



## **Open House Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Action Plan 2018/19 – 2020/21**

Aberdeen Performing Arts is committed to promoting equality, diversity and a culture that values difference. We recognise that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights into the workplace and enrich the way we work. We will proactively tackle discrimination and disadvantage aiming to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason with regard to employment or accessing our services. Our four creative diversity themes are:

### **Celebrating Difference**

We want to develop a culture where equality is both ordinary and extraordinary; where diversity is promoted across creative choices, participation, audience development and employment practices. 'Variety' is a good old-fashioned theatre term that Aberdeen Performing Arts is reclaiming in the context of developing a mainstreamed Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy, where 'variety' = different, varied, broadminded, all encompassing. The term also serves to remind us that we must be vigilant - constantly reviewing the long-standing handed-down practices from theatre and music-hall tradition, checking that our language, signage, practices, programme content and behaviour still work in our contemporary setting.

### **Creativity at Heart**

We put creativity at the heart of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion at the heart of creativity - embodying this in our culture, policies and practices. Cultural diversity is productive for artists, audiences and communities. Diversity increases the adaptive resilience of our company, making us less vulnerable to unexpected change. Creative practice can provide a powerful source of stimulus for personal growth, self-reflection and discovery, challenging self-limiting beliefs. Well-crafted work can also challenge judgment, group-thinking and shine a light on society's shady corners achieving bigger shifts in consciousness. We will continue to stretch and challenge ourselves and others, including partners – from funders to tutors and suppliers, artists to their support teams.

### **No Labels, No Barriers**

We are working towards a culture of 'no labels, no barriers' at Aberdeen Performing Arts. In order to have conversations internally and externally, we name and group things. These represent the range of people, groups, individuals and issues that we consider when we are recruiting to our team and Board, planning our services and programme, training staff on our customer services approach, talking to partners, appointing contractors and procuring goods and services. The balance of power between minority and majority groups is not always a simple one. However, that doesn't alter the issues of

power, fair pay, voice and opportunity that affect minority groups. We will promote positive action to create balance and equality of opportunity, recognising that ‘post-code discrimination’ or social discrimination can affect aspirations and opportunity as much as gender, ethnicity and age.

## Open Thinking

We want to achieve harmony – in our venues, among our staff, with conditions of service, in the creative community, with our visiting artists and promoters, within our wider local communities. In seeking to achieve diversity and equality, this will always be in the context of also achieving harmony. In a safe, supported, harmonious environment we believe staff, artists, audience members and others will feel more able to move outside their comfort zone and reach their full potential. Awareness and a warm welcome are critical to creating positive conditions for all groups to engage with Aberdeen Performing Arts.

## Areas

This plan intersects with our business plan Imagining New Futures and across all of our work. The areas we will work in, our aims and success indicators are:

Area	Aim	Success Measure
Governance and Leadership	Sustain responsive, progressive and imaginative governance and leadership of creative diversity.	A positive company culture that empowers employees to reach their full potential and make an outstanding response to the case for creative diversity
Sector Leadership	Support other cultural organisations in the North-east to gain a greater understanding of creative diversity in their practice	Be sector leading in making the case for creative diversity and equality in the North-east
Workforce	Develop a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we work with and champions equality and diversity	Increase diversity in our workforce
Diverse Artistic Programme and Artists	Create a distinctive and diverse artistic programme that reflects the experience of all of our communities and provides opportunities for participation and creative engagement	A diverse and distinctive artistic programme with diverse artists, producers, programmers and partners
Reaching Diverse Audiences and Cultural engagement	Engage with the diversity of voices, perspectives, artistic and cultural lives of people and communities in the North-east	Extend our reach and develop a more diverse audience base. Reach more people who are least engaged and make people feel included
Data Monitoring and Evaluation	Maintain data, policies, processes and systems to ensure compliance and evidence our work	Provide first class data support, robust benchmarks and agree and share targets

## Ownership

We will all address creative diversity and equality by:

**Board and Leadership Team:** providing outstanding leadership for Creative Diversity and Equality, monitoring our Action Plan and being accountable for compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

**Organisational Development:** increasing workforce diversity through fair recruitment processes, partnership and employee learning and development.

