

## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY**

*Throughout this policy the term 'participants' will be used to describe all volunteers, staff, artists, audience members, and other people who engage with the Loft and its work.*

### **Policy Statement**

The Loft Theatre celebrates and values diversity – in people, creativity, and thought. We are committed to creating an environment where all participants are treated with respect and dignity. Anything which endangers this approach has no place within the Loft Theatre culture.

### **Objectives of this Policy**

The Loft will promote:

- A culture which values diversity, inclusiveness, and respect, and empowers all participants to reflect those values in all their dealings
- A reputation for openness and accessibility
- Equality of opportunity for all
- A workplace where people are treated with dignity and respect and valued for who they are and the contribution they make to the organisation, and in which no participant experiences unlawful or unfair discrimination.
- Active opposition to all forms of unfair and unlawful discrimination, bullying and harassment

### **Responsibilities**

We recognise the importance of not discriminating against others on the basis of their age, ethnic origin, race, nationality, membership of a national minority, culture, language, religious faith or affiliation or lack thereof, political affiliation or opinions or lack thereof, sex, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, marital status, caring or parental responsibilities, illness, ability or disability, mental health status, medical condition, physical appearance, genetic features, parentage, descent, socio-economic background, employment status, spent or irrelevant criminal convictions or any other irrelevant distinction. Upholding and embodying this Policy is the responsibility of everyone in the Loft community, regardless of background, experience or position.

All participants are expected:

- To play an active part in the implementation of this Policy
- Never to infringe on the rights of others through their behaviour, the way they treat others, and the language that they use.
- To challenge unacceptable language and behaviour when it is seen
- Not to unlawfully or unfairly discriminate against other participants
- Not to encourage, instruct, or pressurise other participants to unlawfully discriminate
- Not to harass, bully, abuse or intimidate other participants
- To co-operate with all measures by the Loft to promote and implement equal opportunities

## **Rights of participants**

This Policy provides rights for our participants:

- The right to be treated fairly at all times
- The right to challenge any unfair barriers, to have the challenge considered seriously, and reasonable action to be taken by the Loft to remove the barrier
- The right to be valued and respected as an individual
- The right to be treated with respect and consideration in observing their religious and cultural tradition and practices
- The right to receive full support from the Loft should they need to raise any concerns or challenge any unacceptable behaviour

## **Casting**

The Loft's policy is centred on casting the very best actors for each role. Our team of directors are committed to racial, cultural and artistic diversity and they embrace our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy at all times. The Loft values diversity in race, disability, gender, sexuality, socio-economic background, faith and age, so casting will start from this position and always be open and neutral. Everyone is welcome and warmly encouraged to attend auditions. If specific race/ethnicity or other characteristics are central to the story, we will make this clear in audition notices. There is no pre-casting without the express permission of the Artistic Director. The Policy will be communicated to all directors and auditionees.

## **Public profile**

The Loft will announce in all the usual channels its commitment to diversity and the endorsement of this Policy. In future, all marketing, PR, audition notices, and other public communications will be reviewed to reflect this Policy.

## **Monitoring and reporting**

The Artistic Director and the General Manager will prepare a half-yearly report for review by the Board. This report will confirm that there has been full compliance with this Policy or will explain the circumstances of any breach and what action has been taken. It will also include details of changes in the diversity of the Loft community.

## **Consultation and review**

The policy will be formally reviewed every two years, unless legislation or other proposed changes have amended it in the meantime. At each review, consultation with participants will be part of the process.

Approved by the Loft Board – August 2020.