



Áras Éanna Arts Centre

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and Action Plan

(Draft for Board Approval)

1. Introduction and context

Áras Éanna Arts Centre is located on Inis Oírr, one of the Aran Islands in the heart of the Gaeltacht. We deliver a broad programme of arts and cultural activities, including exhibitions, performances, residencies, workshops, education programmes, festivals and community programmes.

Our audiences include local communities and tourists. Visitors and shared users of the building of all ages and backgrounds use the centre. We work with a small team of permanent and part-time staff, freelancers, and volunteers, and are governed by a voluntary board of management.

Our primary challenge to making the centre more welcoming and accommodating to audiences, artists, and visitors is the physical space. Áras Éanna occupies an old weaving factory, and accordingly there are a lot of issues with the layout and construction of the space that require long term capital funding and a development plan. Within our programming and artistic planning however, there are currently gaps in transparency around our commitment to diversity and representation that we also aim to fill in the coming years.

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and Action Plan has been developed in response to:

- Irish equality legislation and the **nine protected grounds**.
- The Arts Council's EDI Policy and Implementation Plan.

This is a living document. It will be reviewed by the board at least **once a year**, and the full policy will be updated every **three years**.



2. Commitment statement

Áras Éanna Arts Centre is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work. We aim to provide equal access, opportunity and outcomes for all those living in Ireland regardless of their:

- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Civil or family status
- Religion or belief
- Age
- Disability
- Race (including ethnicity, nationality and national origin)
- Membership of the Traveller community
- Socio-economic background

We recognise that our building has significant physical access challenges. We are committed to taking practical, phased steps to reduce barriers and improve inclusion for staff, artists, volunteers, audiences and communities.

We value the diversity of our staff and casual workers, and we strive to maintain a welcoming, respectful and safe environment for everyone who works with or visits Áras Éanna.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- **Governance:** board members, committees and advisors.
- **Employment:** permanent, part-time and casual staff, freelancers, tutors and facilitators.
- **Volunteering:** all volunteers.



- **Programming:** exhibitions, performances, residencies, workshops, education, community projects, festivals and outreach.
- **Audience development and participation.**
- **Communications:** including Irish language provision.
- **Physical and digital access:** building, facilities, and any online presence.
- **Partnerships and collaborations** with other organisations, artists and communities.

All staff, board members, volunteers, artists, tutors and partners are expected to respect and uphold this policy.

4. Legal and policy framework

Áras Éanna's EDI work is informed by:

- Irish equality legislation and the **nine protected grounds** under the Employment Equality Acts and Equal Status Acts.
- The **Arts Council's EDI Policy and Implementation Plan**, which commits the Council and funded organisations to equality of access, opportunity and outcomes.

5. Governance and responsibilities

5.1 Board responsibility

- The board of Áras Éanna has overall responsibility for EDI.
- EDI will be reviewed at least **once a year** at board or management meetings.
- The board will approve this EDI Policy and Action Plan and review it every **three years**.

5.2 Staff responsibility



- Given the small size of the team, EDI responsibility is **shared** among staff.
- One or two staff members will act as **EDI lead(s)** for coordination, including:
 - Collecting and summarising basic EDI data.
 - Updating the action plan and tracking progress.
 - Arranging training and supporting the board EDI champion.
- All staff, freelancers, tutors and volunteers are expected to:
 - Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
 - Avoid discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Raise concerns or suggestions about EDI with the EDI lead(s) or board.

5.3 Partners, artists and tutors

- Partners, artists and tutors working with Áras Éanna are expected to respect this policy and relevant equality and safeguarding laws.
- Where appropriate, EDI expectations will be included in agreements, briefs and calls for participation.

6. EDI goals (internal and external)

In line with our mission Áras Éanna has set the following initial EDI goals.

6.1 Internal goals (staff, board, volunteers)

Goal 1: Training and awareness

- Within 12 months, all staff and board members will have completed introductory EDI training (online or in-person).
- EDI will be a standing item at least once a year at board/management meetings.

Goal 2: Recruitment and induction



- Within 6 months, introduce simple written recruitment procedures (job descriptions, person specifications, basic interview questions) that include EDI considerations.
- Include a short EDI and safeguarding section in induction for all new staff, freelancers, and volunteers.

6.2 External goals (audiences, participants, communities)

Goal 3: Access and participation

- Within 12 months, develop a simple **access improvement plan** for the building and programmes, informed by an informal access review and feedback from users.
- For at least **two events per year**, collect basic anonymous audience data and feedback on barriers and accessibility.

Goal 4: Programming and representation

- Over the next 12 months, ensure that programming decisions explicitly consider diversity and inclusion (e.g. who is represented, who might be excluded, what access needs exist). We expect this to be reflected in our 2028 programme whereupon staff and the board are working with our EDI plan in mind.
- Explore at least one new partnership with a community organisation by the end of Year 1.

7. Key areas of action

The table below sets out actions, responsibilities, timelines and measures of success. This forms the core of the EDI Action Plan.



