



## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan

Version	By Author	Reason	Modification Date	Date Ratified	Date for Review
1	NB	New Policy	18.6.22	27.6.22	JUNE 2023
2	NB	Interim update	21.8.23	21.8.23	JAN 2024
3	NB	Review	31.1.24	1.2.24	MAY 2024

**This policy applies to all Directors and members of staff, volunteers, freelance workers contracted to Quench Arts C.I.C and participants.**

Equality, diversity and inclusion are values which are fundamental to Quench Art's work and sit at the core of our organisational processes, practices and culture.

- We are committed to attracting and recruiting diverse representatives as it's important that our advisory board, staff, and volunteers reflect the communities we serve across our organisation.
- We will strive to eliminate any unlawful or unfair discrimination including direct or indirect discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination linked to a perceived characteristic, harassment and victimisation. Harassment and bullying of any kind will not be tolerated (please see Quench Arts' Grievance and Complaints Policy for further information).
- We will remain pro-active in taking steps to ensure inclusion and engagement for all the people who work for and with us.
- We will continue to strive towards a culture that is diverse and inclusive that recognises and develops the potential of all.
- We recognise the benefits and opportunities of having a diverse community of staff and volunteers, who value one another and realise the contribution they can make to achieving Quench Arts' vision.

Quench Arts is an equal opportunities and a real living wage employer.

The Equality Act 2010 provides the legislative framework that informs our work to promote equality of opportunity and reduce barriers to engagement, in particular for protected groups including:

- age\*
- disability\*
- ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)\*
- gender\*
- gender reassignment\*
- religion or belief\*
- sexual orientation\*
- marriage and civil partnership\*
- pregnancy and maternity\*
- refugees and asylum seekers
- people who are neuro-divergent
- ex-offenders

\*Under the Equality Act (2010) these are known as “protected characteristics”.

The Human Rights Act (1998) makes it illegal to discriminate on a wide range of grounds including ‘sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other statuses.

## **Achieving action**

We have an Equality\*, Diversity\* & Inclusion\* plan, which sets out how we plan to model best practice within our communications, fundraising, workforce and governance.

\*We define this as:

Equality – we believe in equality for all people. However, society is not equal, and for this reason, we adopt an equitable approach to give support to those who need it most.

Diversity – we take active steps to ensure that our workforce and those we support are represented, included and respected, whatever their gender, ethnicity, race, religious and political beliefs, education, socio-economic background, disability, sexual orientation and geographic location.

Inclusion – we are committed to ensuring that everyone feels welcome, no one feels uncomfortable, and everyone is able to thrive and contribute equally.

The action plan is assessed and reviewed on annual basis.

## **Equality, diversity and inclusion action plan 2022-25**

Our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) action plan for 2022 to 2025 aims to make EDI central to the Quench Arts' culture. We have clear ambitions for EDI, and we will be transparent and open about our intentions and how we will take responsibility for achieving them.

The action plan covers five themes:

1. Employee Experience
2. Leadership
3. Knowing and engaging our communities
4. Communication and engagement
5. Delivering inclusive services

Actions for each theme are set out below:

### **1. Employee and Volunteer Experience**

We will strengthen the diversity of our workforce, ensuring an inclusive culture that values difference, where all staff feel they belong and have opportunities to succeed.

We aim to:

- 1) Continue to monitor our staffing/volunteer data regarding colleagues with protected characteristics to help ensure our workforce is reflective of the communities we work with (biannually).
- 2) Enable more staff to feel confident to declare information on protected characteristics, such as hidden disabilities, and consult staff to gain feedback to improve the support we can provide for them (e.g., we will explore how we can incorporate using the sunflower lanyards for hidden disabilities) (when contracted and then biannually).

- 3) Strengthen support for colleagues with disabilities who require reasonable adjustments to deliver their roles effectively (when contracted, via session reports and during monitoring meetings).
- 4) Continue to target our recruitment processes to attract more diverse candidates to employment, training and volunteer opportunities.



## 2. Leadership

Quench Arts Directors are champions of EDI, acting as role models and demonstrating their commitment to tackling inequality.

- 1) Ensure that the Quench Arts Advisory Board is diverse in its membership, representing a range of stakeholder voices (via quarterly meetings).
- 2) Consult with our Quench Arts Advisory Board Members to further develop this EDI policy to gain their thoughts and input (via quarterly meetings).
- 3) Continue to allocate Director time to attend Culture Central's More Than A Moment meetings (<https://www.culturecentral.co.uk/mtam/>) and other CPD opportunities to continue to learn, build knowledge and awareness.
- 4) Develop accessible versions of our policies and procedures (by December 2024, reviewed annually).

## 3. Knowing and engaging our communities

Using the best information available and fostering good relations with and within our communities, to work with them to address their needs and maximise local participation.

- 1) Undertake an audit of our project participants' personal information regarding protected characteristics so that we can ensure that we identify any gaps/inequalities in regards to participation (by December 2022 and then annually) and gain EDI feedback from participants regarding their personal journeys on Quench Arts programmes (on completion of each project as part of evaluation/monitoring).
- 2) Gather local data regarding protected characteristics to be able to compare our audit data to, ensuring our % breakdowns match the local demographic, highlighting any under-served groups (when developing new programmes/funding applications).

- 2) Use insight gathered from our audit to inform future programming and marketing in consultation with groups currently under-represented/ underserved (reviewed annually).
- 3) Moving forward, ensure we gather robust equality information from new participants and ensure all consultation and engagement is inclusive (ongoing).

#### **4. Communications and Engagement**

Clearly communicate our EDI values across Quench Arts' website and social media channels.

- 1) Develop tools, support and guidance to improve the use of language and communications across our online presence to ensure that it is inclusive (by Dec 2024).
- 2) Ensure that all new recruitment processes have appropriate language, and that people can apply for roles in different ways (written, audio, video), whilst also considering implications of unconscious bias and anti-racist practice (ongoing).
- 3) Ensure that marketing is more accessible (ongoing).
- 4) Advocate for more accessibility within the creative sector overall (as many funders have involved processes to apply which is a barrier for many) (ongoing).

#### **5. Delivering inclusive services**

Our provision is responsive to individual needs so that all participants can access services easily and have opportunities to improve their outcomes.

We will continue to:

- 1) Support an inclusive approach in all of our work and encourage participant voice, using feedback to inform and improve provision.
- 2) Ensure any venues we use are accessible and look at ways we can ensure participants feel comfortable coming for the first time (such as video tours and photos and enhanced signage).
- 3) Ensure that musical equipment is accessible for the participants we work with.
- 4) Ensure equality impacts are understood as part of decision making for emergencies and/or serious incidents and put mitigations in place where needed.

This is a living and working document that will be reviewed and revisited every quarter.