



*Future Directions* by Gavin Porter,  
Music Theatre Wales



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru  
Arts Council of Wales

## Arts Council of Wales

Strategic Equality  
Objectives 2024-28



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# Foreword

A generous, fairminded and tolerant society is instinctively inclusive. It values and respects the creativity of all its citizens. If we want Wales to be fair, prosperous and confident, improving the quality of life of people in all of its communities, then we must make the choices that enable this to happen. This is what the Strategic Objectives set out in this document are all about. Diversity strengthens and invigorates the arts.

The Public Sector Equality Duty sets out specific legal responsibilities for the public sector in Wales to support and help progress its equalities work. For the Arts Council of Wales, reporting is more than a legal requirement, it's fundamental to the delivery of our core priorities. These priorities are set out in our strategic plan, More than Arts, and are central to our Widening Engagement Action Plan, developed and published in partnership with Amgueddfa Cymru in 2022.

Our “vision” is of a creative Wales where the arts are central to the life and well-being of the nation, making our country an exciting and vibrant place to live, work and visit. This means recognising the cultural entitlement and creative needs of all individuals and communities across Wales.

Our 2020-24 Strategic Equality Plan set out the actions we intended to take to make real change happen, to address the barriers that had consistently prevented deaf and disabled people

and people from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds from engaging in the arts as artists, as participants and as decision makers. Across all of our work we had consistently failed to provide support that would increase the number of people from diverse backgrounds and with protected characteristics working in the arts and receiving funding to develop their own work on their own terms.

The first two years of that plan saw, in March 2020, an unprecedented and shocking global event with the onset of the Coronavirus/ Covid-19 crisis. The sudden onset of this global pandemic across the UK saw, in a single night, the suspension of all arts activities and a change in the living and working environment for everybody. The arts and cultural sector came to a standstill which continued well into 2020/21 and continued to have a direct impact on the arts and cultural sector well into 2021/22.

In devising our Strategic Equality Action plan for 2024-28 we acknowledge that although evidence shows that progress has been made there is still more to be done to address the inequalities and barriers, we had identified in 2020. Momentum was lost during the two years of the Covid Pandemic and as a result our Equality Objectives remain largely unchanged.

Our commitment to continuing a process of change remains as strong as we expressed in [our Black Lives Matter statement](#) and in our support of the [Seven Inclusive Principles for the Arts](#) that have grown out of the We Shall Not Be Removed campaign.

This commitment is further strengthened as we align our work with the ambitions and aims of the Welsh Government's culture strategy and deliver against the expectations of the Anti Racist Wales Action Plan and LGBTQ+ Action Plan.

Our approach in taking forward this Plan will continue to be one of zero tolerance to racism and ableism and to work towards ensuring people from these communities, together with people facing social-economic disadvantage and those living with protected characteristics, are fully represented in the workforce, as decision makers, as visitors, as creators, participants and as audience members.






*Ye Olde Group Chat*, Rosa Johan-Uddoh  
(Image: Simon Ayre for Chapter)



Long term objectives	Actions	Why we have these objectives	Monitor / Evaluations	Who is responsible?
<p>1. We will actively involve diverse communities and stakeholders in all our work and work to eliminate all forms of discrimination relating to protected characteristics.</p> <p>Cultural democracy will be at the heart of our work, including how we approach engagement, consultation and information sharing with our partners, stakeholders, sector and communities.</p>	<p>To include actions relating to communication and branding, development and monitoring of our corporate strategy and annual plan.</p>	<p>Working alongside artists, partners and communities, being informed and challenged by them has to be central to our work moving forward; as does being open and transparent in communicating our successes, our failures and our ongoing challenges.</p>	<p>We will collect and collate information on discussions that have taken place and the changes that have resulted from those discussions.</p> <p>We will report on and evaluate the impact of specific projects and events, focussing on how these have influenced change in policy, process and delivery.</p> <p>We will report on and evaluate progress and change resulting from working in partnership with specific organisations, detailing aims and objectives and the impact on our work.</p>	<p>Executive Leadership Team is responsible for driving this objective forward. They in turn will be held to account by the Council's Committee and will report on progress to Council.</p>
<p>2. Develop a workforce that reflects the diversity of Wales by increasing the number of people with protected characteristics working in the arts and represented in the governance and leadership of arts organisations and the Arts Council itself.</p>	<p>To include actions around working to eliminate pay gaps across the arts sector, ensure fair and equal pay for all artists working in Wales.</p> <p>Embedding equality in procurement and commissioning.</p> <p>Training, development and career paths.</p> <p>Continue to review and monitor our approach to recruitment and internal staff development and training.</p>	<p>We are failing to bring about substantive change in diversifying the workforce and boards of management of those organisations we fund and in the Arts Council itself.</p> <p>Evidence from across the arts sector and the public sector more widely shows us that fair pay and pay equality continues to be an issue.</p>	<p>We will collect and analyse data from our Multi Year Funded Organisations and application and completion forms submitted by Lottery applicants (individuals and organisations).</p> <p>We will review progress made by our Multi Year Funded Organisations on an annual basis through the Funding Agreements and submission of strategic equality plans and date. Performance against targets set will inform ongoing funding decisions.</p> <p>We will collect and analyse data on our internal recruitment, professional development and progression processes. This data will be reported to and reviewed by our HR and Remuneration Committee and our Equalities Monitoring group.</p> <p>We will provide monitoring reports on all our procurement activity.</p> <p>These will include reports on the state of pay across the sector, particularly in relation to freelancers.</p>	<p>Executive Leadership Team is responsible for driving this objective forward. They in turn will be held to account by the Committee and will report on progress to Council.</p>

