

Arts Council of Wales

# Strategic Equality Plan 2014/15

June 2014





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# Arts Council of Wales

## Strategic Equality Plan 2014/15

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## 1. Our vision for the Arts in Wales

Arts Council of Wales is the country's funding and development agency for the arts. Our vision is of a creative Wales where the arts are central to the life of the nation.

We're ambitious for the arts in Wales. Our strategy – *Inspire: creativity and the arts* – is at the heart of our work. We're about creative ambition and endeavour in the arts; the need for the arts to connect and engage; and the skill needed to ensure that the impact of what the arts achieve renews itself and lasts.

Our strategy is therefore straightforward – it's summed up in just three words:

Make

Reach

Sustain

Making art, ensuring it connects and giving it a durable legacy are all part of the same picture. And these are the themes that underpin our work.

When we talk about **Make**, we mean artistic creation. We want to foster an environment for our artists and arts organisations in which they can create their best work. Because if we **Make** well, we inspire.

If we inspire, more people in Wales will enjoy and take part in the best that our nation has to offer. This is at the heart of our ability to **Reach**, and crucially to reach further than before, and to engage individuals and communities who have felt excluded from our work.

And if in doing this, something of worth is created in what is made or who is embraced, then we should ask how we protect and **Sustain** these things in ways that work economically and that can endure.

We achieve our goals by:

- distributing Government grant-in-aid and Lottery funds
- providing advice about the arts
- sharing information
- raising the profile of the arts in Wales
- generating more money for the arts economy
- influencing planners and decision-makers
- developing international opportunities in the arts
- promoting small scale performances in local communities

Our commitment to equality is fundamental to our work.

The arts help us to understand difference. But they also help us to explore and express the things we have in common and our place in the world. A fair-minded and tolerant society values and respects the needs, interests and creativity of everybody. It's a society that's impatient of disadvantage, which embraces equality and celebrates difference. We want the arts in Wales to include everyone. We know this will make the arts in Wales more vibrant, exciting and relevant.

We're committed to using our knowledge and imagination to make sure that we consider equality across all our work. We'll think about how we can make sure we treat people equally when we're giving out funding, delivering services and in all our everyday work.

Our Strategic Equality Plan 2014/15 builds on consultation that we undertook in 2011. It also takes into account the equalities evidence that is available to us. Our Plan includes work that we currently do and that will continue. It also identifies new objectives. It's informed by what we have learnt from listening to a variety of people and organisations.

We value the contribution that these different voices have made to the development of our work to date. We know that if we want to make policy and deliver work that is relevant to a diverse range of people, then a diverse range of views and experiences must inform the Plan's development and delivery.

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## 2. Our approach to equality and diversity

We adopt an inclusive and broad approach to equality and diversity – one that includes all the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief (or lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation, and Welsh Language.

Our approach recognises that discrimination is often experienced due to a combination of factors. The plan will help us to make sure that we are considering all the protected characteristics.

We recognise, too, that we need to work hard to tackle current inequalities. But we also want to make sure that we value the role people from all parts of our society can play in creating a vibrant Wales. We know that the arts in Wales will be stronger, more exciting and relevant to more people if we embrace diversity. We are enthusiastic about wanting to look at what we do and how we work through fresh eyes. It will revitalise our approach and help increase access to the arts.

## 3. Our previous activity

We're not starting from scratch. The Plan will build on the work we have already carried out and help us to mainstream equality and diversity into all of our work. This includes looking at how we do things internally and the culture of our organisation.

If you want more details of our work to date you can look at our [Annual Equality Report 2012/13](#) which is on our website. Looking at our website <http://www.artswales.org/> is also a good way to find out about the type of work we generally support.

We know there's much more we can do to make sure people across the full range of protected characteristics can enjoy the arts as audiences, participants and artists. We also know that some arts organisations are really good at making sure equality is at the heart of their work.

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## 4. Our Plan

Our Plan is delivered through the eight corporate objectives that apply to the delivery of all our work.

<b>Make</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Creating the environment for the arts to flourish.</li><li>2. Increasing the value of international cultural exchange to the arts in Wales</li></ol>
<b>Reach</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Finding new opportunities, ways and places for people to enjoy and take part in the arts</li><li>4. Developing the creativity of children and young people</li></ol>
<b>Sustain</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Encouraging innovation, resilience and sustainability</li><li>6. Protecting and growing the funding for the arts in Wales</li><li>7. Demonstrating the value of the arts</li><li>8. Making the Arts Council an efficient and effective public body</li></ol>

Each of these objectives relate to all protected characteristics, although we also publish a separate Welsh Language Action Plan.

