



EVA International
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Last Updated: August 2022

CONTENTS

Context

This section outlines our vision and mission as well as the key values that inform all of our work.

Commitments

This section sets out our understanding of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the arts, and a summary of our commitments under three headings: Organisation, Programme and Language & Communications.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This section outlines a plan for monitoring and evaluating the delivery of the EVA Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

Appendix

This section includes further details about related legislation and definitions.

CONTEXT

EVA International is Ireland's Biennial of Contemporary Art. EVA leads in the commissioning and curating of contemporary art by Irish and international artists, culminating in a programme of artistic encounters, exhibitions and education projects, that takes place every two years across venues in Limerick city and beyond. It was founded by artists in 1977 and it remains one of the longest running visual arts organisations in Ireland. Over its 39 editions EVA has worked with 2199 artists (1540 Irish and 659 international) and 43 guest curators (9 Irish and 34 international).

EVA is committed to creating an environment that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion, and to treating all of its employees, partners (artists, curators, producers, volunteers & participants) and audiences equally, regardless of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community, or socio-economic background. This Equality, Inclusion & Diversity Policy takes into account the Arts Council's Equality, Human Rights & Diversity Policy and Strategy as well as current legislation including the employment Equality Acts (1998 – 2015), the Equal Status Acts (2000-2018), the Disability Act 2015 and Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014, otherwise known as the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

Key values and priorities that inform our work:

Mission

- To lead in creating experiences and encounters of world-class contemporary art that activate Limerick as a place of creative endeavour and cultural destination.

Values

- Artistic Ambition and Excellence
- Access and Opportunity
- Place and Partnership

Priorities

- Programme and Production
- Engagement and Impact
- Sustainability and Development

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

EVA will implement practices that value diversity, provide equality of opportunity and ensure that no employee, partner (including artists, curators, producers, volunteers & participants) or audience will receive less favourable treatment on any of the nine aforementioned grounds. We will also ensure that other policies and practices reflect our commitment to treating people fairly, promoting an integrated way of working and respecting the dignity of our community at all times.

In relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, it is our responsibility to address inequality – and we must continue to develop strategies to connect with the widest diversity of artists and audiences, not only as a means of addressing inequality but also as a means of constantly re-energising artforms. The way in which inequality is experienced is complex and intersectional, and our understanding of inequality is constantly changing. We need to monitor all aspects of our language, programming and operations on an ongoing basis to ensure we stay up to date with current thinking, and are open to new connections and ways of working.

Organisation

- Developing strategies to further diversify the Board and staff, in line with the diverse makeup of society in Limerick and Ireland;
- Require all members of the Board and Staff to become familiar with the values and commitments outlined in this policy and to work towards its effective implementation;
- The development of consultation processes, such as training, workshops, and focus groups with stakeholders, to ensure that EVA as a programme and workplace is an accessible and welcoming environment for the whole of our community;
- Ensure that the provision of all services shall be free from any discrimination and harassment, and to support an inclusive environment of dignity and respect.

Programme

- Continuing to broaden our reach and deepen our engagement with audiences and local communities through bespoke programme initiatives such as the Better Words initiative, building engagement over medium- long-term projects to facilitate the development of trust over time;
- Continuing to broaden our reach to artists beyond our existing networks by experimenting with more diverse approaches to developing, curating and programming work, locally and internationally;
- Ensuring EVA venues and programmes are free, open to all, and mobility accessible.

Language and Communications Commitments

- Provide and undertake relevant training, and encourage ongoing dialogue so we become more conscious of how we speak with and about people, and how we communicate online and through our systems for booking tickets, participating in programmes, providing feedback etc;
- Providing information and mediation materials, in multiple formats and in a user friendly design for all staff, visitors and collaborators;
- We will review and constantly monitor our communications in relation to access across all areas of our work.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy is a commitment to an important piece of work ahead. In order to ensure the effective implementation of the policy, we have developed the following plan for monitoring and evaluating progress.

- At Board level, there will be a progress report on the policy roll out at alternate Board meeting and it will be an agenda item in the annual review and planning sessions. At these sessions, the Board will evaluate whether the aims and objectives of the policy are being achieved or whether additional measures are required.
- Staff will be encouraged to provide feedback on the implementation and review of this policy through team meetings and as part of feedback sessions on individual projects and events.

