

EQUALITY DIVERSITY INCLUSION

**North
East
Arts
Touring**

Policy

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“We need to give each other the space to grow, to be ourselves, to exercise our diversity. We need to give each other space so that we may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy, healing, and inclusion.”

— Max de Pree

Introduction

Since 1985 North East Arts Touring (NEAT) has helped to change the lives of those who live, work and visit the North East of Scotland by enabling rural communities to promote high quality professional productions and screenings.

Over the past thirty years those communities have changed and will continue to change; NEAT realises that in order to remain relevant in a changing world it must develop and embrace a resilient and practical Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and action plan (EDI).

NEAT is committed to implementing this EDI policy which promotes equality of access to our full range of arts events for people of all ages, abilities, cultures and communities.

This policy will be implemented through a collaborative approach by our Board of Non-Executive Directors, Staff, and Volunteers and also via individuals and organisations engaged in providing services for NEAT.

As a condition of working or volunteering for the organisation individuals must embrace the spirit and ethos of equality, diversity and inclusion and operate effective equality practices.

The Board and the Executive Director will be committed to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in everything we do.

In this policy we have set ourselves some challenging targets and tasks. Through our actions we aim to become an organisation that places equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of our working practice as a promoter of high quality productions and screenings across the North East of Scotland.

This policy will address the following:

- how our organisation deals with staff, freelancers, artists and volunteers;
- how our organisation deals with audiences and service users.
- the role of our board.



Our vision

By 2021 we want to see culturally vibrant communities across the North East, driven by passionate volunteer promoters and supported by a team of experienced and dedicated arts practitioners. NEAT's theatre, dance and film events will be celebrated across the region.

Our menu of excellent productions and screenings coupled with a friendly atmosphere will see us as an organisation that works in the heart of communities. Our commitment to establishing sustainable partnerships with other organisations and businesses who complement our vision will increase our appeal and make our events more accessible to a diverse audience. NEAT will be respected as an arts organisation committed to enriching lives by creating opportunities for participants to take part in events where the focus on social wellbeing, learning and equality is as important as the product we promote. Many communities in the North East are remote and do not necessarily have public transport routes, this makes NEAT the perfect vehicle to help reduce social isolation by creating opportunities for evolving communities to socialise together.

Our programme for young audiences will reflect Scotland as a country committed to investing in high quality arts and cultural events for children, young people and families. Our Young Promoter Scheme will be an excellent model for creative learning, a building block for transferable skills and an opportunity to experience and explore arts management roles.

Our Mission

To develop and support a thriving network of voluntary promoters, enabling them to promote high quality professional theatre, dance performances and community cinema screenings in rural venues across the North East of Scotland. Inspire young people to participate in arts events and to take a lead in influencing arts programming

Our Values

Accessible

Democratic

Diverse

Embracing

Equal

Friendly

Honest

Hospitable

Inclusive

Open

Respectful

Sharing

Tolerant

Unbiased

Welcoming

What does equality, diversity and inclusion mean to us?

Equality

Enables everyone to participate and have opportunities to achieve their potential. In this way we help create a fairer workplace and friendlier venues. An equalities approach recognises that our social identity can impact on our life experiences.



Diversity

Focuses on acknowledging and valuing the individual differences of our staff, volunteers, partners and audiences and the ways in which these can enrich NEAT at all levels.

Inclusion

Is about everyone who is part of NEAT; all staff, volunteers, audiences, participants, partners and other stakeholders. It involves taking action to remove barriers to participation and also involves eliminating discrimination and promoting equality.



Who will benefit from this policy?

This policy's aim is to ensure that good practice as legally required will champion the values of human rights in society.

However, this policy is not just about legal compliance; it will form the foundation for our core value as an organisation that celebrates diversity and which endeavors to deliver a programme of events which is accessible to all.

NEAT recognises that some groups may have particular and specific requirements resulting from longstanding disadvantage and/or prejudicial treatment.

The Equality Act 2010 Act introduced the concept of protected characteristics and NEAT recognise that people within these groups benefit from the same level of protection against discrimination.

By embracing this policy we recognise that NEAT as an organisation and the communities it serves will benefit by:

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not.
- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimization.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- Fostering good relations and promoting understanding between people from different groups.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities.

The nine protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We also embrace Creative Scotland's inclusion of:

- Gaelic Language
- Deprivation



What will change?

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NEAT will ...

- Attract outstanding practitioners due to its commitment to EDI.
- Be viewed as a reformer, champion and leader in the practice of EDI.
- Celebrate its EDI success.
- Continue to develop a working ethos that is supportive, tolerant and respectful.
- Engage with external organisations and individuals to help us monitor our progress and influence our strategic development.
- Have EDI visible within all parts of its work.
- Place issues of EDI at its core.
- Work in local communities and with partners in terms of reaching disadvantaged communities.

Our staff will ...

- Be aware of their responsibilities in terms of EDI. This will be monitored annually through our appraisal procedure and personal development.
- Be more diverse and reflect the communities in which we work and who are supported and included in the development of strategy, policy and practice.
- Be offered training and support to help them to fulfil their potential.
- Have a workplace free from harassment and prejudice.