**Artistic Programme:** working in partnership to increase audiences, artists and producers with disabilities, from BAME and socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Marketing:** ensuring quality of opportunity for all audiences to connect with Aberdeen Performing Arts through the information we provide in our venues, online, in communities and to listen and consult.

**Operations and Customer Services:** ensuring venues are accessible and welcoming, our employees well trained in creative diversity and equality

**Business Transformation:** providing excellent data support, robust benchmarks and targets

**Finance and Fundraising:** providing strong financial management and using all means of fundraising to enable Aberdeen Performing Arts to achieve our creative diversity and equality objectives.

## Resources

Both budget and people resource is embedded and dispersed across the company. The Chief Executive is champion and is supported by the Head of Organisational Development.

## Risks and Challenges

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of Board and employee engagement with the case for Creative Diversity and Equality	Information and aims shaped by and shared with employees and board members, creative diversity and equality plan in place, our Open House Policy is understood and owned by employees at all levels within the company with allocated resources and responsibilities.
Lack of engagement with local communities and people who are least engaged and who view our venues and our programmes as 'not for me'	Audience development plan and external stakeholder relationship management plan in place. Increased consultation with people and communities, more project co-design with communities
Lack of appropriate data to support planning	Make data a higher priority within the organization, undertake data rationalisation exercise and invest in new software
Insufficient resources to deliver the plan	Ensure we understand what is required and allocate appropriate resources

1. Governance & Management	Task	Lead	Target Dates	Measures of Success	Likely	Impact	Risk
1.1	Review data held and improve systems for information gathering and performance reporting to ensure we can report back to Scottish Government, Local Authority, Creative Scotland and other funders on EDI issues. Work with Culture Republic, Audience View and Purple 7	DFCS and HBT	April 18	Clear and reliable systems and processes in place for EDI information gathering  Accurate and comprehensive CS Annual Return	3	5	
1.2	Appoint Board Champion for EDI	CEO & Board	April 18	Improved high level leadership for EDI	1	4	
1.3	Appoint new post of Head of Organisational Development in Leadership Team to be our EDI leader	HOD	April 18	Improved high level leadership for EDI	1	4	
1.4	Get EDI working group up and running with representatives from all teams	HOD	April 18	Embedded leadership for EDI in all teams and levels within APA	2	5	
1.5	Roll out EDI awareness refresher training for staff and Board to ensure our Open House Policy is understood and owned by employees at all levels within the company	DMC	June 18 + October 19	Increased awareness and understanding of EDI at all levels within the company	2	5	
1.6	Secure our Customer Service Excellence accreditation year on year.	DMC	Ongoing in July annually	Retained CSE accreditation with compliance in all categories and aim for compliance plus in 8 of the 12	2	4	
1.7	Review Memorandum and Articles	CEO and Board	July 19	M&A updated to allow for improved governance – increased Board membership to 16, increased no of places for open recruitment, % of protected characteristics on Board increased to 20%, more Board members available to serve on sub committees	3	5	
1.8	Make space to recruit for 3 new Board members	CEO and Board	Mar 20	Board refreshed, increased number of places allowing for more open	3	5	

				recruitment and more diverse representation on Board			
2. Disability	Task	Lead	Target Dates	Measures of Success	Likely	Impact	Risk
2.1	Introduce an Access Membership Scheme	DMC	Dec 18	Improved ticketing and customer service experience for people with disabilities in our venues. Achieve a membership of 500 by 2021	3	5	
2.2	Review Carer's Policy	DMC	April 18	Improved experience for people with disabilities in our venues and 500 carers annually	2	4	
2.3	Review Pricing Strategy	DMC	Sept 18	Favourable benchmarking with best practice nationally and 3% increase in the number of people with disabilities using our services by 2021	2	4	
2.4	Improve physical access for audiences and artists with restricted mobility at HMT – new passenger lift and introduce a new ramp at stage door, and at the Music Hall - new state of the art sesame platform lift at main entrance, introduce lift access to balcony and more wheelchair space Develop pre show venues checklist to ensure lifts and accessibility equipment regularly checked.	CEO	June 19	Access all areas achieved for artists and audiences with restricted mobility at HMT and Music Hall. Vastly improved service for the 20% of our audience at HMT who need to use our lift for access. 100% improvement for artists with restricted mobility at HMT who currently can't access stage door. 100% improvement for audiences with restricted mobility at the Music Hall who currently can't use the main entrance or access the balcony	3	4	
2.5	Review all the services we provide for people with disabilities with a view to expanding and improving	DMC	Mar 20	More people with disabilities accessing our services and programmes. 3% increase by 2021 (1% year on year)	3	4	
2.6	Increase the number of younger people using our disability services – consult young people with disabilities through our Teachers Network and Woodlands Special Educational Needs School and Newhills Visual Impairment School	DMC	Mar 21	An increase in younger people with disabilities accessing our services and programmes. 5% increase by 2021	3	4	