Long term objectives	Actions	Why we have these objectives	Monitor / Evaluations	Who is responsible?
<p><b>3. Increase the number of diverse artists and arts organisations accessing funding and support to create and present their own art on their own terms.</b></p>	<p>To include actions around the implementation and impact of our Lottery funding schemes and any targeted programmes such as Creative Steps and Perspectives.</p>	<p>Our evidence tells us that progress has been made in terms of improving access to our Lottery programmes, both in terms of process and grants awarded. However, further action is required to ensure equality of access for all artists with protected characteristics.</p>	<p>We will review and report on applications and awards made through our Lottery funded programmes and strategic projects.</p> <p>This will include data collection in relation to people leading and accessing arts activity. We will also begin to use our new Outcomes Based Accountability evaluation tool to measure the impact of specific projects and our funding on the engagement of artists and communities from protected characteristic groups.</p>	<p>Executive Leadership Team is responsible for driving this objective forward. They in turn will be held to account by the Committee and will report on progress to Council</p>
<p><b>4. Increase the diversity of those engaging with the arts as audience members and creative participants.</b></p>	<p>To include specific actions around the implementation and impact of our Lottery funding schemes, targeted programmes and the work of our Multi Year Funded Organisations.</p>	<p>Our evidence tells us that whilst progress has been made in some areas, the arts in Wales still fail to reach significant parts of our communities – both in social and geographic terms.</p>	<p>We will collect and analyse data from our Multi Year Funded Organisations and application and completion forms submitted by Lottery applicants (individuals and organisations).</p> <p>We will review progress made by our Multi Year Funded Organisations on an annual basis through the Funding Agreements and submission of strategic equality plans and date.</p> <p>This will include data collection in relation to people leading and accessing arts activity and evaluation of the impact of specific projects on engagement of artists and communities from protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>We will begin to implement and adopt our new Outcome Based Accountability approach to evaluation to measure the impact of our work.</p> <p>We will continue to be part of the Wales National survey which includes questions about arts and culture.</p>	<p>Executive Leadership Team is responsible for driving this objective forward. They in turn will be held to account by the Committee and will report on progress to Council.</p>

# Application of the 5 Ways of Working Future Generations Act Wales

Ways of Working	How this has been applied
Prevention 	The objectives have been informed through understanding inequality insight evidenced through 'Is Wales fairer' – The state of equality and human rights, the Equality and Human Rights Commissions review of the public sector equality duty and information from our equalities annual reporting 2020-2024.
Long term 	The high-level objectives are recognised as long-term objectives that will exist beyond the four-year cycle of the SEP. The plan recognises that long term commitment to delivery and resourcing is essential to bring about the substantive change needed.
Collaboration 	We are working in partnership with a group of 11 Public Bodies united behind shared objectives and committed to working together to meet the objectives. Partnership bodies have signed a 'memorandum of understanding' which outlines their commitment to collaborative working. Through this partnership we will support and learn from each other and hold each other to account.
Integration 	The high-level objectives have been informed through insight, they align to Welsh Government long term equality aims and contribute to a more equal Wales (FGA) and a fairer society (Equality Act, 2010). Application of the five ways of working has supported integration across duties.
Involvement 	Conversations with stakeholders and recipients of public services informed the development of this and the public bodies shared plan. We are committed to engagement with people and communities in the further development of the plan and the design of projects, programmes and services that drive our objectives forward.