Our approach is to bring all the protected characteristics together and consider everyone when we are planning all our work. But there will be times when we need to include objectives that relate to specific protected characteristics. We'll do this when the equalities data we collect tells us that there is specific action that needs to be taken to make sure people are treated equally.

We are also mindful of the fact that some people may have more than one protected characteristic, and may therefore experience multiple levels of disadvantage.

Our Action Plan for 2014/15 is set out as [Appendix 1](#). We are required to publish an objective for each protected characteristic, or publish the reasons why we haven't. [Appendix 2: Summary of how the draft plan relates to the different protected characteristics](#) tells you how each objective relates to the protected characteristics. One of the most important objectives included in the Plan relates to the ways in which we will collect data relating to each protected characteristic. This will make sure we can review how the plan is advancing equality for each of them. This data will include evidence collected by listening to what different people tell us, and by engaging with protected characteristic groups.

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## 5. Monitoring our progress

We're committed to monitoring, and reporting on, our progress. An Equalities Monitoring Group scrutinises our work. The Group includes independent external observers and is chaired by a member of our Council. The Group reports directly to Council.

One of the important ways that we monitor and evaluate what we're doing is through our use of Equality Impact Assessments. We carry out Equality Impact Assessments on all policy and practice and improve how we do this (including making sure we fully consider all protected characteristics). We assess all new policy or practice and revisions to existing policies. You can see details of the assessments we carried out in 2012/13 in our Annual Equality Report 2012/13.

We'll continue to carry out Equality Impact Assessments on new and revised policies and make sure our staff receive training and support to do this. We'll also improve how we use equalities evidence to inform our assessments.

We'll use our Annual Equality report to publish a summary of the practical actions identified through the assessments and whether they've been delivered. We'll also identify, if necessary, where more work needs to be done.

## Appendix 1: Equalities Action Plan 2014/15

1. Creating the environment for the arts to flourish.		
<p><b>What are we trying to achieve?</b></p> <p>We want to see our best artists and organisations able to create their best work and to sustain themselves through the quality of their activities. Priorities will be our investment in our revenue funded (RFO) portfolio, support for the individual artist and festivals and major events that significantly raise the profile of the arts.</p> <p>Previous research identified development needs that led us to introducing the <i>Creative Steps Development Programme</i>. The programme is now operational and initial feedback suggests that this is helping to target artists who didn't previously feel able to access Arts Council funding.</p> <p>More generally, our funding information and Guidelines are being reviewed to promote more widely the funding opportunities that we offer.</p>		
Action	Measure	Lead team
1. Ensure that our new arts development strategy, <i>Creativity and the arts</i> , enables positive and practical implementation of our Equalities objectives	– Equalities Impact Assessment either confirms the appropriateness of the strategy, or identifies the amendments that are needed	Arts Development
2. Simplify Lottery Funded schemes and publish new guidelines	– New edition of Guidelines published for 2014/15	Investment and Funding Services
3. Encourage applications from a wider diversity of individuals and organisations	– Work with specialist arts organisations, and diversity community groups and organisations to improve the reach of our funding surgeries	Information Services

Action	Measure	Lead team
4. Implement a <i>Creative Steps</i> successor scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– New procedures agreed and published</li> <li>– Data compiled on number of applications received and success rate</li> </ul>	Engagement and Participation
5. Invest Lottery capital funding to improve access for people with physical, sensory, cognitive and learning impairments in Wales' principal arts venues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improving access for audiences with physical, sensory, cognitive and learning impairments is a priority in our new Capital Programme</li> </ul>	Investment and Funding Services

2. Increasing the value of international cultural exchange to the arts in Wales		
<p><b>What are we trying to achieve?</b></p> <p>We want to enable leading artists and arts organisations in Wales to realise their international ambitions by expanding horizons, encouraging potential and connecting with inspiring partners and markets. In an increasingly globalised world we want the arts in Wales to be able to operate effectively in the global market place.</p> <p>However, we also know that experiencing and appreciating cultural traditions from around the world can increase our understanding of cultural diversity. We therefore encourage artists and audiences to develop international links.</p>		
Action	Measure	Lead team
6. Increasing opportunities for international artist exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– International exchange projects supported through our International Opportunities Fund</li> </ul>	Wales Arts International

### 3. Finding new opportunities, ways and places for people to enjoy and take part in the arts

#### What are we trying to achieve?

We want to encourage as many people as possible in Wales to enjoy and take part in the arts. It's not just about defending and protecting what already exists. We want to see the arts activities that we support reaching out to a wider cross section of the population of Wales – in new ways and in new places – to people who've previously experienced barriers to attending and taking part in the arts.

