

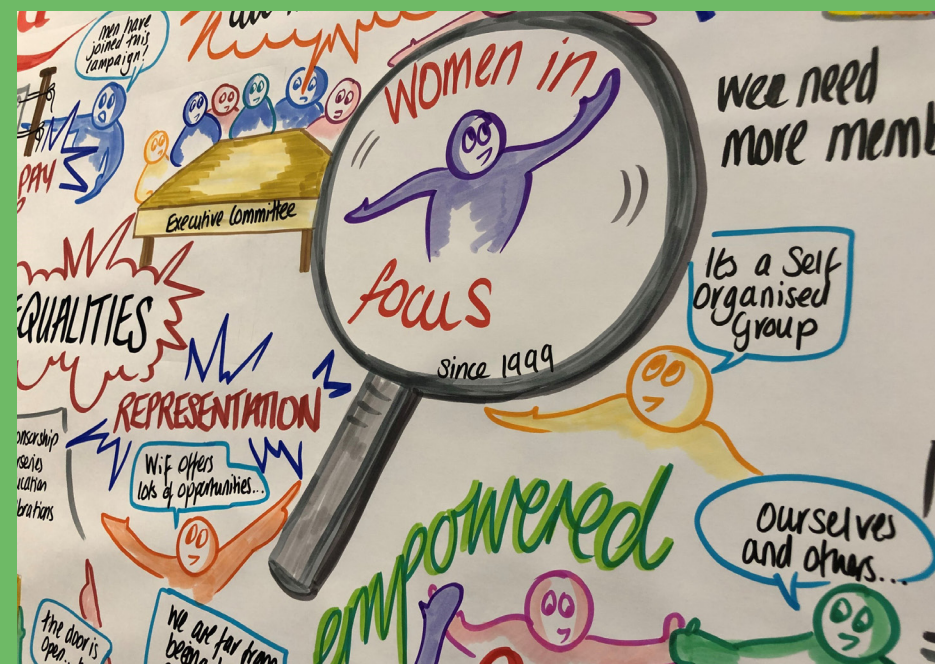


Image: TSSA Women's Conference, 2018

*The decision to form a young members group was taken by the EC in early 2002. One of the founder members went on to become EC President, Mick Carney*

*In 2005 the TSSA Disability Working Group was formed. Pauline McAulde was the founder member. The DWG held its first conference in 2006 at Llandudno.*

# TSSA standards and expectations of staff, reps and members

## TSSA as an employer

As an employer we aim to set the standard and act as a model to those organisations where we have members by:

Adopting **fair and progressive recruitment practises** that aim to increase the diversity of our staff and not discriminate against applicants.

Having a **fair and transparent pay system** that is working towards closing our gender pay gap and creating opportunities for all staff to develop and progress.

Retaining and supporting staff through our **internal policies and practises** such as those aimed at working parents, carers, disabled employees and LGBT+ staff.

## TSSA staff members

As a TSSA staff member you are expected to:

Show an understanding of and a **commitment to equalities** and our equalities agenda.

Create a **workplace culture** of inclusivity, acceptance and respect.

**Challenge** workplace discrimination, bullying, harassment and negative workplace banter.

## TSSA Elected Representatives

As an elected representative of TSSA your role is to:

Improve your **knowledge of equalities** by attending our training and reading our materials.

**Promote** our TSSA equality strategy and bargaining standards in your workplace and branch.

**Build awareness** of equality issues amongst colleagues and the wider union.

**Challenge** workplace and internal union discrimination, bullying, harassment and negative banter.

## TSSA Champions and Role Models

Work with TSSA staff and members to **improve equality** in your workplace and union structures.

Find ways to **stand up for equality and underrepresented groups** in your workplace and the union and share your story to help others.

## TSSA Members

Work with us to create a union free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and inappropriate banter and behaviour.

**Become an Ally** to show active support for women, BAME, LGBT+, disabled workers and others.

Consider becoming involved in a TSSA Self Organised Group, **becoming a workplace TSSA equality champion**, role model, or even a representative.

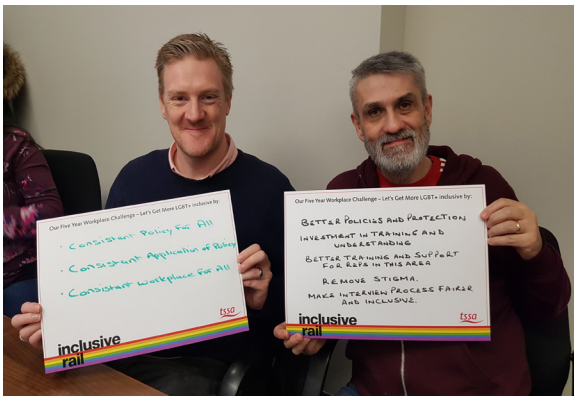
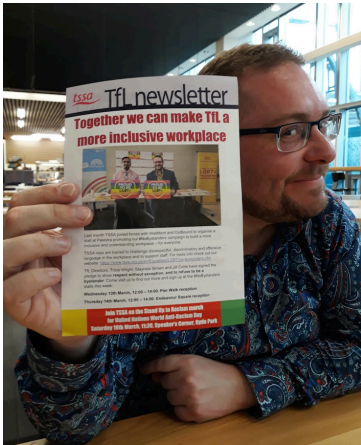
*We ALL want safe inclusive workplaces where people can be their authentic selves*



*In 2017 TSSA became the first trade union to become a Stonewall Diversity Champion*

# Our Members and Staff

Our members and staff are leading our equality agenda in the workplace. To find out how to get involved, email us on [by2025@tssa.org.uk](mailto:by2025@tssa.org.uk)



**We will address the key issues through our organising and campaigning, building membership, increasing our relevance with specific communities and ultimately, changing lives for all TSSA members.**

We aim to have employers reach Gold Standard within 5 years of committing to working with us.

We aim to have major rail employers recognising Equality Representatives by 2025.

We aim for the railway to be inclusive of LGBT+ people by 2025.

We pledge to change the way we think about mental health at work.

By the end of 2022 we aim to have 100 trained TSSA Representatives as Neurodiversity Specialists.

We are expanding our commitments all the time so all members can get involved.

Find out more about our campaigns and programmes at: [www.tssa.org.uk/equality](http://www.tssa.org.uk/equality) or email us on [by2025@tssa.org.uk](mailto:by2025@tssa.org.uk)

## As an employer we commit to the following:

To continue to support women's progression into and within our own union and the wider union movement

To explore ways to increase our proportion of BAME staff so we are more representative of the rail industry

To work towards achieving our Time to Change pledge plan of action

To continue to build upon our internal support for our current and potential neurodiverse staff

To create a workplace culture where all our staff feel that they can be their authentic selves

To train and support our staff to enable them to enact the commitments to our members contained within this documents

EVERYONE CAN GET  
INVOLVED IN TSSA



**FIND OUT MORE:**

[WWW.TSSA.ORG.UK/JOIN](http://WWW.TSSA.ORG.UK/JOIN)



### TSSA Helpdesk

helpdesk@tssa.org.uk  
0800 328 2673 (UK)  
1800 805272 (RoI)

by2025@tssa.org.uk  
@TSSAEqualities

**Neurodiversity**  
celebrating our differences

