



The Old Lodge, Uffculme, 50 Queensbridge Road, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 8QY.
Tel: 0121 449 7117 Email: info@womenandtheatre.co.uk

Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

General Statement of Policy

- Women & Theatre is committed to equal opportunities and complies with all legal legislation including The Equality Act 2010. This policy was drafted with reference to guidance from the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) and relevant Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Training providers.
- This policy exists to ensure everyone's right to be treated equally, fairly and with respect without regard to age, disability, gender identity, marital/civil partnership status, race, religion/belief or lack of any religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, care of dependents or socio-economic background and status.
- We strive to ensure no one experiences discrimination on any grounds and the aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer, freelance worker, audience member or project participant receives less favourable treatment on grounds related to any protected characteristic. Women & Theatre recognises discrimination as being a process of acting unfairly against an individual or group by exclusion, verbal comment, denigration, harassment, failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation.
- W&T aims to include specific equal opportunities training in the induction of new employees & freelancers and a copy of its policy is provided and discussed as part of training and induction processes.
- Copies of all W&T policies are available on the W&T Website.
- This policy is reviewed by the Board of W&T every year.
- W&T's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Framework & Action Plan ensures our commitment to embedding inclusion and diversity into the ethos of the company, alongside our commitment to the More Than A Moment pledge¹ and in doing so W&T wholeheartedly commits to ensuring equity, investment in, and opportunities with and for Black artists and creatives, as well as with those from other underrepresented groups, within W&T.

Responsibility

- The Board take ultimate responsibility for the setting, and review of Policy.
- The General Manager is responsible for its implementation in recruitment and in the day to day running of the Company.
- The Artistic Director is responsible for its implementation in casting, programming and project planning and delivery.

¹ The *More Than A Moment* pledge is the West Midlands Arts sector's promise to take radical, bold and immediate action, to dismantle the systems that have for too long kept Black artists and creatives from achieving their potential in the arts and cultural industries.

<https://www.culturecentral.co.uk/mtam/>

- The designated Lead Artist is responsible for ensuring that the Policy is practised within project delivery.
- Everyone is responsible for complying with policy and voicing any queries or concerns about equal opportunities to the General Manager or Artistic Director.
- All allegations of discrimination against a person because of a protected characteristic will be dealt with seriously and confidentially, in accordance with W&T's Grievance & Disciplinary and Complaints Policies.

Access to premises

- The Company base is at The Old Lodge on the Uffculme Centre site. It has adequate parking and drop off points near to the entrance for people who are disabled.
- The entrance to The Old Lodge is accessible for wheelchair users with a ramp up to the front door.
- There is a toilet equipped for use by people who are disabled at the main Uffculme building.

Recruitment

- Women & Theatre is an Equal Opportunities employer. This policy, alongside our Recruitment Policy, and Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Framework & Action Plan aims to ensure that no job applicant or freelancer receives less favourable treatment on any grounds. The staff responsible for shortlisting, interviewing, or auditioning will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and the need for consistency. Wherever possible, at least two people will shortlist, and interview applicants and all questions will relate to the selection criteria.
- Each employee post will be advertised with the aim of attracting interest from the widest community. We will endeavour to ensure that advertisements are not restricted to areas or publications that would exclude or disproportionately reduce applications from a particular gender, religion, age group or racial group. All job adverts will express W&T's commitment to Equal Opportunities, and that it welcomes applications from underrepresented groups.
- W&T will ensure job descriptions, application packs and advertisements are written in clear plain English and available in a variety of formats including audio versions & large print formats.
- W&T will ensure job applications can be submitted in a variety of formats, all candidates undergo the same interview procedure with additional / different methods and provision made to support accessibility for individual candidates.
- Genuine occupational requirement (GOR) provisions allow protected characteristics (e.g. an actor or worker's race or gender) to be specified in certain circumstances. A GOR must be crucial to the post and must be proportionate to achieving a legitimate aim.
- Each employee will have a Contract, Job Description and Person Specification that is non-discriminatory.
- Selection criteria and procedures are such that individuals are selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. All staff involved with recruitment will have undergone Equal Opportunities training
- W&T acknowledges a new provision allowing preference to be given to someone from a 'protected group' that is under-represented in our workforce, where there are two equally well-suited applicants/candidates. It does not require the company to give preference to a candidate who is less well-qualified. If there are candidates who are equally qualified it is not mandatory to choose the candidate from an under-represented group. W&T acknowledges that positive action is voluntary, and it must be proportionate to the aim.

- For the Equal Opportunities Policy to be effective and to ensure it is reaching its aims, it is necessary, for monitoring purposes, to classify Company members and job applicants according to their ethnic origin, gender, age and noting any disability.
- Details of candidates and of selection decisions (including the rationale for selection or rejection) will be kept for at least six months after an appointment has been made in case they are required as evidence by an employment tribunal or for other proceedings. The company will keep anonymous records of the gender, ethnic group, age and any disability of its employees and of all candidates and of those shortlisted and appointed.
- W&T considers and actively operates flexible working arrangements for employees.
- Where relevant, staff-specific risk assessments will be carried out to assess and address any need for reasonable adjustments, in line with W&T's Wellbeing policy and Health & Safety policy.

Artistic Policy & Programming

- Social Inclusion underpins all of W&T's work and the content and presentation of performances strives to be as inclusive as possible.
- W&T maintains a wide programme of work to appeal to a wide range of different groups of people.
- W&T actively work with community and voluntary groups to further our understanding of the needs of different communities.
- Plays are cast to reflect the cultural diversity of the community in which we live.
- The Company regularly work with interpreters in BSL and a wide range of community languages.
- Marketing information contains venue access information and clearly marks interpreted performances.
- W&T maintains procedures for monitoring the profile of our audiences and participants.

Marketing and Publicity

- W&T will ensure that its online, print marketing and communications are accessible and representative of diversity.
- W&T will ensure that images and imagery used in all online and print materials reflects the organisations commitment to equal opportunities, is responsive to the communities we work with, and does not contain any content that is discriminatory and includes diverse and inclusive representation.
- W&T will ensure appropriate resources that enables access to alternative print formats such as transcripts, audio recordings, translation, and signing.
- W&T will ensure all our online marketing materials and social media assets are accessible and will regularly review the software and processes we use. E.g. use of captioning, alt text, image descriptions etc.

This policy was approved by W&T's Board of Directors on 14 September 2022