Action	Measure	Lead team
7. Providing artists and arts organisations with the practical tools to help them reach a broader and more representative audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Equalities Guidelines and Toolkit published on our website</li> <li>– Programme of external training to cover all protected characteristics is developed and delivered.</li> </ul>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Arts Development</p>
8. Build relationships with partners who can help us to understand the particular views and perspectives of people across the full range of protected characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Implement partnership project with Baring Foundation and Age Cymru.</li> <li>– Continue to develop the relationship with Diverse Cymru across a range of projects.</li> <li>– Identify and develop potential partnerships with groups across other protected characteristics such as Stonewall Cymru and Bi Cymru/Wales.</li> </ul>	Engagement and Participation
9. Enable disabled patrons to more easily book and attend arts events across Wales through the introduction of a Disability Card Users Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Scheme scoped and launched</li> <li>– First phase of implementation successfully rolled out</li> </ul>	Engagement and Participation

#### 4. Developing the creativity of children and young people

##### What are we trying to achieve?

We want to see more children and young people across Wales actively involved in high quality creative activity. Whatever the circumstances that they face, we want all young people to have the opportunity to develop their talents (including to an advanced level of attainment).

Young Creators – our strategy for the development of arts and young people – commits us to ensuring that opportunities to engage with the arts are available to all children and young people in Wales. Children and young people have different skills, different abilities and different needs. In all of our programmes we will make sure that all of these needs and abilities are met.

A key priority will be working with the Welsh Government on the implementation of the Arts and Education Review.

Action	Measure	Lead team
10. Ensure that children and young people's different abilities and needs are met by making sure that there is no differential impact on any child or young person involved in the programmes and projects we initiate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Equality Impact Assessments undertaken on all new programmes and projects</li> <li>– Equality Impact Assessments published and action plans delivered</li> </ul>	Engagement and Participation
11. Develop, implement and support projects which are developed specifically to address instances where potential differentiation has been identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Specific targeted projects support such as Youth of Creative</li> <li>– Projects supported within larger programmes such as Momentum</li> </ul>	Engagement and Participation

## 5. Encouraging innovation, resilience and sustainability

### What are we trying to achieve?

We want to deliver a strategy for the Arts Council, and the arts in Wales, that encourages innovation and entrepreneurship and that enables the work of our artists and arts organisations to become more resilient and sustainable.

Our definition of sustainability is wide ranging and extends to environmental, social and economic well-being. A key feature of this is likely to be the extent that arts organisations are 'embedded' within their local communities, promoting activity which engages and reaches individuals across the complete range of society.

Action	Measure	Lead team
12. Support RFOs to operate fully compliant Equalities policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– All RFOs to provide copies of current/updated Equalities policies</li> <li>– Assess the range and extent of current compliance through the Annual Review Meetings</li> <li>– Publicise and promote examples of good practice</li> <li>– Plan for the inclusion of Equalities issues across all the protected characteristics as part of the RFO Development Programme for 2015</li> </ul>	<p>Investment and Funding Services</p> <p>Communications</p> <p>Investment and Funding Services</p>
13. National companies demonstrate leadership role in promoting equalities and diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Pilot project on cultural diversity is developed</li> <li>– Evaluation on completion with a view to implementing future projects focussing on other protected characteristics.</li> </ul>	Arts Development

## 6. Protecting and growing the funding for the arts in Wales

### What are we trying to achieve?

The arts in Wales are sustained by a range of different organisations contributing money, resources and expertise. However, funding (especially in the public sector) is being squeezed, with our local authorities in particular facing increasing difficulties in maintaining current levels of funding. Our priority during 2014/15 will be an advocacy campaign designed to protect local authority investment in the arts.

Data and evidence allows us to monitor how effectively we are working. Improving our evidence base will be a priority during 2014/15.

