



# Annual Report 2021-2022

## Strategic Equality Plan



# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Our Equality Plan Objectives .....	5
What key actions did we progress this year? .....	6
What does our data tell us about how well we have done? .....	9
Strategic Equality Committee .....	16
Meeting our Legislative Responsibilities .....	17
Evidence of the Five Ways of Working .....	18

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Arts Council of Wales operates an equal opportunities policy.



# Introduction

The Public Sector Equality Duty sets out specific duties for the public sector in Wales to support and help progress on equalities work. For the Arts Council of Wales, reporting on Equalities is more than a legal requirement, it's fundamental to the delivery of our core priorities.

Our Corporate Plan, “For the Benefit of All”, sets out our ambitions and plans for increasing the number of people enjoying and taking part in the arts, targeting those people from communities and backgrounds that the arts in Wales still fail to fully represent.

The Arts Council of Wales believes that culture in Wales should reflect the lives of all its citizens. People who are culturally and ethnically diverse, neuro-divergent, deaf and disabled people, LGBTQ+ people and people facing social-economic

disadvantage are integral and central to our cultural life. Our approach in taking forward our work will be one of zero tolerance to racism and ableism and to work towards ensuring people from these communities are fully represented in the workforce, as decision makers, as visitors, as creators, participants and as audience members.

Our vision is for a fair and equal Wales where the arts are widely and easily available for everyone. We're determined to champion diversity and to break down the barriers that prevent this from happening.

The arts in Wales continued to face huge challenges as a result of Covid-19 during 2021/22 and, as in the previous year, our most marginalised communities have been impacted the hardest. The culmination of the work on Widening Engagement also presented us with significant challenges and called for us to continue our deep reflection on the work we've been doing to advance the equality agenda. The publication of the Widening Engagement Action Plan represents a pivotal moment for us and, as this becomes central to the work of this Committee moving forward, I have confidence that we are truly on a path towards change.



**Devinda De Silva**  
Chair, Strategic Equality  
Committee

(Appointed as Chair April 2021)

“ THE WIDENING  
ENGAGEMENT  
ACTION PLAN  
REPRESENTS A  
PIVOTAL MOMENT  
FOR US...WE ARE  
TRULY ON A PATH  
TOWARDS CHANGE. ”

# Our Equality Plan Objectives

Our plan has five objectives. These are:

1. Engage, consult with and inform our partners and the communities we aim to reach and in so doing challenge and question our knowledge and experience.
2. Develop a workforce that reflects the diversity of Wales by increasing the number of people with protected characteristics employed in the arts and represented in the governance of arts organisations.
3. Work to eliminate pay gaps across the arts sector and ensure fair and equal pay for all artists working in Wales.
4. Increase the number of diverse artists and arts organisations accessing funding and support to create and present their own art on their own terms.
5. Increase the diversity of those engaging with the arts as audience members and creative participants.

These five objectives cover all protected characteristics.

However, when we published our new plan in 2020 we continued to give specific emphasis to increasing engagement amongst people from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds and deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people.



# What key actions did we progress this year?

A major focus for our work in 2021/22 was the completion and publication of the Widening Engagement reports we had commissioned in the previous year, in partnership with Amgueddfa Cymru. The three areas of research focused on engagement with those communities we, and the work we supported, had consistently failed to reach. This work involved hearing the voices of people with lived experience sharing stories that were uncomfortable and challenging to hear, but vital to

bringing about the change that is needed if we are to deliver the ambitious goals set out in our plan.

The final reports and the development of a joint action plan with Amgueddfa Cymru were at the centre of our work during the year. The reports called for significant actions to develop and improve arts experiences for deaf and disabled people, for people from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds and for those

experiencing social deprivation and poverty. They called for positive action to tackle racism and ableism. Our joint action plan was published in February 2022.

As we stepped into 2021/22, we announced the appointment of our Agent for Change, Andrew Ogun. During the year Andrew was at the heart of conversations, both internal and external, focused on making changes to policies and processes and the removal of barriers that have prevented equity of access to us and our work.

The arts sector and wider society were still impacted by Covid-19 during this year and once again we concentrated on supporting artists and arts organisations as they met the challenges of re-emerging to create and share work with audiences.

Our Strategic Equality Committee was clear in its deliberations that the lessons of the last two years should not be lost when we revisit and re-articulate our equality plan moving forward. The #WeShallNotBeRemoved campaign had articulated with absolute clarity the impact the pandemic had on disabled people.