APPENDIX

Legislation

This policy is informed by the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 which prohibit direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment and victimisation in relation to nine specified equality grounds: gender, family status, civil status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ethnicity and membership of the Traveller community.

The Employment Equality Acts prohibit discrimination in employment, including recruitment, promotion, pay and other conditions of employment. The Equal Status Acts prohibit discrimination in access to and provision of services, accommodation and educational establishments.

The Disability Act 2015 places significant obligations on public bodies in terms of providing integrated access to services and information to people with disabilities, as well as promoting the employment of people with disabilities.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 requires that in the performance of their functions public bodies shall have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment and protect the human rights of staff and service users.

This policy reflects the commitment to honour its obligations under these Acts.

Definitions

Equality

- The principle of equality is enshrined in the Irish Constitution and in many international and EU treaties and declarations.
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sees equality as a fundamental principle in terms of a person's human rights – 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights', Art. 1.
- Key pieces of equality legislation in Ireland are the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011 and Equal Status Acts 2000-2012.

Equality grounds

Discrimination is prohibited by legislation on the basis of any of the following grounds:

1. Gender: a man, a woman, or a transsexual person
2. Civil status: single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, civil partner, former civil partner.
3. Family status: pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 years, or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability;

4. Age: this only applies to people over 16 except for the provision of car insurance to licensed drivers under this age;
5. Race and ethnicity: a particular race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin; religion: different religious belief, background, outlook or none;
6. Disability: this is broadly defined including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions;
7. Sexual orientation: Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or heterosexual;
8. Membership of the Traveller community: people who are commonly called Travellers, who are identified both by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.

Discrimination

Discrimination is prohibited and has a specific meaning in the Employment Equality Acts and Equal Status Acts. Discrimination is defined as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on any of the nine equality grounds. Discrimination can be direct, indirect, by association or imputation.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination happens when there is less favourable treatment in effect or by impact. It happens when people are, for example, refused employment or training not explicitly on account of a discriminatory reason but because of a provision, practice or requirement which they find hard to satisfy. If the provision, practice or requirement puts people who belong to one of the grounds covered by the Acts at a particular disadvantage then the employer is deemed to have indirectly discriminated, unless the provision is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

Harassment

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In both cases the unwanted conduct may include acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material. The emphasis is on the effect of the unwanted conduct on the recipient, not on the intention of the perpetrator. There are other forms of bullying and harassment which are not included in the Acts but covered by other legislation such as the Employment Equality Acts, the Unfair Dismissals Acts, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, Civil Law and Criminal Law.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the (re)-organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors typically involved in policy making. (Council of Europe Group of Specialists definition). The aim of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality in practice. Equality

impact assessments and equality proofing are tools to achieving the goal of gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming involves an analysis of the effects of policies and practices on women and men respectively, as part of the usual decision-making process.

Positive Action

The Equality Acts allow for preferential treatment or the taking of positive measures which are bona fide intended to:

- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Cater for the special needs of persons, or a category of persons who because of their circumstances, may require facilities, arrangements, services or assistance;
- Reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities: in service provision (this involves providing special treatment or facilities in circumstances where without these, it would be impossible or unduly difficult to avail of the goods, services, accommodation etc. However, they are not obliged to provide special facilities or treatment when to do so will cost more than what is called a nominal cost. What amounts to nominal cost will depend on the circumstances such as the size and resources of the body involved. (Equal Status Acts);
- Reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities: in employment nothing in the Act requires an employer to recruit or promote a person who is not fully competent and fully available and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the position. For the purposes of the Act a person who has a disability is considered fully competent and capable of reasonable accommodation (referred to as appropriate measures) being provided by the person's employer;
- An employer is obliged to take appropriate measures to enable a person who has a disability: to have access to employment, to participate or advance in employment, to undertake training unless the measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer.
- Appropriate measures are practical measures to adapt the employer's place of business including: the adaptation of premises and equipment, patterns of working time, distribution of tasks or the provision of training or integration resources;
- The employer is not obliged to provide any treatment, facility or item that the person might ordinarily or reasonably provide for themselves. In determining whether the measures would impose a disproportionate burden, account is taken of the financial and other costs entailed, the scale and financial resources of the employer's business, and the possibility of obtaining public funding or other assistance. (Employment equality acts).