

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre

Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre aims to recognise, respect and value differences in order to promote an inclusive culture for all.

This document (in progress) is the result of ongoing dialogue and exchange with key partners Croí Glan Integrated Dance Company, meetings, focus groups, questionnaires and an openness to learn.

It aims to outline our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion for all the people who work for and with Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre and who avail of our services and opportunities.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are values that are embedded across our Strategic Plan 2022-2025, this process looks at practical application and implementation with the aim of bringing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to the Board by December 2022.

About Uillinn

Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre is an arts facility that creates opportunities for the people of West Cork to have access to, and engagement with, local and global arts practice of excellence.

Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre provides an important resource and support for artists living and working locally and nationally. It presents creative engagement opportunities for communities that increase arts participation and make accessible, critical cultural experiences for a rural community.

Our service is delivered primarily at our own premises located in Skibbereen, County Cork. We work with many partner organisations to extend our reach across West Cork. Our off-site partners include schools, hospitals, Day Care Centres, Education Centres, festivals and community venues.

An Inclusive Future

Uillinn is committed to developing and implementing an artistic programme that places public engagement, the right to cultural expression and social inclusion at its centre. Learning at Uillinn is a dialogical practice; through the arts and the work of artists our programmes foster a spirit of public enquiry and curiosity. They enhance understanding, meaning-making, expression, experimentation, and risk-taking.

We are championing accessibility and promoting the right for everyone, of all ages, to enjoy and participate in arts and culture based on the principles of dignity, independence, inclusion and equal opportunity. We're asking ourselves: who else needs to be in the room and what do we intend to do to ensure that they are? We want to create equality of opportunity in practice and, importantly, in action.

We're aiming to ensure that our artists, artistic programme and audiences reflect the contemporary society in which they are situated and this particular moment in time. We're asking ourselves what our communities will need as they re-emerge from lockdown and re-integrate into society, into a post-Covid 19 context. The pandemic has given rise to a heightened awareness of the value of interconnection and of the local; of supporting each others' well-being, both mental and physical.

Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre commits to:

Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre is fully committed to our legal obligations under the Equality Acts (1998-2015), the Equal Status Acts (2000-2018) and Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014 (Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty).

We commit to positive policy measures to promote equality of opportunity, access and outcomes for all those living in Ireland regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller Community. The legislation defines discrimination as treating one person in a less favourable way than another person.

- **Gender:** this means man, woman or transgender
- **Civil status:** includes single, married, separated, divorced, widowed people, civil partners and former civil partners
- **Family status:** this refers to the parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability
- **Sexual orientation:** includes gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual
- **Religion:** means religious belief, background, outlook or none
- **Age:** this does not apply to a person aged under 16
- **Disability:** includes people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions
- **Race:** includes race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin
- Membership of the **Traveller community**.

Furthermore, we work in line with the Arts Council's Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Policy and Strategy (EHRD), and also note the ground of socio-economic status as a further basis for which equality of opportunity, access and outcomes must be guaranteed.

Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan 2022–2025 lists key actions we will take to realise these and further commitments:

- Cultivate a creative environment and strengthen our capacity to support diverse artists, generating the conditions for artists to research, create, exhibit, perform, tour and engage in critical dialogue
- Examine how we think about, understand and measure our audiences and participants
- Provide a space for dynamic, sustained engagement in the arts by diverse communities (of place, interest, culture, ethnicity, gender identity and by people with disabilities)
- Develop programmes that take Uillinn out into diverse communities in order to facilitate their engagement with artworks and artists at Uillinn, or online
- Take positive actions that reflect the diversity of our community through our exhibition, residency and creative learning programmes
- Support artists in their co-creation of work with participants inclusive of those with disabilities

Youth Programmes

In 2022, we announced all our YP programmes as LGBTQ+ and allies as default in 2022, committing to changing all language from hetero-normative for Draw Mind Matter, Rusty Frog Youth Theatre, Young Dancers, Tune in Music Programme.

Croí Glan Integrated Dance

In 2022 we started working with Croí Glan Integrated Dance as our Dance Company in Residence at Uillinn and Key EDI partners.

This step represents a commitment from both our organisations to work together on our shared goals through a programme of performance, public engagements, studio time and a new Dance Artist in Residence opportunity for an artist with a disability. We will host two performances; a series of Contemporary Dance workshops aimed at young dancers; an Aerial Dance programme; and Professional Development Training for Dance Artists in inclusive dance.

Croí Glan Integrated Dance highlights the value of diverse bodies in creating performance, working with dancers with and without disabilities to produce innovative, engaging, high calibre productions and to deliver associated participatory activities. Together we intend to increase opportunities for dance artists and the public to engage with our programmes at Uillinn.

Croí Glan will deliver programmes that create a unique nonverbal environment where people with and without disabilities feel their equality and shared humanity through an immediate and visceral experience.

Equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace; recognising, respecting and valuing differences in order to promote an inclusive culture for all.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all artists, participants, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities are recognised and valued.
 - This commitment includes training for staff, artists and Board of Management about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.
 - All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, employees, artists, participants, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, artists, participants, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff and artists who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their skills and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning staff and programming based on merit

6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce and programme regarding information such as gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller Community in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and Uillinn Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025 are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the Director and has been agreed with employee representatives, Programme Manager, Justine Foster.

Next Steps are to:

1. Presentation by Justine Foster to the Board on the EDI Policy
2. Official acceptance of the EDI Policy by the Board
3. EDI Policy to be made available on our web
4. Establish review structure and schedule.

For more information:

https://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Main_Site/Content/About_Us/Dignity-at-Work.pdf

<https://www.artscouncil.ie/equality-human-rights-diversity/>

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/employment/equality_in_work/equality_in_the_workplace.html

<https://www.youth.ie/8-steps-to-inclusive-youth-work/>

Who works at West Cork Arts Centre

www.westcorkartscentre.com/team

What's on at West Cork Arts Centre

www.westcorkartscentre.com

www.facebook.com/uillinnwestcorkartscentre

twitter.com/westcorkarts

instagram.com/uillinnwestcorkarts

youtube.com/channel

About the building

uillinnwestcorkartscentre.blogspot.ie