### Our key actions included:

- We undertook a detailed review of the second year of our Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-24. A specific focus emerging from this review will be to address barriers faced by people living with poverty and for this to be a key action in our 2022-23 plan.
- We published a joint [Widening Engagement Action Plan](#) with Amgueddfa Cymru link.
- We continued to monitor where our funding has reached. Data has once again shown an increase in the number of successful funding applications, particularly to our new **Connect and Flourish Scheme**, from disability-led organisations and those led by artists from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds.
- We continued to support organisations on their business development journey through our **Creative Steps** scheme and further progressed our work on developing a strand for individual artists and creatives.
- We began working in partnership with the other UK Arts Councils to explore a UK-wide Arts Access Card scheme based on our hugely successful Hynt scheme.

# Creative Steps Case Study

## Taking Flight is a disability-led Theatre Company



“This organisational development project has supported all activities we undertake by providing stability and opportunity for growth and development of ourselves as individuals, as a team, and as a creative community passionate about equality, inclusion and access.”

### A changing picture

A one year grant of £103,244 (including access costs of £26,500) was awarded to enable Taking Flight to continue to develop organisationally to include staff and salary re-organisation, ongoing support for trustee development, Welsh language and web presence, marketing consultant and new posts for inclusion/ access and technical services (specific posts for Deaf/Disabled practitioners).

The activity enabled the company to support and invest in its staff team and Board at a crucial time, including in relation to ensuring their wellbeing since the pandemic. It enabled them to focus on developing their capacity, profile/reach and sustainability.

Taking Flight is building the next generation of disabled leaders in the arts and continues to influence the arts sector across Wales.

### Key outcomes

- Implementation of new staff structure, including two new posts employing and developing disabled people.
- Increased capacity enabled the development of their access/ inclusion services to support the industry and to become more welcoming to deaf and disabled audiences.
- Strengthened, more engaged, Board.

 Prosperity

 Culture

 Equality



# What does our data tell us about how well we have done?

## Our data for 2021-22 shows us the following:

- Most staff and applicants identify as heterosexual/straight. A higher percentage of applicants (86.2%) than staff (71.1%) identify as heterosexual/straight.
- Most staff (57.6%) and applicants (72.4%) identify as Welsh, with British being the second highest percentage (23.9% of staff and 17.2% of applicants). All other national identities selected by staff and applicants have been suppressed and not included in the graphs to ensure that the data is not identifiable.
- 88% of staff have recorded their ethnicity as either White, White Asian, White British, White English, White Irish, White Other and White Welsh. 86.2% of applicants have identified as White British, White Welsh or White Irish.
- Most applicants (39.1%) have recorded that they have no religion. This figure has increased year on year. We cannot compare that with the number of employees who have recorded this option as that data has been suppressed. Most staff have recorded their religion as Christian (31.5%), with this being the second highest percentage for applicants (33.3%). A large proportion of staff have not specified their religion (18.5%).
- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring Form has been updated to include a larger number of options that applicants can choose from when recording their ethnicity. 3.4% of applicants chose 'prefer not to say'. All other data has been suppressed for both staff and applicants to ensure that the data is not identifiable.

- We ask our staff to record whether they are disabled as per the legal definition and social model. Whilst the number of staff recording this information has increased since last year (54.3% of staff have now recorded a response to the legal definition compared with just 36.7% last year, and 54.3% have recorded a response to social model compared with 37.7% last year), there is still work to be done if we want to get an accurate picture of the composition of our staff.
- Most staff and applicants were aged between 40-49. Only 25% of staff were aged under 40, compared with 42.5% of applicants. There were no staff and no applicants ages under 20. Individual percentages for 50-59 and over 60 cannot be provided for applicants as it may be identifiable, but the overall percentage of applicants over 50 was 16.1% compared with 27.2% of staff.
- Due to the length of service of male employees at grades B to D being longer than female employees, and therefore at the top of their salary grade, there is a small difference between female and male average salaries, with male average salaries around 2% higher than female salaries. With annual increments awarded in August each year, the margins will close as more females reach the top of their salary grade.

All our staff are asked to complete the equality, diversity and monitoring section of our self-service HR system, Cascade. All new starters are encouraged to update this information as part of their induction to the system. Reminders are sent to all staff, a couple of times a year, reminding them of why we ask them to provide this information and staff are aware of the 'prefer not to say' option. Nevertheless, some staff have yet to update this information although we have seen an improvement compared with previous years.

We ask all external job applicants to complete and submit an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring Form when submitting their application. During the 2021-22, 96.6% of applicants completed the form when asked to do so (compared with 73.2% of applicants during the previous financial year).

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring Form was updated twice in 2021-22. We worked with the Arts Council's research team and with Stonewall to revise the categories and options included on the form, as well as the terminology used. Later in the year we worked with the Welsh Language Enabler/Ysgogwr y Gymraeg to amend the information that we asked applicants in relation to the Welsh language. Previously we only asked for language preference, but now we ask about Welsh language ability and learning status. This will be reported on in more detail in our 2022-23 annual report.

