

# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The background features a large, faint white circle in the center. Overlaid on this are several smaller, semi-transparent purple and pink circles of varying sizes, some with a textured, brushstroke-like edge. The overall aesthetic is modern and clean.

Approved: December 2024  
Last updated: February 2026  
Next review point: February 2028

# Contents

1	General Statement of Policy		
2	Definitions for our practice		
3	Purpose		
4	Principles		
4.1	Culture		
4.2	Action		
4.3	Monitoring and review		
4.4	Accountability		
5	Positive Action v Positive Discrimination		
5.1	Positive Action		
5.2	Positive Discrimination		
5.3	Positive action measures		
6	Employment at Sound and Music		
6.1	Job Descriptions and Person Specifications		
6.2	Advertising		
6.3	Applications and shortlisting		
6.4	Interviewing		
		6.5	Selection 10
		4	6.6 DBS Policy 10
			6.7 Ex-offenders 10
		5	6.8 Induction 10
			6.9 Flexible working 10
		5	6.10 Promotion 11
			6.11 Training 11
		5	6.12 Placements 11
		5	6.13 Annual leave and religious holidays 11
		6	6.14 Cultural and religious needs 11
		6	6.15 Disabled employees 11
		6	6.16 Grievance and disciplinary procedures 11
			6.17 Bullying and harassment 12
		6	
		6	7 Beneficiaries and participants 12
		7	7.1 Fair Access Principles 12
		7	7.2 Application documents 12
			7.3 Advertising 12
		7	7.4 Applications and shortlisting 13
		7	7.5 Interviewing 13
		8	7.6 Selection 13
		8	7.7 Programme participants 14
		9	

# Contents

8	Monitoring	14
9	Freedom of expression	15
10	Accountability	15

# 1 General Statement of Policy

Sound and Music is deeply committed to equity, inclusion and representation and ensuring our work is reflective of the diversity of the UK. Music has the transformative ability to shape lives, communities, culture and indeed our national identity and social fabric. But to do so new music in the UK must be representative of all the UK.

We recognise the structural barriers obstructing so many from realising their creative potential and shaping our culture. As such removing these barriers and championing inclusion underpins all we do.

We are committed to encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination both in our role as an employer and as a provider of opportunities and services.

We aim to create and promote a culture that respects and values individuals' differences; that promotes dignity, equity, inclusion and diversity; and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.

Through this policy, we aim to:

- Achieve and maintain a workforce and Board of Trustees that broadly reflects the wider UK community within which it operates
- Diversify the range of people, including the creators and audiences, who benefit from the opportunities and services it offers
- Be inclusive and welcoming in our activities, processes, communications, marketing and wider organisational culture
- Recognise and address the barriers to participation and employment that many people face

We recognise the role and responsibility we have as a national organisation and a leader in the sector to champion equity, diversity and inclusion.

The organisation aims to show by example that increasing the diversity of young, emerging and established creators and audiences it engages with in turn broadens and enriches the range of creators accessing support, enhancing our creative output and the wider audience experience. We will continue to work with others in the sector to champion the [Fair Access Principles](#), and to hold ourselves to account in how we as an organisation progress towards meeting all of them.

In particular, we are guided by the following aims:

- To ensure that all our activities and services are sensitive, accessible and appropriate to the needs of different groups
- Continue to take a leading role in combating any form of conscious or subconscious discrimination in the new music sector, including through continued work on and advocacy for the [Fair Access Principles](#)
- We will work with others to ensure that the diversity of the population in the UK is recognised, that fair and equal representation is embraced and that all creators are celebrated for their contribution to the arts
- We will focus on addressing barriers to employment and participation on the grounds of gender (including trans), ethnicity, disability, neurodiversity and socio-economic background, as our data shows these are the groups who are harder to reach. The organisation has set out targets to monitor and measure progress. These targets, and the strategic processes for achieving them, are laid out in the **Fair Access, Inclusivity and Relevance (FAIR) Action Plan**
- We will take care to avoid consciously or unconsciously discriminatory images or text appearing in published, printed or spoken material. We will proactively seek to use images and text that reflect a diversity of backgrounds

The **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** forms part of the Contract of Employment and Staff Handbook.

Any form of discrimination by an employee, trustee or volunteer is treated very seriously and where appropriate will be dealt with using the disciplinary process laid out in the Staff Handbook.

