

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

TAKING
FLIGHT

Equality and Diversity Policy

Taking Flight Theatre

Our mission is to smash down the barriers to participating in theatre and to constantly push the boundaries of creative access. It is to drive forward equal representation of Deaf and disabled people in theatre by levelling the stage. It is to alter the arts landscape in Wales and beyond by challenging others to think more inclusively.

Our vision is of a world where the stories told and the voices heard are genuinely reflective of the world we live in; where the theatre we make understands audiences of all backgrounds and invites and welcomes them in; where the field is level and everyone has equal access.

Purpose of the Policy

Taking Flight Theatre is an accessible and inclusive organisation. We are committed to improving and advocating equality and diversity. In particular, we aim to treat everyone equitably, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, socio-economic background, pregnancy, menopause or maternity/ paternity/ adoption, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. This includes staff, freelancers, organisations, volunteers and audiences.

Reflecting societal changes and lived experiences will change the scope and parameters of this policy; this policy will be reviewed and amended regularly through consultation, conversations and advice.

Aims

- Taking Flight recognises that in our society power is not held equally and that groups and individuals have been and continue to be discriminated against on many grounds including, for example, race, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, class, religion, marital status and where they live.
- Taking Flight also recognises that where direct or indirect discrimination occurs within the organisation, it is both morally and legally unacceptable.
- The purpose of the Equality and Diversity Policy is to set out clearly and fully the positive action taking Flight intends to take to combat direct and indirect discrimination in the organisation, in the services it provides and in its relationships with other bodies.
- In adopting this Equality and Diversity Policy, Taking Flight is also making an unequivocal commitment to implementing it, so as to ensure that equal opportunity becomes a reality.

Scope of the policy

For taking flight's purposes the scope of this policy will apply to

- Salaried staff
- Freelancers and contractors
- Volunteers including Governance body
- External organisations and venues.

Accessibility

All our meetings, rehearsals and events are held in venues that are accessible to wheelchair users, and we will provide a range of access tools such as BSL/English interpretation, captions and/ or simultaneous translations, audio description etc. Talking to us about other access requirements not listed here will be encouraged.

All our public material will be published in English, Welsh, BSL/ captioned, audio files and where possible easy read format- this includes website pages, programmes and flyers.

All activity will take place in accessible venues, and we actively recommend organisations and venues we work with to be as accessible and welcoming as possible. This includes the use of appropriate language and encouraging jargon busting terminology.

We will encourage the development of personal access riders including invisible access needs which will include access tools and requirements, and this will be costed and scheduled to ensure we can accommodate these requirements in advance. We will work with staff and contractors to develop personal access riders and will advise organisations on the best way to implement these access riders.

Taking Flight acknowledges that day to day needs may vary and will take this into consideration on a regular or daily basis as needed. We will encourage regular communications and keeping in touch sessions for Mental Health, fluctuating conditions and energy levels etc to ensure that expectations are appropriate, and adjustments can be made as necessary. This includes working flexibly or from home where possible.

Diversity

Diversity is more than a tick box exercise and incorporates a range of backgrounds and experiences- not limited to race but to all characteristics that make us different and a demonstration of genuine interest in a breadth of opinions, backgrounds and experiences.

Taking Flight will endeavour to be open to new ideas and will particularly prioritise opportunities for artists and audiences to share their cultural heritage, socio-economic backgrounds and lived experiences in order to nurture an open, conversational environment that respects difference.

Inclusion and respect

Every person coming into contact with Taking Flight should be made to feel equally welcome.

Audism, ableist, sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks or behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment and have no place in Taking Flight's work or sphere of influence.

Taking Flight theatre will actively listen to staff, audiences stakeholders and trustees ensuring as many voices and opinions are heard.

Dealing with discrimination and harassment

If any staff member feels they have been discriminated against by the Taking Flight Theatre or harassed at an Taking Flight event they should raise this with their Line manager in the first instance. The line manager will investigate the complaint,

listening to all members involved.

All attempts will be made to resolve any issues through conversation in the first instance. If the complaint involves the line manager then it will be referred directly to the CEO or Board of Trustees and will follow Taking Flight's grievance procedure outlined in the staff handbook and supporting documents.

If the complaint is against a particular individual, this person will have the opportunity to express their point of view, accompanied by a friend. The person making the complaint will also have this opportunity.

If the complaint is against the Organisation as a whole, the CEO/Trustees must work to ensure that such discrimination is not repeated in the future and must inform the complainant of how they propose to do this.

Any decision to exclude a person from the organisation due to discriminatory or harassing behaviour will be made with reference to the organisations constitution. The organisation will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against, and will not victimise or treat them less well because they have raised this.

Approved by the board on: 6th January 2023

To be reviewed on: 6th January 2024