

## Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy Approved on: 20/11/2025

Policy Review Date: 20/11/2025

### Introduction

Creative at HeART CIC recognises its responsibility to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and celebrate diversity across all areas of its work. We are committed to ensuring that no person connected with our organization, whether a participant, staff member, volunteer, or partner, is treated unfairly or denied opportunity based on their age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, socio-economic background, or caring responsibilities.

As a Community Interest Company dedicated to supporting children and families through creativity, compassion, and connection, we value the uniqueness of every individual. Our commitment to equality and diversity strengthens the quality, relevance, and inclusivity of our creative programmes and community impact.

### Our Aims

In carrying out our functions as a Community Interest Company, Creative at HeART CIC is committed to embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion into all aspects of our governance, service delivery, and employment practices.

We aim to:

- Provide creative opportunities that are inclusive, welcoming, and accessible to all.
- Promote equality of opportunity and diversity in employment, volunteering, and community partnerships.
- Foster a positive, respectful environment that values individual differences and shared humanity.
- Build strong relationships with communities, funders, schools, and partner organisations whose values align with our own.

### About This Policy

This policy applies to all Directors, staff, freelance practitioners, and volunteers of Creative at HeART CIC.

It sets out our commitment to:

- Eliminating all forms of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or bullying.
- Promoting equal access to creative experiences and opportunities.

- Ensuring that everyone we engage with feels respected, safe, and valued.

Creative at HeART CIC is firmly opposed to any behaviour that undermines equality, dignity, or inclusion. This applies in all circumstances, including recruitment, training, partnerships, and day-to-day operations.

This policy aligns with the Equality Act 2010 and the following protected characteristics: Age • Disability • Gender Reassignment • Marriage and Civil Partnership • Pregnancy and Maternity • Race • Religion or Belief • Sex • Sexual Orientation.

### **Our Commitments**

Creative at HeART CIC will:

- Value diversity and ensure that everyone is treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.
- Actively promote inclusion through language, practice, and representation.
- Ensure all services are accessible, relevant, and responsive to individual needs.
- Reflect the diversity of our local and national communities in our workforce, volunteers, and participants.
- Take positive action where appropriate to overcome barriers to participation or underrepresentation.

### **Responsibilities**

This policy covers the behaviour and conduct of everyone involved in Creative at HeART CIC, including Directors, employees, freelance practitioners, and volunteers.

- Every individual has a personal responsibility to act in accordance with this policy and to challenge discriminatory behaviour where it occurs.
- The CEO is responsible for day-to-day implementation, supported by the Board of Directors.
- All staff, volunteers, and partners must ensure their language, attitudes, and actions reflect the values and commitments of this policy.

Creative at HeART CIC recognises that achieving genuine equality and inclusion is an ongoing process that requires awareness, reflection, and collective effort.

### **Legal and Ethical Framework**

Creative at HeART CIC acknowledges its obligations under the following legislation and frameworks:

- Equality Act 2010.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Public Sector Equality Duty (where applicable).
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

## Our Approach to Inclusion

At Creative at HeART CIC, we believe creativity should be accessible to everyone. We will:

- Adapt our workshops, sessions, and materials to meet diverse needs.
- Ensure venues are physically accessible wherever possible.
- Offer reasonable adjustments for participants or staff with disabilities.
- Promote inclusive imagery and language in all communications and marketing.
- Encourage feedback from service users to continually improve accessibility and inclusivity.

## Training and Awareness

To embed equality and diversity across the organisation, Creative at HeART CIC will:

- Provide induction and ongoing training for all staff, volunteers, and practitioners on equality and inclusion.
- Encourage reflective practice to understand the impact of unconscious bias.
- Promote awareness of cultural sensitivity and inclusive communication.
- Support leadership development to champion equality and embed good practice.

## Objectives

Creative at HeART CIC will meet the standards of this policy by:

- Monitoring the diversity of our workforce and volunteers to ensure fair representation.
- Evaluating our services to ensure they meet the needs of individuals and communities.
- Building partnerships with diverse community organisations and creative networks.
- Challenging discrimination, stereotypes, or barriers whenever they arise.
- Ensuring equal access to opportunities for employment, volunteering, and participation.
- Regularly reviewing and improving our equality and inclusion practices.

## Implementation

Creative at HeART CIC will implement this policy by:

- Ensuring that all staff, practitioners, and volunteers receive and understand this policy as part of their induction.
- Embedding equality and diversity principles into all policies, procedures, and decision-making.
- Making time and resources available for relevant equality and inclusion training.
- Actively monitoring all aspects of our service, communications, and events to ensure they are inclusive and accessible.

## Monitoring and Review

Creative at HeART CIC is committed to maintaining, developing, and reviewing its Equality and Diversity Policy as part of its governance and quality assurance processes.

The CEO will oversee the monitoring of equality and inclusion practices, with an annual review presented to the Board of Directors.

Feedback from staff, volunteers, and service users will be used to strengthen future action plans and ensure the policy remains effective and meaningful.