## 2 Definitions for our practice

**Equity** is about fairness and fair access. It also means meeting legal obligations under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and other relevant legislation.

**Diversity** represents the organisation's commitment to work with a wide range of people of different backgrounds, with a particular focus on those from specified backgrounds (including some of those considered as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010).

**Freedom of expression** means the freedom, within the law, to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas or information by means of speech, writing, images or works of art (including in electronic form) without interference by public authorities (see Article 10 of the 1998 Human Rights Act).

**Inclusion** represents the organisation's desire to acknowledge and address barriers by making the necessary internal changes to our activities, culture, processes and other relevant factors, in order to relevant and welcoming to all those working or coming into contact with us.

It also informs our public campaigning for wider cultural change within organisations.

## 3 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure equity and fairness for all current and prospective employees and Board of Trustee members; and all those engaging with our activities in any form
- To provide a framework to ensure we do not discriminate, consciously or unconsciously, on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, religion, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, neurodiversity, sexual

orientation, religion, socio-economic background or age. We oppose all forms of discrimination and commit to the following:

- To treat fairly and with respect all employees, trustees, freelance providers and volunteers, whether part-time, full-time or temporary. Selection for employment, promotion, training, volunteering or any other benefit will be on the basis of skills, potential and commitment to Sound and Music
- To treat fairly and with respect all participants across the organisation's programmes. Selection will be on the basis of skills, potential and commitment to Sound and Music
- To treat fairly and with respect all current and potential employees, volunteers, audiences and users of our services. Marketing and communications will be representative, accessible, open and welcoming (e.g., using practices that support screen readers)
- To ensure all our work foregrounds acting with fairness and with equity. This commitment requires us to better understand lived experiences, particularly for people navigating access needs or exclusion, and to foster innovative practice that will actively support a broader range of creators from across the UK. This will in turn invigorate the work and unlock the engagement of more and broader audiences.

## 4 Principles

We adhere to the following principles:

### 4.1 Culture

- Create a working environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our employees, Board of Trustees, freelance providers, participants, audiences and volunteers are recognised and valued
- Create an environment that is safe and welcoming, promoting dignity and respect for all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated in any context, in person or online

- Provide regular information and mandatory training to all employees, trustees and volunteers so that they are fully aware of the issues relating to equity, diversity and inclusion, and their responsibilities relating to ensuring this policy is adhered to
- Treat breaches of this policy seriously and taking disciplinary action when required

#### 4.2 Action

- Work towards ensuring, and monitoring, that our workforce, beneficiaries and participants reflect and represent the broader population
- Be proactive in opening our employment and programme opportunities to a broader diversity of applicants
- Work with others in the sector to address barriers to participation, including through championing and self-assessment against the Fair Access Principles
- Promote equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the sector (e.g., share recruitment best practice with partners and networks)
- Implement further actions/initiatives which address inequalities as appropriate

#### 4.3 Monitoring and review

- Review regularly all employment and volunteering practices and procedures to ensure that no job applicants, staff, trustees or volunteers are treated less favourably than others
- Review regularly activities and communications to ensure they are accessible and appropriate to all groups within society
  - Monitor (quarterly), evaluate and report on the diversity of all applicants to (and those selected for) our programmes
- Monitor, evaluate and report on the diversity of our audiences
- Develop, monitor (quarterly) and report against an **Fair Access, Inclusivity and Relevance (FAIR) Action Plan**, to ensure this **Policy** is fully implemented
- Monitor, evaluate and review this Policy annually

#### 4.4 Accountability

- Ensure this Policy is available and accessible publicly
- Ensure the Policy is fully supported and embraced by the Board of Trustees

## 5 Positive Action v Positive Discrimination

We understand the differences between positive action and positive discrimination and actively seek to address inequality in the sector, both in employment and in participation on our artist development programmes and commissions, through positive action.

#### 5.1 Positive Action

We continually review our recruitment processes and programmes to ensure we take positive action to both invite, support, and retain employees and programme participants from under-represented backgrounds in the sector. Through positive action, where it is appropriate and relevant, we seek to enable or encourage members of under-represented groups to:

- overcome or minimise a disadvantage
- have their different needs met
- participate in programme activities

While positive action is voluntary, we have chosen to take positive action to ensure that people with particular protected characteristics are not excluded or disadvantaged in the workplace or our artist programme. This includes both measures to increase their participation in the workforce where it is disproportionately low, and/or to address their specific employment needs or programme participation needs.

