



Youth
Theatre
Arts
Scotland

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

YTAS's Membership Values (Statement 4):

We work to broaden access for those who want to participate in our youth theatre activity as creators and audience.

We agree that every young person in Scotland should have unrestricted access to a quality youth theatre experience and should not encounter barriers to access. We are not exclusive in our attitude and we strive to remove all barriers to our activity to promote participation which reflects and celebrates the diversity of Scottish culture.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

Introduction

YTAS's work involves developing relationships with people from a range of backgrounds and cultures. Working effectively with diversity and promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion is therefore an essential part of our work. There is no equality of opportunity if diversity and inclusion is not recognised and valued.

Equality of opportunity is about treating people fairly and without bias and creating conditions in the workplace and wider society that encourage and value diversity and promote dignity. It is also about trying to redress past imbalances and ensuring that dealings with our members, participants, partners and suppliers are conducted in a constructive way that supports appropriate inclusion and does not give rise to unjustified discrimination.

Diversity is concerned with creating an environment and practices that benefit the organisation and those who work in and with it. It takes account of the fact that people differ from one another in many ways. Understanding, valuing and effectively managing these differences can result in greater participation that can be leveraged for success at an individual, team and organisational level.

Inclusion completes the triangle of equality, diversity and inclusion; in so far as equality is about removing barriers and diversity is about recognition of people, inclusion aims to provide the conditions for people to be able to participate in the way that they want to, knowing they are welcome regardless of their background. Inclusive arts practice focuses on an approach of openness, participation, engagement and response to community cultural needs. Inclusion often involves a human rights approach, ensuring positive processes and outcomes, treating people with dignity and respect, and ensuring that barriers to involvement are removed.

When we talk about equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion, we focus on the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race / ethnicity
- Religion / belief and culture
- Sex / gender
- Sexual orientation

To this list, Creative Scotland (YTAS's principal funder) added its own characteristic;

- Socio-economic deprivation

This additional characteristic covers areas such as poverty, crime, rural isolation, low economic activity/unemployment and poor educational attainment.

YTAS's uses a range of tools to monitor and evaluate our progress in mainstreaming our policy and promote equality, diversity and inclusion. We believe the best way to manage equal opportunity and diversity is to ensure these are built into all processes and functions, considered part of all policy decisions, and present in the planning of all programmes from start to finish. This is what we mean by mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion principles and practices.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented. However, all employees have a

responsibility in their area to ensure that the aims and objectives of the policy are met.

We endeavour to:

- Comply with and exceed all relevant regulatory requirements.
- Continually improve and monitor equality, diversity and inclusion performance.
- Incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion considerations into business decisions.
- Increase employee awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues.

Preconceptions

- In the application of this policy, it is essential that the board and employees guard against discrimination on the basis of possible assumptions that individuals, because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion/belief and culture, sex/gender, sexual orientation or socio-economic deprivation, possess characteristics which would make them unsuitable for employment, volunteering or participation.
- Any restrictions, which are applied by management, and/or senior employees which affect certain groups more than others may effectively constitute indirect discrimination and should be reviewed and altered to redress any imbalance.

Recruitment and Promotion

- Applicants for posts and volunteering shall be given as much clear and accurate information about posts through advertisements, job descriptions and interviews in order to enable them to assess their own suitability for a post. Information about posts shall be placed and prominently displayed where it may reach individuals of all groups previously referred to.
- All applicants and volunteers shall be informed that YTAS encourages equality, diversity and inclusion through this policy. Such information should be included in advertisements, job descriptions and/or application forms.
- All personnel specifications for posts and voluntary work shall include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for effective performance.
- All interviews shall be thorough, conducted on an objective basis and shall deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job or voluntary work and ability to fulfil the job requirements. Where it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect performance of the job, for example when it involves unsocial hours or extensive travel, this should be discussed objectively without detailed questions based on assumptions about marital status, children and domestic obligations.
- YTAS will not discriminate on the basis of sex, marital status, colour, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or unrelated criminal record in the allocation of duties between staff employed in any grade or grades with comparable job descriptions.

Training

- YTAS shall not discriminate in the provision of training courses.
- Appropriate training shall be provided to enable employees to perform their jobs effectively.
- Age limits for entry to training provisions should not be restrictive to exclude certain groups of employees.
- All board, advisory committee members and employees involved in interviewing shall receive training as / when required to ensure that selection is made on an objective basis and that encouragement is given to women and men to take full advantage of training opportunities.

Grievance and Victimisation

- Particular care will be taken to deal effectively with any complaint of discrimination or sexual harassment which should be pursued through the Grievance Procedure as detailed in this handbook.
- Any employee or volunteer who may feel discriminated against on the grounds of their sex, marital status, ethnic origins, colour, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or unrelated criminal record has recourse via an appointed officer to have their complaint fully investigated. All parties involved in such a complaint and its subsequent investigation shall be made fully aware of the findings.

Culture

- We will involve employees in the implementation of this policy, for greater commitment and improved performance.
- We will update this policy annually in consultation with employees.
- We will provide employees with relevant equality, diversity and inclusion training.
- We will work with our event partners to improve their equality, diversity and inclusion performance.

Monitoring and Improvement

- We will comply with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- We will continually monitor and seek to improve performance.
- We will incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion considerations into business decisions.
- We will increase employee awareness.
- We will review this policy and any related business decisions at team meetings.