Action	Measure	Lead team
14. Ensuring that the Arts Council's policies, procedures and projects have a positive impact on our equalities goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Equality Impact Assessments reviewed on a regular basis</li> </ul>	Monitoring Group
15. Collect data on all protected characteristics in relation to how our funding is distributed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Data analysed and used to inform our future development work</li> <li>– Report on progress in our Annual Equality Report</li> </ul>	Research  Chief Executive

## 7. Demonstrating the value of the arts

### What are we trying to achieve?

We want to promote a positive and engaging view of the arts in Wales, making sure that the arts sector and the wider public in Wales understand what we, the Arts Council, are trying to achieve.

We have supported events such as Black History Month celebrations, Unity (an arts and disability festival), Cardiff Multicultural Mela and the Gwanwyn Festival that celebrates creativity in older age.

Action	Measure	Lead team
16. Collect and promote examples of good practice that demonstrate a positive approach to equalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum of 6 case studies collected and written up</li> <li>- At least 1 media campaign focusing on equalities issues</li> </ul>	Communications
17. Encourage debate about the role that the arts can play in advancing equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Equality issues featured in discussion/networking event with National Advisers</li> <li>- Equality issues a feature in one of the Sgwrs events during 2014/15</li> </ul>	Arts Development  Communications
18. Ensuring that the information we publish through our website is accessible - especially for disabled people - but also with consideration of all the protected characteristics groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standards are followed as set out in <i>Equal Spaces: Best Practice guidance for arts providers on disability</i></li> </ul>	Communications

## 8. Making the Arts Council an efficient and effective public body

### What are we trying to achieve?

As a public body we have a responsibility to create a strong, confident organisation providing services that are relevant and useful. We provide professional services across a range of disciplines. As well as aiming for quality in the delivery of these services, we're committed to doing so in ways which reduce cost and recognise our responsibility to become a more environmentally sustainable organisation.

We believe that we will be more effective as an organisation if our Council, Advisers and Staff are more representative of the wider population. We recognise that treating people equally sometimes involves enabling people to work differently. In 2011 we agreed a programme of internal cultural change called *Our Culture: Open Doors, Open Minds* because we recognise that equality and diversity need to be considered in everything we do.

Our Council members are appointed by the Welsh Government (in consultation with our Chair), so the selection of candidates is not entirely within our sphere of influence. However, we will encourage the Welsh Government to consider any necessary equalities matters when recruiting new Council members.

Action	Measure	Lead team
17. Ensure that the culture within the Arts Council respects and embraces issues of diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Review and update <i>Our Culture: Open Doors, Open Minds</i></li> <li>– Delivery of Diverse Cymru Development Programme for Arts Council staff and Council members</li> </ul>	<p>Engagement and Participation</p> <p>HR</p>
18. Arts Council meets its obligations and demonstrates a positive approach to Equalities matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strategic Equality Plan for 2014/15 is published</li> <li>– Plan is monitored</li> <li>– Equality Impact Assessments are completed and actions monitored as appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Monitoring Group</p> <p>All teams</p>

Action	Measure	Lead team
19. Policies and procedures for the procurement of goods and services are fair, equitable and transparent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supplier/contractor questionnaire devised, to include questions on practice in promoting equality.</li> <li>– Data and statistics included in Equalities Annual report</li> </ul>	Corporate Services/Arts Development
20. Increase diversity amongst the Arts Council's staff and National Advisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Different strategies developed for recruitment</li> <li>– Increased number of applications from diverse communities</li> </ul>	Finance and Resources
21. We report on our progress during the year, identifying our achievements against the targets in this Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Annual Equalities Report for 2013/14 produced and published</li> </ul>	Chief Executive

## Appendix 2: The policy framework

The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010. The Act brings together and replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies and strengthens the law, removes inconsistencies and makes it easier for people to understand and comply with it.

The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the 'general duty') that replaces previous separate duties on race, disability and gender equality. This came into force on 4 April 2011.

It covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (only in relation to the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief (or lack of belief)
- Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Arts Council of Wales is one of the public bodies that is covered by the general duty. The aim of the general duty is to make sure that public authorities, and those carrying out a public function, consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty makes sure that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review.

We are required to have due regard of the need 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 characteristic and those who do not
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

To make sure that we comply with the Act we must:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

Specific duties, set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011) also apply to listed public bodies in Wales, including Arts Council of Wales. These tell us the steps we need to take to demonstrate that we are paying due regard to the general duty.