## 5.2 Positive Discrimination

Positive discrimination means treating someone favourably solely on the basis of individual, protected and sensitive characteristics.

Positive discrimination is illegal and the recruitment of 'quotas' of particular groups based solely on their individual characteristics is also illegal. Discrimination in selection to achieve or secure a balance of persons of different racial groups is also not allowed under the Race Relations Act 1976.

There is an exception, however, which may be appropriate for certain posts in the organisation, i.e. when a genuine occupational qualification (GOQ) is necessary or desirable for a particular group or sex. Both the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 allow these exceptions.

## 5.3 Positive action measures

- We use inclusive language in all communications and materials to avoid unintentionally excluding or alienating any groups
- We use targeted advertising to reach underrepresented groups, such as placing job ads in publications or on platforms that cater to diverse audiences
- We offer infrequently asked questions sessions, workshops, training sessions, and educational projects tailored to the needs of underrepresented groups to help them develop their skills and confidence
- We create funding streams or awards specifically for underrepresented artists to encourage their participation and development
- We offer access support for applicants to our programmes to ensure their applications are considered
- We offer access support to selected artists on our programmes and continually reflect on adapting our programmes to artists' access needs which may change over time
- We offer flexible working arrangements to support employees with diverse needs, such as those with caring responsibilities or disabilities

We regularly review our positive action measures to ensure they are effective and not inadvertently leading to positive discrimination.

# 6 Employment at Sound and Music

## 6.1 Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Job Descriptions including Person Specifications are prepared for all posts, including internships and Board of Trustee positions.

These Job Descriptions indicate the responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken by the post holder. The Person Specification describes the qualifications, skills, experience and abilities required.

With a view toward cultivating an inclusive organisation in the long term, the following criterion will be included in the Person Specifications of all posts:

- The individual will support our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, contributing to a culture of respect and collaboration in the organisation's internal and external activities

Care will be taken to ensure that neither the description nor the specification is discriminatory in any way.

The specification will only include such qualifications, skills, experience and abilities that are directly relevant to the fulfilment of the role.

We will publish the salary range for the role.

In addition, we have adopted the recommendations outlined in the [Arts Council's Culture Change Guide: How to recruit diverse talent](#).

These include the implementation of the following considerations in criteria within person specifications:

- Includes reference to equalities e.g. 'ability to work with customers from a wide range of backgrounds'
- Has 10 or fewer criteria
- Is clear on why particular knowledge and/or qualifications are being sought e.g., "must have GCSE maths" to be replaced with "ability to keep accurate financial records"
- Only includes "essential" requirements – desirable requirements may exclude candidates who do not fit a post's traditional profile
- Distinguishes between skill (proven ability to do something) and ability (having the capacity to do something) to include people with less formal work experience
- Precise and explicit criteria
- Describe what is meant by experience. Do not ask for a number of years' experience. Experience can include that gained outside of work
- Be clear about the level of skill or experience needed. Candidates may under- or over-estimate the level required unless you state it
- Show candidates how each criteria will be assessed e.g. at interview, practical exercise
- Clarify how different criteria and aspects of the application process are weighted (including whether this is different at different stages)
- Do not use personality traits e.g. "outgoing personality"
- Do not unnecessarily exclude disabled people
- Do not ask for criteria which cannot be assessed/measured

## 6.2 Advertising

We will use a range of advertising methods to attract the widest pool of appropriate applicants.

Vacancies for new and existing jobs or voluntary roles will normally be advertised internally and externally.

All our advertising will:

- Contain the statement 'We are an Equal Opportunities Employer'
- Ensure that we do not exclude, discriminate against, or discourage any particular group from applying nor make it difficult for anyone from such a group to apply
- Signpost applicants to the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Refer to the Job Description and Person Specification in order to give information about the requirements of the job
- Proactively encourage a diversity of applicants
- Offer documents and information in a range of formats on request
- Give clear instructions about obtaining the application pack
- Where appropriate, use agencies/networks/publications with networks with under-represented groups
- Ensure online and print publicity materials reflect a diverse workforce and participants
- Implement the relevant and agreed recommendations of the organisation's Accessibility Review

## 6.3 Applications and shortlisting

All applicants will be asked to fill out an Application Form, which contains only information essential and relevant to the appointment, unless their role requires a post holder to write persuasive written communications (e.g., Head of External Engagement) in which case an application letter may be requested in place of Section 2 of the Application Form.