7.1 Governance and leadership

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Measure of success
Add EDI as a standing agenda item at least once a year at board/management meetings	Chairperson / EDI lead(s)	Ongoing from August 2026	EDI item recorded in minutes at least annually
Review and update this EDI policy and action plan every 3 years	Board with EDI lead(s)	Every 3 years from January 2030	Updated policy approved and dated by board

7.2 Training and capacity building

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Measure of success
Identify and book introductory EDI training for staff and board	EDI lead(s)	Within 12 months	Training completed; attendance recorded
Use Arts Council EDI Toolkit and peer policies as learning resources	EDI lead(s)	Ongoing	Resources referenced in planning and policy updates

7.3 Recruitment, staff and volunteers

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Measure of success
Create simple templates for job descriptions and person specifications with EDI considerations	EDI lead(s)	Within 6 months	Templates in use for new roles
Develop basic interview questions that include EDI considerations	EDI lead(s)	Within 6 months	Questions used in interviews
Create an induction checklist including EDI, safeguarding and accessibility	EDI lead(s)	Within 6 months	Checklist used for all new staff, freelancers, tutors and volunteers
Include a short EDI statement in all recruitment advertisements	EDI lead(s)	Within 6 months	EDI statement visible in ads



7.4 Programming and participation

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Measure of success
Add a short EDI checklist to programming discussions (who is this for, who might be excluded, access needs, advertising, pricing)	Programming lead / EDI lead(s)	Within 6 months	Checklist used in planning meetings
Ensure at least two events per year include/ are programmed with/ target under-represented groups	Programming lead / EDI lead(s)	Annually	Recorded in annual report

7.5 Audience development and monitoring

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Measure of success
For at least two events per year, collect basic anonymous audience data (e.g. age band, location, disability yes/no/prefer not to say, Irish language ability)	EDI lead(s) / front-of-house	Annually	Data collected and summarised for board review
Include 1–2 EDI questions in feedback forms or conversations (e.g. barriers experienced, suggestions for improvement)	EDI lead(s) / front-of-house	Annually	Feedback recorded and considered in planning

7.6 Communications and language

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Measure of success
Continue bilingual (Irish/English) communications in signage, programmes, flyers, forms and digital content where applicable	All staff	Ongoing	Bilingual materials consistently produced
Develop simple guidelines for inclusive language (disability, gender, age, ethnicity) and accessible information (plain English, clear fonts, alt text for images, captions for video)	EDI lead(s)	Within 12 months	Guidelines documented and shared with team

7.7 Physical and digital access

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Measure of success
Carry out an informal access review of the building and note key barriers	EDI lead(s) / board	Within 12 months	Access review document completed
Document existing temporary measures and aspirations for access	EDI lead(s)	Within 12 months	Measures and aspirations recorded
Develop a phased access improvement plan (low-cost, medium- and long-term improvements)	Board with EDI lead(s)	Within 12 months	Access plan approved by board
Implement at least one access improvement in Year 1 (e.g. signage, seating, staff assistance, ground-floor programming)	Board / EDI lead(s)	Within 12 months	Improvement completed and noted in report

7.8 Partnerships and collaboration

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Measure of success
Explore at least one new partnership with a community organisation (e.g. disability, Traveller, ethnic minority, youth, older people, or Irish language group)	Programming lead / EDI lead(s)	Within 12 months	New partnership established or in development

8. Resources and budget

- EDI and accessibility costs will be considered in all future budgets and funding applications.
- For Arts Council Strategic Funding and other relevant schemes, EDI and access costs (e.g. training, access improvements, outreach, materials) will be explicitly included in budget lines.
- The board will ensure that sufficient time and resources are allocated to implement the actions in this plan.

9. Monitoring, evaluation and review

9.1 Annual review

- The board/management will review EDI progress at least **once a year**.
- The review will consider:
 - Data collected on staff, artists, tutors and audiences (for 1–2 events per year).
 - Feedback on barriers and accessibility.
 - Actions completed from the EDI Action Plan.
 - Any incidents, concerns or good practice related to EDI.
- A short EDI progress report will be prepared for the board by the EDI lead(s).

9.2 Three-year review

- The full EDI Policy and Action Plan will be reviewed and updated every **three years**.
- The review will:
 - Assess progress against goals and actions.
 - Consult staff, board, artists and (where possible) audiences and communities.
 - Update goals and actions to reflect learning, changes in the organisation and new funding or legal requirements.

9.3 Measures of success (examples)

- EDI training completed by all staff and board.
- Recruitment and induction templates in use.
- At least two events per year with audience data and feedback collected.
- Access improvement plan drafted and at least one improvement implemented.
- EDI explicitly considered in programming decisions.
- New community partnership established or in development.



- EDI item recorded in board minutes at least annually.

10. Related policies

This EDI Policy should be read alongside:

- Áras Éanna **Child Safeguarding Policy**.
- Áras Éanna **Climate Policy**.
- Any future policies on:
 - Dignity at work / bullying and harassment
 - Recruitment
 - Complaints and feedback
 - Environmental or social responsibility



11. Approval and adoption

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan was approved by the board of Áras Éanna Arts Centre on:

Date of approval: [Date]

Approved by: [Name/role of chairperson]

Review date: [Date – 3 years from approval]

Signed (Chairperson):

James C. Harrold

Artistic Director:

Dara McGee

Date:

09/09/26

This policy will be made available to staff, board members, volunteers, artists, tutors and partners, and will be published where appropriate (e.g. on a website or in funding applications).