

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

Impact Arts is committed to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and promoting an environment of respect, understanding, encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination.

Our aim is to value and manage people's differences to enable all employees and participants, both actual and potential, to contribute and realise their full potential.

To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all our people and not to discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and recognise that all individuals are different and should be treated fairly and equally in accordance with their needs.

This equality, diversity and inclusion policy will be implemented across all aspects of Impact Arts' work:

- the appointment of members to its Board
- the appointment of staff, their conditions of service and employment procedures
- the appointment of volunteers
- all dealings with the public and participants
- the contracting and management of freelancers

For the purposes of this policy the term 'People' refers to employees, freelancers, volunteers, project participants and any other individual or company undertaking services on behalf of Impact Arts.

Our commitment:

- to create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all people are recognised and valued
- to comply with legislation to ensure there is no discrimination, directly or indirectly
- to ensure every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- to provide training, development and progression opportunities for all staff according to their job role
- to ensure all recruitment decisions are based on the merits and abilities of candidates alone and no other criteria will be used
- to ensure terms and conditions of service are standard across all employees
- to ensure all people are aware that breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- to take positive action if we believe that people who share a particular protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic, or if their participation in an activity is disproportionately low
- to make reasonable adjustments where a person might be disadvantaged because of a disability
- provide equality, diversity and inclusion training and guidance as appropriate

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- in hiring contractors and other agencies to work for it, Impact Arts will try to ensure its commitment to Equal Opportunities is pursued

Public and Participants

Impact Arts aims to make its projects accessible to as wide a range of the public as possible and in order to achieve this will take steps to remove barriers which prevent potential participants and audience members from having equal access to the organisation's activities. This will include:

- Events and workshops to be held on suitable days and times and to be inclusive of community members
- Cultural and religious needs to be identified and met as far as possible e.g. dietary requirements
- All project activities to take into account the varying needs and abilities of the participants
- Ensuring that where possible activities take place in venues and premises which are accessible and where territorial issues are not a barrier
- Ensuring that marketing and publicity material are shared widely and take into account the needs of people with disabilities both in terms of print, format and information on access
- Ensuring that transport costs are available for participants to ensure this is not a barrier to participation.
- Ensuring that all workshops are free so that cost and socio-economic background is not a barrier to participation
- Encouraging and enabling people from underrepresented groups to attend and participate
- Ensuring that disadvantage is not a barrier to participation be that youth unemployment, mental health issues or addiction

Monitoring and review

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy and in order to review and refine any short comings in equalities.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed regularly in consultation with the Board of Trustees and action taken as necessary. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to address the imbalance.

Types of discrimination:

Direct discrimination

Occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perception discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see discrimination by association below).

Discrimination by association

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perception discrimination

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted reasonably in managing your business, i.e. that it is 'proportionate means of achieving a

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legitimate aim'. A *legitimate aim* might be any lawful decision you make in running your business or organisation, but if there is a discriminatory effect, the sole aim of reducing costs is likely to be unlawful.

Being proportionate really means being fair and reasonable, including showing that you've looked at 'less discriminatory' alternatives to any decision taken.

Harassment

Harassment is 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported complaint or raised a grievance or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

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