Our Arts Portfolio Wales data for 2021-22 showed a significant improvement in the representation of people with protected characteristics both as employees and members of Boards of Management.

The monitoring of our Arts Portfolio Wales clients in 2021/22 showed the beginning of a culture change across the organisations. There were marked increases particularly in the number of disabled people and those from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds employed by these organisations. The tables below show 38% increase on the former and a welcome 44.8% increase on the latter. The age profile of those employed also saw a change with an increase in younger people.

Employee Data	2020/21	2021/22	% Change (2020/21-2021/22)	% of overall employees 2020/21	% of overall employees 2021/22
Total number of Employees	1743	1934	11.0	-	-
Total number of D/deaf or disabled employees	86	119	38.4	4.9	6.2
Total number of Culturally and Ethnically Diverse employees	96	139	44.8	5.5	7.2
Total Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual people	194	243	25.3	11.1	12.6
Total Older People	463	473	2.2	26.6	24.5
Total Younger People	189	317	67.7	10.8	16.4
Total People with specific religious beliefs	220	248	12.7	12.6	12.8
Total Women who are pregnant or on maternity leave	39	39	0.0	2.2	2.0
Total Transgender people	*	24	*	*	1.2

Although the total number of members of Boards reduced, there was an encouraging increase in the number of Board members from amongst protected characteristic groups, again specifically in relation to disabled people and those from a culturally and ethnically diverse background. The tables below show 27% and 255 respectively and an increase in the number of people on Boards identifying as Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual.

Boards of Management Data	2020/21	2021/22	% Change (2020/21-2021/22)	% of overall Boards of Management 2020/21	% of overall Boards of Management 2021/22
Total number of on Boards of Management	484	456	-5.8	-	-
Total number of D/deaf or disabled People on Boards of Management	29	37	27.6	6	8.1
Total number of Culturally and Ethnically Diverse People on Boards of Management	52	65	25.0	10.7	14.3
Total Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual People on Boards of Management	57	69	21.1	11.8	15.1
Total Older People on Boards of Management	262	244	-6.9	54.1	53.5
Total number of People on Boards of Management with specific religious beliefs	91	90	-1.1	18.8	19.7
Total number on Boards of Management who are pregnant or on maternity leave	6	9	50.0	1.2	2.0
Total Transgender people People on Boards of Management	*	*	*	*	*
Total Younger People on Boards of Management	13	14	7.7	2.7	3.1

The data from our lottery funded programmes in 2021-22 reflected a sector gradually beginning to emerge from Covid with arts projects and programmes once again being at the heart of the applications received.

In 2021-22 we awarded a total of £14.6 million to 369 projects. Of these almost 30% were projects targeted at deaf and disabled and people from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds. The following table shows how projects in receipt of funding targeted their activity.

Protected Characteristic Group	Number of Awards	Total Value of Grant	% of all awards	% value of all awards
Culturally and Ethnically Diverse People	107	£4,419,239	28.9	29.5
Children & Young People	95	£4,885,339	25.7	32.6
Older People	45	£1,569,309	12.2	10.5
D/deaf or Disabled People	109	£4,577,096	29.5	30.5
People who are pregnant or on Maternity Leave	12	£172,004	3.2	1.1
People who have undergone or are undergoing gender reassignment	12	£178,947	3.2	1.2

We continue to ask individuals to complete equality monitoring forms when applying for grants and the information received in 2021-22 showed us that 49% of grants awarded went to individuals who identified as female and 37% to those who identified as male with a higher proportion than before of those preferring not to say. Interestingly, the grant amount awarded to those identifying as male was on average £3,000 higher than those awarded to those who identified as female. This is an issue for us to explore further.

The majority of grants awarded went to people aged between 26 and 49. With only 2 grants awarded to people under 25 and 7 to people aged over 60.

When looking at the sexual orientation of those awarded grants, we saw a shift from previous years. More people identifying as being Lesbian, gay or bisexual were awarded grants in 2021-22, over a quarter of all individuals. In comparison to the previous year when two thirds of all grants were allocated to Straight/Heterosexual people. In 2021-22 this went down to 50%.

14% of all awards were made to Culturally and Ethnically Diverse people and a further 6% opted for the 'prefer not to say' option. This compared to 2020-21 when 88% of all awards to individuals were to people who identified as White. On average, awards made to Culturally and Ethnically diverse people were higher than awards made to those that identify as White.

A quarter of all grants awarded in 2021-22 went to D/deaf and disabled individuals. This was up from 10% on the previous year. On average each grant to D/deaf and disabled individuals was around £1,500 higher than those who did not identify as disabled.