Different formats will be made available on request.

The summary of steps for recruiting are:

1. Define the components (or mediating assessments) in the job description (i.e., Essential and Desirable criteria for the Candidate Profile). For senior positions, for example, we often include Leadership, Collaboration and Communication and something role-related
2. Ensure that whenever possible, mediating assessments use an outside view (fact-based and with a case scale if possible)
3. In the analytical phase (i.e., scoring applicants), keep assessments independent of one another
4. In the decision meeting, review each assessment separately
5. On each assessment, ensure that the panel make their judgements individually; then use the estimate-talk-estimate method (an App like Mentimeter can be a useful voting tool to capture and share initial assessments anonymously)
6. To make the final decision, delay intuition, but do not ban it because the final decision will be anchored on fact-based, thoroughly discussed scoring.

Section 1 of the Application Form includes personal details. As part of this section and in order to inform our positive action commitments to diversifying the workforce, we ask candidates to voluntarily provide sensitive personal data about their ethnicity, gender, disabled status and socio-economic background, which we handle in accordance with our [Data Protection and Privacy Policy](#). We guarantee an interview to candidates from significantly under-represented groups who meet the specified minimum requirements of a role.

Section 2 of the Application Form (or a written letter) is focussed on gathering details about the applicant's relevant experience (in work or relevant voluntary or unpaid experience) and we ask candidates to provide evidence for each relevant selection criteria. We will not ask for details of past salaries.

The person leading the recruitment will define the selection criteria (mediating assessments) to be tested through the application form/letter, or through interview, or both. For senior positions, for example, we often include Leadership,

Collaboration, Communication and something role related as mediating assessments.

Section 1 will be separated from the rest of the Application Form before shortlisting by a member of staff not involved in selection, who will number both sections.

Applications will be shortlisted by at least two people. Staff and members of the Board of Trustees (in the case of senior management recruitment) responsible for shortlisting, interviewing and selection of candidates will be:

- Clearly informed of selection criteria and the need for their consistent application
- Given an up-to-date copy of the **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** and **Guidance for Recruitment** at the commencement of recruitment shortlisting

In the analytical phase, panellists will score each question according to the criteria they have been assigned and these will be collated to achieve a long list of candidates who meet the minimum requirements of the role.

The two panellists will then prioritise the long list by reviewing those applicants who have disclosed protected characteristics against the threshold to achieve a manageable shortlist of candidates to interview.

#### 6.4 Interviewing

All interviews will be carried out by a minimum of two people. The names of interviewers and interview questions will be made available in advance.

We will ask questions that seek to gather objective evidence in support of the Job Description and Person Specifications.

We will ask the same questions of all candidates applying for the job, although we may ask supplementary questions in addition to these.

In deciding the questions, the person leading the recruitment will place an emphasis on how the candidate would approach the role, ensuring that questions already addressed in the Application Form/letter are not unnecessarily repeated.

One of the questions asked will pertain to how the individual will support our development as a diverse and inclusive arts organisation and contribute to a culture of respect and collaboration.

All candidates invited to interview will be asked if they need access support during the interview process and wherever possible their needs will be accommodated. Flexibility will be prioritised for those candidates who are in personal assistant or companion roles with disabled people.

Every candidate will have the opportunity to ask questions. Notes will be taken and evidence gathered against the Job Description and Person Specification. Each candidate will be scored against the criteria.

### **6.5 Selection**

All candidates will be scored against the Job Description and Person Specification. Interviewers will decide individually on scores in the first instance.

The highest scoring applicants will be offered the position. Where scoring is equal, those from under-represented groups will be given priority, in line with our positive action commitments.

Offers will be made to successful candidates, subject to satisfactory references and DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check (where required). A starting salary will be offered in line with the Remuneration Policy.

All unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the result of their application and offered bespoke feedback.

### **6.6 DBS Policy**

For certain positions we will request enhanced disclosures for all employees, trustees and volunteers. This requirement will be clearly stated in the application pack.