To make sure we comply with both the general and specific duties we will:

- Prepare and publish our equality objectives each year in our Strategic Equality Plan
- Make appropriate arrangements to monitor progress towards meeting our objectives and to monitor the effectiveness of our approach
- Give appropriate consideration to relevant equality information we hold when considering what our equality objectives should be
- Review all our equality objectives at least once every four years
- Involve a broad range of people (included people who are seen to be representative of one or more protected groups) in:
  - Setting equality objectives
  - Preparing and reviewing our Strategic Equality Plan
  - Identifying how our work could contribute to meeting the general duty
  - Assessing the likely impact on protected groups of any policies or practices being proposed and reviewed (through our Equality Impact Assessment Process)
- Carry out Equality Impact Assessments on proposed and reviewed policies and practices
- Improve how we collect, analyse and use equalities data
- collect and publish on an annual basis relevant equalities information about our staff
- Revise our procurement process
- Produce an Annual Equality Report each year and publish this in accessible formats

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## Appendix 3: How the Plan relates to the different protected characteristics

### **Objective 1: Creating the environment for the arts to flourish.**

**How this relates to the different Protected Characteristics:** This objective relates to all protected characteristics.

It could be said that it will have a greater impact initially on those protected characteristics that we haven't previously included in the data that we gather. Improved data will enable us to better assess how effective we have been in creating the environment in which artists from across the protected characteristics have been able to take advantage of the opportunities we offer.

### **Objective 2: Increasing the value of international cultural exchange to the arts in Wales**

**How this relates to the different Protected Characteristics:** This objective relates to all protected characteristics.

However, given the international dimension to this objective there are obvious opportunities to promote greater understanding of Race, Religion and the Welsh Language in particular.

### **Objective 3: Finding new opportunities, ways and places for people to enjoy and take part in the arts**

**How this relates to the different Protected Characteristics:** This objective relates to all protected characteristics.

The focus of our monitoring will be our portfolio of Revenue Funded Organisations (RFOs) and Lottery funded projects. We know that there are a range of access issues that should be considered. We will talk to our RFOs about these at their Annual Reviews and encourage and monitor whether organisations are taking action to increase access across the board.

But we know from our Arts in Wales Survey that disabled people are significantly experiencing barriers to accessing the arts. As such this group will be a particular focus of our monitoring.

#### **Objective 4: Developing the creativity of children and young people**

**How this relates to the different Protected Characteristics:** This objective potentially relates to all protected characteristics.

However, it will have a greater impact on Age as this is the obvious characteristic that relates to children and young people.

#### **Objective 5: Encouraging innovation, resilience and sustainability**

**How this relates to the different Protected Characteristics:** This Objective relates to all protected characteristics.

If the publicly funded arts are to be more sustainable then, organisations must have a real and connected relationship with the widest possible audience. Key organisations will need to be encouraged and supported in their endeavours to meet this goal.

We will make this is the case by making sure all protected characteristics are covered in the discussion, training and projects that will form part of the delivery of this plan. We will be especially careful to make sure that protected characteristics that haven't previously been a focus of our work are considered when training needs are being identified. We'll monitor the training needs responses by protected characteristic.

#### **Objective 6: Protecting and growing the funding for the arts in Wales**

**How this relates to the different Protected Characteristics:** This objective relates to all Protected Characteristics.

### **Objective 7: Demonstrating the value of the arts**

**How this relates to the different Protected Characteristics:** This objective relates to all protected characteristics.

Through our Communications activity we will monitor whether the debate generated tends to focus on any specifically and take action to generate other debate if some appear to have been neglected.

We will also be mindful of the way that we communicate with disabled people or people who have specific language needs, especially through our website.

### **Objective 8: Making the Arts Council an efficient and effective public body**

**How this relates to the different Protected Characteristics:** This Objective relates to all protected characteristics.

As a public body, we are expected to provide a service to all members of the public. To achieve this goal it is especially important that our staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to operate confidently across all of the protected characteristics.

A skills gap analysis has highlighted gaps in relation to protected characteristics that have not been covered by previous legislation. For this reason the objective could have a greater impact on sexual orientation, religion or belief (or lack of belief) and transgender. However, appropriate training will be undertaken during 2014/15.