We also asked organisations applying for Lottery funding to complete an equality monitoring form in relation to the make up of their boards of management. Although our methodology has changed to allow us to receive more data, the picture had changed little when compared to previous years. 25 awards were made to organisations that are led by culturally and ethnically diverse people and similarly 27 awards were made to organisations that are led by D/deaf or disabled people.

However, there does seem to be a shift in the age profile of Boards of Management with less Older Person led Boards receiving grants.



## Case Study

# Jukebox Collective: Future Creatives

**Collaborators and Partners:** Watch Africa, SSAP, Futurimpose

**Facilitators:** Bethan James, Liana Stewart, Karimah Hassan, Ibbby Tarafdar, Yusuf Ismail

**Location:** Cardiff, South Wales

**Award:** £23,300

**Priorities:** Ethnically and culturally diverse, Artist-led, community focus, innovative

Jukebox Collective and partners invited Welsh people from diverse backgrounds to joint imagination sessions investigating how Wales could better embrace them, their creativity and ambitions.

Creating spaces where participants felt at ease and understood, the project involved over 50 creatives who worked with facilitators and industry consultants who were representative and relatable to participants.

These sessions resulted in a report outlining the challenges in accessing spaces, events and artist development. The report explores how Welsh creatives are challenging the status quo and shares their hopes, ideas and ambitions for the future.

Future Creatives sparked a massive shift among participants and for Jukebox Collective and led to a second larger Connect & Flourish application. Future Creatives work collaboratively on the co-creation of Black-led experiences, events and sessions, receive support, mentoring and work as equal partners with Jukebox Collective.

## Project outcomes

- Provided opportunity for over 50 creatives to come together in safe spaces that were supportive and built connection, knowledge, confidence and inspiration.
- Publication of Future Creatives report.
- Increasing understanding of the barriers ethnically diverse Welsh creatives face and solutions for change.



# Strategic Equality Committee

The monitoring of the Arts Council of Wales' responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty is something that Council has taken very seriously. It has set the bar high and is keen – not only to meet our obligations fully – but to champion the principles underpinning the legislation.

The newly established Strategic Equality Committee continued to closely monitor progress with our strategic equality action plan and also gave focus to the development and progress of the Widening Engagement action plan.

The Committee sets the agenda of our equalities work and reports directly to Council on performance against our objectives.

# Meeting our Legislative Responsibilities

During 2021/22 we monitored our progress with the day to day tasks required to meet our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty at two meetings of the monitoring group.

**Our plan continues to address the general duty in relation to:**

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

**In relation to the specific duties for Wales, we have:**

- Continued to monitor and report on pay differences with specific reference to gender pay gaps.
- Collate and monitor employment data, including applications for posts within the Arts Council but we are still to progress our work around monitoring of training and professional development amongst our staff. This will need to be taken forward in the next financial year.
- We have continued to produce detailed equality impact assessments for all policies, programmes and projects.
- We include equalities expectations in our procurement policy and processes but have not yet developed a process for monitoring progress against these expectations. This will need to be taken forward in the next financial year.

# Evidence of the Five Ways of Working

## The integration of our work with the work of other public bodies

We continued to work with the network of 11 public bodies on our shared equality objectives and we took over the administration for the group. The network includes bodies such as Natural Resources Wales, Sports Wales, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Velindre University NHS Trust, Welsh Language Commissioner, Careers Wales, amongst others.

This partnership will continue with a commitment to monitor our progress against the objectives and share learning and emerging best practice.

## Increasing the number of collaborations and partnerships we are involved in

Strong collaborations and partnerships continue to be critical to our work and during the year we have continued to nurture the strategic level partnerships we have established. These have included those referenced below.

We have continued to work closely with other Arts Councils across the UK learning from their work and sharing our own.

Discussions have continued to focus on the possible development of a UK wide access card scheme.

A key partnership has been with Amgueddfa Cymru on taking forward our Widening Engagement Action Plan.

We are working with key equality bodies to help drive our work forward. These include Stonewall Cymru, Diverse Cymru, Chwarae Teg, Older People's Commissioner's Office, Race Council Cymru, Health Boards, Public Health Wales.

## Listening to our staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries

Our Strategic Equality Committee involves staff from across the organisation as well as external advisors.

Consulting with wider stakeholders, specifically organisations and individuals we don't already have an ongoing relationship with continues to be a key aim and ongoing challenge for us. Our Widening Engagement work will be key in informing the future direction of our plan.

## Preventing Harm

Our equalities objectives have been designed to address the prevention agenda.

## Thinking Long Term

This continues to be a key driver for our work. Considering the longer term impact of what we do now has become more embedded in our planning.



# Annual Report 2021-22 Strategic Equality Plan

[www.arts.wales](http://www.arts.wales)