We have a separate Policy and Procedure for the Protection of Children and Young People, which is available on our website: <https://soundandmusic.org/child-protection-policy>

### **6.7 Ex-offenders**

We will not discriminate against ex-offenders with unspent convictions, unless required to do so because of the nature of the post.

### **6.8 Induction**

All employees, Board of Trustees and volunteers will be required to follow an appropriate induction process to ensure they are equipped to do the job.

All employees, Board of Trustees and volunteers will receive training on the **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** and **Fair Access, Inclusivity and Relevance (FAIR) Action Plan** as part of their induction.

For new staff and board members this will take the form of a conversation regarding the Policy and Action Plan with a current member of the Senior Management Team.

For volunteers on the In the Making Residential, introduction to the Policy will form part of their induction.

A discussion around, and implementation of, reasonable adjustments and any access requirements related to individual needs will start as soon as possible, and be in place when employment begins.

### **6.9 Flexible working**

We will consider all requests for flexible working arrangements constructively and creatively, taking account of balancing the needs of the organisation with the

needs of the individual employee. Further details are outlined in the Staff Handbook.

### **6.10 Promotion**

Vacancies or new roles arising will be advertised externally as well as internally, unless there is an exceptional reason not to do so.

Vacancies will be promoted in places that will attract applicants from a wide range of backgrounds.

### **6.11 Training**

We have allocated budget for employees' training in order to maximise the capability and retention of employees. Professional development within job roles is a requirement of Sound and Music employment. Training needs and opportunities will be discussed during one-to-one meetings with line managers, and selection for training will be made on the basis of both the needs of the business set out in the organisation's Business Plan and the personal development of the individual.

We will be proactive in offering additional training opportunities targeted at employees from under-represented backgrounds in the sector, in line with our commitment to positive action.

Access support and requirements for people with disabilities or caring responsibilities will be taken into account whenever practicable and methods sought to minimise any barriers to taking up training opportunities.

Staff with management, recruitment and selection responsibilities will be given guidance in the implementation of the **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** to ensure that they understand their position in law and under this policy.

### **6.12 Placements**

Our Placements Policy is informed and in line with best practice guidance from the Chartered Institute of Personal Development, gov.uk and NVCO.

### **6.13 Annual leave and religious holidays**

We will not ask about an employee's religion and will not discriminate against anyone wishing to celebrate festivals or holidays important to them.

Employees are required to use part of their annual holiday entitlement to cover time off for these and must follow the normal holiday booking procedure.

### **6.14 Cultural and religious needs**

Where employees, trustees or volunteers have particular cultural and religious needs, we will consider whether it is reasonably practicable to meet these needs while maintaining the efficiency of the business. We will accommodate dietary requirements and have a relaxed dress code at work allowing for cultural or religious attire.

### **6.15 Disabled employees**

- We will make genuine efforts to recruit disabled people and take reasonable steps to make the workplace and individual jobs fully accessible
- We will regularly review our facilities for disabled employees, Board of Trustees and volunteers and will try to overcome any problems faced wherever practicable and within reasonable resources available
- We will ensure that disabled people have maximum access to employment opportunities and to meetings and events
- We offer flexible working arrangements, including but not limited to part-time or remote work
- We will support disabled employees applying to Access to Work or other relevant schemes where appropriate
- We will ensure any spaces and facilities we use are accessible to all employees

### **6.16 Grievance and disciplinary procedures**

We will take seriously any complaints of discrimination and will not victimise people who make such complaints.

We will ensure any grievance and disciplinary procedures are clear, transparent, and accessible to all employees and that these procedures are applied fairly and without discrimination based on protected characteristics. For further details, please see our Disciplinary and Capability Policy and Procedure and Grievance Policy in the Staff Handbook.

### **6.17 Bullying and harassment**

We uphold the right of all employees and volunteers to be treated with respect and dignity and to work in an atmosphere free of bullying and harassment. We implement a zero-tolerance policy for bullying and harassment, with clear definitions of what constitutes these behaviours.

We will ensure that all reports of bullying and harassment are investigated promptly and fairly, with appropriate action taken against perpetrators and provide support and resources for victims of bullying and harassment.