2.7	Put in place a strategy and clear, concise, consistent, legible guidance for accessible communication in print and in digital formats to meet the needs of our audiences – consult and research alternative channels	DMC	June 18 Research Dec 18 Strategy Mar 19 Guidance	Better and more services available for audiences with disabilities. 10% uptake in services by 2021  Purchased Asset Bank software April 19 and database of diverse images created for promotional purposes	2	5	
2.8	Ensure that people with disabilities are fully engaged with the Music Hall <i>Stepping Out</i> Programme and participating in the <i>Stepping In</i> community re-launch weekend. Use the MH redevelopment to signal step change in the services we provide.	DPCP	Mar 19	More participation, performance and talent development opportunities for people with disabilities.  More high quality engagement through partnership with companies like Solar Bear and Birds of Paradise. Minimum of 1 project annually	2	5	
2.9	Curate programmes/seasons of work to raise awareness, encourage main streaming and promote good practice (tying in with awareness dates in the calendar)	DPCP	Apr 18	Raised awareness of the achievements of people with disabilities working in the arts and cultural sector  More artists and companies with disabilities featuring in our cultural programme. Increase by 5%	2	5	
2.10	Design and roll out training to engage, inform and empower employees to provide excellent customer service for people with disabilities	HOD	Apr 18	Better trained and informed employees. 150 employees undertaking some form of disability training in 2018 – and regular refresher course thereafter	2	5	

3 Socio Economic Deprivation	Task	Lead	Target Date	Measures of Success	Likely	Impact	Risk
3.1	Ensure that adults and young people living in areas of multiple deprivation (particularly Torry, Woodlands and Northfield) are fully engaged with the Music Hall <i>Stepping Out</i> Programme and participating in the <i>Stepping In</i> community re-launch weekend. Use the Music Hall redevelopment to signal step change in the services we provide.	DPCP and HPT	April 19	Work in a minimum of 3 areas of multiple deprivation and achieve 300 participations in Music Hall projects. Engage with 5,000 people from Aberdeen and the North-east over the community launch weekend, 10% of whom minimum will be from areas of multiple deprivation.	2	5	
3.2	Continue to build engagement with Looked After Children by encouraging active participation in arts projects and attendance	DPCP	Projects in 17/18 and 18/19	Recognition as sector leading in Scotland with our work with looked after children and young people. Meaningful engagement with 15 looked after children a year for 3 years	2	4	
3.3	Ensure that our Associate Artist programme engages with individuals and communities affected by socio economic deprivation	HPT	Projects in 18/19, 19/20 and 20/21	A minimum of 1 associate artist a year from 2018/19 onwards engaging with individuals and communities affected by socio economic deprivation	2	4	
3.4	Increase engagement with the North-east's economic migrant community - help them to find a voice and tell their story through participation in arts projects.	HPT	17/18 Research & Development 18/19 – 20/21 Deliver	3 creative projects delivered over 3 years with migrant communities	2	4	
3.5	Reduce financial barriers to attendance and participation by developing a pricing strategy to help families on low income, by providing bursaries for our youth art and creative learning activities and by setting affordable prices for participative activities	DMC	Sept 18	Pricing strategy reviewed to ensure creative learning charges are affordable by March 18. 2 youth theatre bursaries a term for each of 8 classes: 16 each term. Achieve 100% take up of bursaries	2	4	

3.6	Introduce a new Pathways to Positive Destinations programme to improve and expand APA work experience opportunities for individuals affected by socio economic deprivation.	HOD	April 19	New tailored programme in place. More delivery partners. Increased uptake of work placements apprenticeships and job opportunities	3	5	
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