



**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY
AND ANTI-RACISM ACTION PLAN**

Groundswell Arts is committed to devising creative projects that support high levels of community engagement and inclusion. We have an inclusive approach to creative learning and our programmes aim to reduce educational disadvantage.

We are committed to providing access for all children, parents and teachers to the arts as participants, practitioners and audience, throughout the range of our creative programmes.

Our Core Values are:

- Creative Learning
- Wellbeing
- Inclusion
- Community

In order to achieve this, Groundswell Arts undertakes to ensure that all job applicants, participants, team and audience members across the range of our activities are treated equitably and encouraged to develop and realise their full potential, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, political opinion, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief (including lack of belief), or sex and sexual orientation.

We recognise discrimination as being a process of acting unfairly against an individual or group by exclusion, verbal comment, denigration, failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Groundswell Arts is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, creating an environment of respect and understanding, which welcomes and values people's differences across our workforce, and in which no form of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour is tolerated.

We are dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture and to ensure that all participants, employees, and job applicants are given equal opportunity and that our organisation is representative of all sections of society. We are opposed to 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 policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all, and it is important that we reflect this policy within the content areas of our programme of work.

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to monitor the effectiveness and develop where necessary the Policy and the Action Plan, in consultation with the Board of Trustees. Each member of the company has responsibility for their own compliance.

This policy is delivered across all aspects of Groundswell Arts' work: from managing our workplace to selecting employees, to our communications. These include:

- the appointment of members to its Board
- the appointment of staff, their conditions of service and employment procedures

- the contracting and management of freelancers
- the appointment of volunteers
- all dealings with the public and participants

This policy and the associated Action Plans are monitored and reviewed annually by Groundswell Arts Board of Trustees.

Public and participants

We are committed to:

- Making all Groundswell Arts projects as accessible, inclusive, and representative of a diverse audience as possible

In order to achieve this, we will take steps to remove barriers which prevent potential participants from having equal access to the organisation's activities. This includes:

- Events and projects to be held on suitable days and times (during classes/after school or weekends) 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 consider 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 consider the needs of people with disabilities both in terms of print, format, and information on access
- Ensuring that our projects are delivered locally and if not, the transport costs are available for participants to ensure this is not a barrier to participation.
- Ensuring that our projects are delivered for free for low-income families 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 disability and mental health conditions

Working with freelancers

Groundswell Arts team consists of freelance creative practitioners, volunteers as well as permanent staff. We have a strong commitment to providing each team member with the best support.

We are an accredited London Living Wage employer and committed to paying all our staff including our freelance and permanent team members the living wage as a minimum.

We include any research or planning time as well as the creativity or culture our freelancer practitioners create.

We run our freelancers' payments every 2 weeks to make sure all our staff are paid in a timely fashion

We offer our freelance team regular access to practice sharing opportunities with the rest of our team and have created shared folders for supportive resources and policies to be shared and an online portal which they can access.

Additionally, we offer our freelancers access to equipment, training for technical equipment, use of printers, wi-fi and computers, marketing and digital support and a desk space if needed, as well as networking opportunities in the community including signposting them to other work and opportunities and providing references for other jobs they are doing.

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality in the Groundswell Arts team, to ensure all recruitment decisions are based on the merits and abilities of candidates alone
- Creating an inclusive organisational culture that promotes dignity and respect for everyone we work with.
- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all participants are recognised and valued.
- Complying with legislation to ensure there is no discrimination, directly or indirectly
- Ensuring our volunteer and job application forms address accessibility and provide a welcoming place for people to advocate for their specific needs
- Making reasonable adjustments where a job applicant/ an employee might be disadvantaged because of a disability
- Encouraging our team to treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Ensuring all employees are aware that breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- Encouraging anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns so we can apply corrective measures
- Not tolerating any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to discipline those that breach this policy
- Making training, development, and progression opportunities available to all staff
- Invite all permanent and freelancer staff to events so they feel part of the organisation

What we are already doing:

- We acknowledge the diversity of our workforce and ensure that our team and our board reflect the same diversity that we embrace with our accessibility beliefs and policy.

- Accessibility is a high priority for us: We make our projects accessible as possible to all members of the public in the varied communities in which the work is presented.
- We actively work to reduce barriers to participation, engagement and learning for all children, including those with impairments and those who are categorised as having SEN/D. This includes using Makaton sign language and translation to other languages where possible.
- Our programmes focus on encouraging all participants to share stories or aspects of their heritage and culture.
- We focus on disadvantaged local communities to support their social engagement
- Our programmes reflect the skills of creative practitioners from all backgrounds
- We use participation and evaluation forms to collect data from our participants, and represent children and families' voices and images on our marketing channels following their consents
- We have live streaming or video conferencing availability to help include those that may not be able to make the meeting/project for reasons related to location or physical abilities, or for any other potential reason including Covid-19
- We recently launched our new website and are actively working to make our content accessible and user friendly to everyone.
- Our practitioners are a mix of ages and genders, races, and artistic backgrounds whilst some are formally trained others come from more practice-based experience. Within our core programmes we try to create opportunities for practitioners to share learning and benefit from the diverse experiences in our teams and provide opportunities for practitioners to lead sessions for each other, alongside mentoring opportunities for newer team members.

Action Plan

Learning and Training

- To provide equality, diversity and inclusion training and guidance to all team members 2023
- To hold unconscious bias training for all Trustees and members of the Senior Management Team 2023
- To include the above training awareness in trustee/employee induction processes

Diversity

- Further increase the diversity of candidates in the recruitment process by expanding the platforms we advertise our job openings and networks we advertise in. 2022/23
- Be aware to seek out a range of diverse stories and resources to be used in our projects such as Story Lab / Communication Pod.
- Hold a specific training around de-colonisation of the EY music curriculum to approve awareness and understanding about racism in music repertoire for our Sing Our Story project 2023
- Capture the EDI monitoring data to review and better understand reach and benchmark effectiveness 2022
- Our board member Hannah D'Aguiar, a nominated Governor for EDI, will be responsible for Diversity and inclusion evaluation

Accessibility

- All written materials are in an accessible format
- We recently carried out an accessibility audit for our website and our ambition is to achieve an A level accessibility by 2024.

Inclusion

- Our website, social and print media should always reflect the diversity of our audiences and participants both in tone and imagery
- Our production marketing and press is tailored, inclusive and aware
- Differentiation in schemes of work and resources created because of work on our Story Lab project for SEN learners
- To regularly inform all new and old employees that an equality and diversity policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements and promote fairness in the workplace
- To draw attention of all our partners, funding agencies, stakeholders, customers, learners, and job applicants to this policy
- To regularly review all our employment practices and procedures so that fairness is always maintained

Monitoring and review

- We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion policy and to review and refine any shortcomings 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.
- To monitor and annually renew this policy in consultation with the Board of Trustees and take actions as necessary
- It will be the responsibility of the Executive Directors to ensure implementation of these policies and procedures
- It will be the responsibility of the Board to establish and maintain policies and procedures and to bring these procedures into effect.
- Groundswell Arts equality and diversity policy is fully supported by senior management, advisory board, and employee representatives.

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 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 a 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.