For further details, please see our Disciplinary and Capability Policy and Procedure and the Grievance Policy in the Staff Handbook

## **7 Beneficiaries and participants**

### **7.1 Fair Access Principles**

We will follow our published [Fair Access Principles](#) in how we select and work with creators on our programmes. We will review our performance against these Principles and encourage other organisations to sign up to the Principles.

### **7.2 Application documents**

Every opportunity offered by us is advertised publicly, with a clear description of the opportunity and the expectations of the participant in fulfilling that opportunity, together with clear guidelines as to how to apply.

We do not ask for any application fee or similar.

Application documents will be available in different formats, including but not limited to Easy Read, Large Print or other formats as requested, and this will be made explicitly clear to potential applicants.

We will make clear in application documents that access requirements and the costs of these will be met wherever possible, both the application, and interview process, as well as during a composer's participation on our programmes once selected.

We will use clear, welcoming and inclusive language on any documents relating to our programmes, including highlighting the organisation's commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion and a link to this Policy.

We will make clear any financial offer of the opportunity, including any bursary, and a commitment to cover any travel and accommodation costs incurred in attending an interview, in line with our Expenses Policy.

We will actively encourage feedback on application documents and processes both before and after their implementation, specifically to improve accessibility in future opportunities.

We will make adjustments to our application process and programme participation, including but not limited to offering extensions, access support, additional coaching or other support as deemed appropriate in order to accommodate applicants' and participants' access needs.

We will undertake an internal review of our recruitment processes to apply any learning and feedback and improve the way we support artists with access needs.

### **7.3 Advertising**

We will use a range of advertising methods in order to attract the widest pool of appropriate applicants.

All advertising will:

- Ensure that we do not exclude, discriminate against, or discourage any particular group from applying, nor make it difficult for anyone from such a group to apply
- Refer to application documentation to make clear the nature of the opportunity
- Give clear instructions about how to apply and offer alternative formats if required
- Be explicit about the organisation's commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion

#### **7.4 Applications and shortlisting**

All applicants to our programmes, commissions, and awards will be asked to fill out an Application Form, which contains only information essential and relevant to the opportunity.

As part of our commitment to positive action, we ask applicants (on a completely voluntary basis) to provide sensitive personal data about their protected characteristics including ethnicity, gender, disabled status and socio-economic background.

We store and use this information in accordance with our [Data Protection and Privacy Policy](#).

A minimum of two people will review and score each application.. We will manage the shortlisting process on the basis of objective criteria and the extent to which candidates have shown, in the application form, that they meet the criteria of the open call in question.

With the exception of our programmes for young creators (up to age 18), shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview.

Staff and external partners responsible for shortlisting, interviewing and selection of applicants will be:

- Clearly informed of the requirements of the opportunities documentation, and the need for their consistent application
- Required to read our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy as part of their contract

#### **7.5 Interviewing**

All interviews will be carried out by a minimum of two people. This will normally be a member of our team; plus one or more external independent individuals.

A minimum of 50% of the panel will be women.

We will rotate external panellists for every open call and opportunity, to minimise bias and ensure a fairer process.

- The names of panel members will be made available to applicants as much in advance as possible
- We will ask interview questions that seek to gather evidence relevant to the selection components of the opportunity. The same questions will be asked of all applicants and will be offered to all applicants in advance of the interviews
- We will offer access support to all candidates invited to interview if needed to support them to take part at the interview. Special consideration will also be given to applicants who are carers
- Panellists will take notes and gather evidence against the components of the application requirements

#### **7.6 Selection**

All applicants will be scored against the requirements of the call documentation.

The highest scoring applicants will be selected to progress or participate on the programme. Where scoring is equal, those from under-represented groups will be given priority, in line with our positive action commitments.

We work in partnership with organisations in our networks to ensure our opportunities reach as diverse a range of composers as possible, and we review and actively monitor Equal Opportunities data submitted during the application period to adjust our marketing and communications to address gaps in our reach.

All unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the result of their application and offered specific feedback.

### 7.7 Programme participants

We are committed to ensure that all programme beneficiaries can participate fully and have equal access to opportunities as part of our programmes.

Selected applicants will be offered access support, and where applicable access plans will be made with them to ensure that any barriers to their inclusion to programme activities are addressed and additional support is provided. All programme budgets will include a line for access support.

