Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Arts Uplift CIC

Our Commitment

Arts Uplift CIC is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and aims to ensure that everyone has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in the arts at all levels and in all roles. This includes Directors, volunteers, participants, supporters, and freelance staff.

We will not discriminate on the grounds of any of the nine characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- sex
- sexual orientation

We also recognise that many of the people we work with face barriers to participation linked to isolation, health, income, or where they live. We are committed to reducing these barriers and welcome everyone regardless of their background or circumstances.

Arts Uplift recognises that discrimination is unacceptable and will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

Arts Uplift will take, or support, positive action to eliminate individual and institutional discrimination and to remove barriers to participation.

- Arts Uplift respects the rights, dignity and worth of every person and will treat everyone equally.
- Arts Uplift is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy arts activities in an environment free from threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment, and abuse.
- All participants have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity. Arts Uplift's management is responsible for

implementing and maintaining this policy and for dealing with any breaches of it.
- Arts Uplift regards any incidence of discriminatory behaviour as serious misconduct and will deal with it in accordance with Arts Uplift's disciplinary procedures.

Legal Responsibilities

Arts Uplift fully accepts its legal responsibilities under the **Equality Act 2010**, which brings together and replaces previous anti-discrimination legislation, including the Race Relations Acts, the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Acts, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and the Employment Equality Regulations on sexual orientation, religion or belief, and age.

Arts Uplift also recognises its responsibilities under other relevant legislation, including:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Employment Rights Act 1996

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in the provision of services, including the services and activities that Arts Uplift delivers to participants. This policy will be reviewed whenever there are significant changes in the law or in official guidance.

Implementation

A copy of this policy will be available to all Directors, volunteers, and freelance staff of Arts Uplift, and to participants and supporters on request. All persons shall respect, act in accordance with, and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of this policy.

Arts Uplift will:

- make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can take part in our activities, whether as participants, volunteers, freelance staff, or Directors;
- consider the accessibility of venues, communications, and activity formats when planning programmes;
- ensure that any activity or service aimed at a particular group (for example, a particular age group or a community facing specific barriers) is lawful, with its purpose clearly justified and recorded;
- monitor participation where appropriate and use what we learn to improve who we reach and how we include them.

Types of Discrimination

Arts Uplift regards any form of discrimination as serious misconduct. Any Director, volunteer, or freelance staff member who discriminates against, harasses, or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action.

Direct Discrimination

Treating a person less favourably than others would be treated in the same circumstances because of a protected characteristic. This includes discrimination because of a person's *perceived* characteristic, or because of their association with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination

Occurs when a rule, policy, or practice that applies equally to everyone puts people who share a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Discrimination Arising from Disability

Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected to their disability, where this cannot be justified.

Failure to Make Reasonable Adjustments

Failing to make reasonable changes to remove or reduce disadvantages faced by disabled people.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. This includes sexual harassment, and harassment carried out by third parties such as participants, partners, or members of the public.

Victimisation

Treating a person unfavourably because they have made or supported a complaint or allegation of discrimination or harassment or are believed to have done so.

Age

Arts Uplift works with adults of all ages. Where an activity is designed for a particular age group, Arts Uplift will make sure that this is objectively justified or covered by a lawful exception or positive action measure, and that people outside that group are not unfairly excluded from comparable opportunities.

Complaints Procedure

Arts Uplift is committed to ensuring that any complaints regarding discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or breaches of this policy are dealt with seriously, promptly, fairly, and in confidence.

1. **Raising a Concern**
    - Any individual (Director, volunteer, freelance staff member, participant, or supporter) who believes they have been subject to discrimination or harassment, or who has witnessed such behaviour, should report their concern to the Executive Director in the first instance.
    - If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the concern should be reported directly to the other members of the Board of Directors.
2. **Informal Resolution**
    - Where appropriate and agreed by all parties, complaints may be resolved informally through discussion, mediation, or clarification of misunderstandings.
3. **Formal Procedure**
    - If informal resolution is not appropriate or does not resolve the issue, a formal written complaint should be submitted.
    - The complaint will be investigated thoroughly and impartially by a designated member of the Board not directly involved in the matter.
    - All parties will be given the opportunity to present their version of events.
4. **Outcome**
    - A decision will be made and communicated in writing to the complainant and respondent within a reasonable timeframe.
    - If discrimination, harassment, or victimisation is found to have occurred, appropriate action will be taken in line with Arts Uplift's disciplinary procedures, which may include training, mediation, or, in serious cases, termination of role or contract.
5. **Right of Appeal**
    - Any party dissatisfied with the outcome has the right to appeal in writing to the Board of Directors within 14 days of the decision.
6. **Protection from Victimisation**
    - No one will be treated unfavourably for raising a concern in good faith or for supporting someone else to do so.
7. **Confidentiality**
    - All complaints will be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in resolving the issue.

Nothing in this procedure prevents an individual from seeking independent advice or pursuing their legal rights.

Declaration of Intent

Arts Uplift hereby declares that this policy is adopted by the Directors of Arts Uplift and will be implemented accordingly.

Signed: _____Jenny Davis _____

Reviewed: October 2026

Next review: October 2027