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Our volunteers will ...

- Be a diverse group and more representative of the communities in which we work.
- Be supported in formulating their own EDI policies and work toward good practice.
- Feel valued and their communities will thrive due to accessible events.

Our audiences will ...

- Better reflect our diverse communities.
- Feel welcomed and respected in the communities we serve.
- Influence our programming and therefore offer a more diverse calendar of events which will appeal to a wider audience.



Who is responsible for equality, diversity and inclusion?

This will be a collective responsibility with certain key areas allocated to certain members of staff, volunteers and the Board.

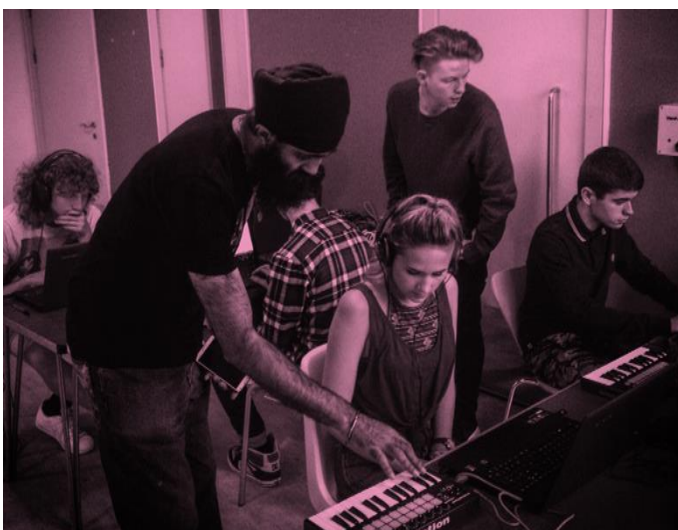
The policy will be supervised by the Executive Director and monitored by a member of the Board.

Board

Our Board has the overall legal responsibility for the governance of the organisation.

This requires a Board with arrange of diverse skills but also a board which is reflective of the communities we serve.

The members of the Board will aim to undertake equality, diversity and inclusion training as part of their governance responsibility.



Staff

NEAT staff are responsible for the day to day running of the organisation.

NEAT staff and office volunteers are all protected by HR policies and guidelines.

Any employee or office volunteer who feels they are being mistreated by colleagues, the board or by volunteer promoters due to EDI issues should refer to the HR Polices for guidance.

NEAT is committed to undertaking open recruitment and selection procedures and wherever possible all relevant vacancies will be advertised and a fair and equitable short listing and interview processes will be followed. NEAT will ensure that no job applicant, freelancer, employee or volunteer receives less favourable treatment than another on grounds of disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, age, religion/belief, civil partnership/marriage, pregnancy/maternity, gender reassignment, social background or language. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

Employees, freelancers and office volunteers working with NEAT will be informed of the EDI policy and receive training on equality issues. NEAT will also ensure that the changing and developing needs of freelancers, staff and volunteers are recognised and appropriate adjustments made to working conditions and/or training provided.

Any conduct or actions against the spirit and/or letter of the equality laws, on which this policy is based, will be considered a serious disciplinary matter. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds.

Our EDI policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximize the efficiency of the organisation.

Volunteer Promoters

NEAT Volunteer Promoters are the backbone of our organisation and it's their responsibility to deliver events in the communities we serve.

NEAT will ensure that no Volunteer Promoter or venue receives less favourable treatment than another on grounds of disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, age, religion/belief, civil partnership / marriage, pregnancy / maternity, gender reassignment, deprivation or language.

All Volunteer Promoters will be supported in developing their own EDI policies in order to encourage and embrace greater participation from within our communities.

All Volunteer Promoters will be offered training on EDI issues.

NEAT will also ensure that the changing and developing needs of Volunteer Promoters is recognised and appropriate adjustments made to ensure that they can continue volunteering.

Any conduct or actions against the spirit and/or letter of the equality laws, on which this policy is based, will be considered a serious disciplinary matter which could lead to the termination of membership of the volunteer and/or the association they represent.

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All Volunteer Promoters and the organisation they represent will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds.

When allocation training, attendance at conferences, events etc. or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

Audience

Our audience is central to our organisation, we respect all audience members and wish to continue to grow a relationship with faithful audiences and also nurture a relationship with new audiences.

NEAT aims to make its events accessible to as wide a range of the public as possible and remove barriers which prevent potential audience or participants from having equal access to the organisation's activities.

NEAT will encourage Volunteer Promoters to programme events during suitable days and times to be inclusive of community members.

Cultural and religious needs to be identified and met as far as possible e.g. dietary requirements if food is served.

All activities to take into account the varying needs and abilities of audiences; ensuring that where possible activities take place in venues and premises which are accessible to disabled people.

Venues should where possible provide facilities for disabled people to enable them to participate fully in activities i.e. making reasonable adjustments.

NEAT and Volunteer Promoters should ensure that the design of publicity material takes account of the needs of people with disabilities and second language speakers both in terms of print, format and information on access; these should be made available in as many places as possible.

NEAT and the Volunteer Promoters should encourage and enable people from underrepresented groups to attend and participate in as many NEAT events as possible.