In order to ensure continued learning and improvement, we will evaluate any measures put in place for access support and gain feedback from participants through voluntary surveys (with opt-outs available). We will share learning internally and where applicable and relevant (and in line with our Data Protection and Privacy Policy) with partner organisations, with the aim of sharing best practice and removing barriers to inclusion across the sector.

Where we work in partnership with other organisations, we will expect partners to share and adhere to the same principles and commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

We will seek to share our commitment to inclusion by publicly talking about our work with artists. This will happen in the following ways:

- Public sharing and discussion of anonymised, aggregated data gained through Equal Opportunities Monitoring forms
- Where permissioned, profiling creators who can become role models for inclusion

For programmes involving the participation of children and young people:

- Activity will be planned using Youth Music's Quality Framework and Arts Council England's Quality Principles
- Students selected for In the Making will be offered additional support to ensure their inclusion in the residential week, for example offering additional, specialist tutor support, teaching materials in alternative formats, provision of quiet spaces, and flexibility over accommodation and timetabling arrangements
- Students are selected for in the In the Making regardless of their ability to pay; information about a student's disability or ethnic background is not made available to the selection panel
- There are separate codes of conduct for both participants and staff for all participatory activity, that outlines expected behaviour for both parties, including relating to bullying and harassment (online and in person) and whistleblowing

## 8 Monitoring

All applicants to Sound and Music, including programme participants, employees, Board of Trustees and volunteers, will be asked to fill in an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form alongside their application.

Completing this is entirely voluntary and this is made clear to all applicants, along with an explanation of why this data is useful to Sound and Music, and how it will be used and stored, [as outlined in our Data Protection and Privacy Policy](#).

The data we collect includes data about age, ethnicity, gender, whether disabled, and level of education attained.

The Equal Opportunities Monitoring form is completed and submitted anonymously. It is not used in the selection process but aggregated in order to inform our monitoring, reporting, evaluation and campaigning activities.

Applicants selected to one of our programmes will be asked to fill out another anonymous Equal Opportunities Monitoring form in line with the above principles.

All monitoring statistics will be collated and presented to staff and the Board of Trustees annually and used to inform public campaigning as relevant.

We will use data and feedback, internal and external, to identify and address disparities in equal access to opportunities.

We will use exit interview results to identify and address disparities in retention of staff members.

## 9 Freedom of expression

The right to freedom of expression is a foundational principle of the UK, and we are committed to championing and defending this right.

Trustees, employees and any other individuals have the right to exercise their freedom of expression within in the law in their communications, including when using social media.

Together with our beneficiaries, however, we are likely to be at the forefront of conversations around change and challenge in society.

All trustees, employees and freelance workers will take the following steps, adapted from the guidance provided by Arts Council England, when undertaking activity that may result in a reputational risk:

- If a risk is identified, flag it with a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) who will inform the Board of Trustees as soon as possible

- SMT and the Board will take time to consider and discuss the risk, and what it means. The prompts on page 15 of the [Relationship Framework NPO](#) by Arts Council England may be used to frame the discussion
- Speak to other organisations who have faced similar issues
- If appropriate, develop a risk register for the activity
- Having considered the risks, and the mitigating steps we can take to manage those risks, weigh up whether we want to proceed with the activity or action as it is, or whether there are further measures we could put in place
- Put in place support for the artist and staff involved in delivering the activity
- Talk to our Relationship Manager about the risk, and actions taken

The following boilerplate will be used if we anticipate the planned activity might be perceived as controversial, or attract negative attention:

'Sound and Music is an independent, impartial and neutral charity. Our neutrality means that we can provide a platform for all voices and views, which anyone in our community considers relevant, within the bounds set by law.'

## 10 Accountability

It is the Chief Executive's responsibility with the support of the Board of Trustees to ensure the implementation of the **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** and **Fair Access, Inclusivity and Relevance (FAIR) Action Plan**. Appropriate funds will be sought to implement approved aspects of the Policy which require special and additional resources.

The Board of Trustees will review the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and discuss progress of the FAIR Action Plan, annually.

All employees, trustees and volunteers have the individual responsibility to:

- Follow procedures introduced to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination

- To draw the attention of management to suspected or alleged discriminatory practices
- To refrain from harassing or intimidating other employees, Board of Trustees or volunteers, clients or visitors of Sound and Music on any of the grounds cited in the policy statement
- Report any witnessed harassing or intimidating behaviour to their line manager