



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Creative Scotland Funding Criteria: 3. Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Introduction

In 2021/22 Creative Scotland refreshed its Strategic Framework, establishing a new set of aims and priorities to guide our work. This refresh took into account our remit and the role we are here to deliver. As part of this, we also updated our funding criteria, on which we will base all future funding activity.

These criteria are:

1. Quality and Ambition
2. Engagement
- 3. Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**
4. Environmental Sustainability
5. Fair Work
6. International (optional - only for applications involving international activity)

Each of the criteria listed above has its own guide, that sets out:

- The outcomes we want to see in this area of our work as a result of our funding
- Where this work aligns to national policy agendas
- Key aspects of the sector's work in this area, including current challenges
- Any links to relevant further information.

To access each guide please [visit our website](#).

Please note that applicants to our Funds do not necessarily need to address all the Criteria set out here. Each Fund will have specific questions which will be proportionate to the levels of funding available. We recognise that organisations and individuals work in different ways and will be at different stages in their development. However, Creative Scotland does expect all those we fund to have a clear vision for delivery against the Fund Criteria and to report impact against them.

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Key outcomes

Our Priority: Supporting a diverse range of creative people, communities, and activity, promoting an equality of opportunity to create, participate and engage

What do we want to achieve?

We want to ensure that the culture and creative sectors better reflect the full diversity of Scotland today. We therefore want more people, from across all parts of society, to be able to access to and take part in a range of artistic and creative activities - and also, for all who want to, to have the opportunity to work in the creative and cultural sectors.

Creative Scotland's EDI commitments are about fairness, and everyone having the opportunity to access culture and creativity. They are also about developing the necessary conditions for the creative activity we support to welcome all views and voices.

- Equality is about removing barriers
- Diversity is about supporting and reflecting different cultures in Scotland, enabling different voices to be heard
- Inclusion is about creating opportunities for people to work in, engage with, participate in, and experience arts and creativity throughout the country.

What does this mean for those who we fund?

We require those we fund to embed EDI in all aspects of their activity. This includes:

- a commitment to **tackling inequalities** for people who experience exclusion or are marginalised
- helping to support a more **diverse workforce**, (including those who govern and lead); and
- considering how to incorporate EDI in artistic and creative **programming**, where appropriate.

We expect all funded activity to be undertaken with due regard to **access**, including taking practical steps to ensure activities, spaces, processes and events – in person and online – are inclusive and accessible for the widest range of people possible. Throughout this document we'll outline any specific actions we expect those we fund to consider.

We expect organisations we fund to have clear EDI plans that are relevant to their work and the size and scale of their activities. EDI planning should set out what practical actions are being taken, timelines for delivery, and how activity will be resourced, monitored and reviewed. We expect to see clear accountability with lines of responsibility when delivering more complex activities. We also want to see how you have developed these plans and what evidence you have used to support your actions, including how you have involved and engaged people and groups from diverse backgrounds in determining your EDI plans and actions. Where applicable, we want to know if you engage with any guides or benchmarks which outline good EDI practice within your fields of work, or if you've consulted a representative group who have the lived experience and expertise to advise on EDI related issues.

Why is this a priority?

Looking ahead, if the cultural and creative life of Scotland is to be richer and more dynamic, then all Scottish society needs to be better represented. Although some progress has been made, there is much still to be done so that those people who remain excluded are equally valued and supported, and their talent and excellence recognised. The recent COVID pandemic highlighted the major negative impact felt by Scotland's diverse and socially disadvantaged communities, which if not addressed risks workforce representation in the creative and cultural sectors becoming even less diverse after the pandemic.

National policy agendas

Our roles and responsibilities

As the national body for the culture and creative sector, we have a responsibility to support the full diversity of Scotland's population. As a public body we work to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011. We have further requirements to consider inclusion as part of legislation covering Gaelic, British Sign Language and the empowerment of Island communities. In addition, the Scottish Government's Culture Strategy commits to extending opportunities for people to take part in culture throughout their lives and that tackling barriers to this engagement is a priority for the culture sector in Scotland. This includes increasing access for those with talent, from all diverse backgrounds, to support the future of the sector.

Key work in this area

Addressing Inequalities

We recognise that there are complex barriers faced by people who experience exclusion and marginalisation – including environmental, financial, organisational and communication barriers, as well as attitudes held by some in society. We expect all those we fund to be proactive in both removing these barriers and creating conditions and opportunities for a wide and diverse range of people, communities and groups to enjoy and benefit from their work.

For sector support organisations, we expect to see the same approach to employment, progression and work with freelancers and contracted practitioners. EDI needs to be considered from the outset of all the work we fund, including the diversity of the audience for any work that will be presented publicly.

We work to ensure we meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010 that requires us to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

We share these responsibilities with the organisations we fund.

The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The public sector equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.

There are also specific barriers and lack of opportunities faced by people and under-represented groups that are not specifically covered by The Equalities Act 2010. We therefore also seek to address to support inclusion for people with lived experience in these areas, specifically those who:

- Identify as neurodivergent
- Experience poor health or mental health
- Come from a disadvantaged socio-economic background
- Have grown up in the care system
- Have experience of being carers
- Are Gaelic or Scots speakers
- Do not speak English as a primary language
- Have experience of displacement, such as refugees and asylum seekers
- Live in geographic locations which may inhibit opportunities for engagement

Applicants should also recognise that diversity can be subtle and complex and there may be ‘diversity within diversity’, where individuals have a combination of different identities and characteristics which may change over time. Everyone has a number of social categorisations such as race, class and gender – this complexity is often described as Intersectionality. It is important for the creative and cultural sectors to recognise that Intersectionality means that certain individuals can face multiple layers of disadvantage and discrimination due to their characteristics and social backgrounds.

A Diverse Workforce

We want more people, from across all parts of society to be able to work in the culture and creative sector so that it becomes more representative of the increasingly diverse population of Scotland. Achieving true workforce diversity will help the culture and creative sector to access multiple perspectives and make its work more representative.

There is historic under-representation and lack of diversity in the culture and creative sector workforce, including in leadership and governance roles. Scotland’s ethnic minority population is growing fast, but the employment of people from ethnic minorities in the sector is low. While the gender balance in governance and employment looks positive, there are still deep-rooted issues to be addressed about the representation of women in leadership roles, as well as both on and off stage and screen. The number of disabled people involved in governance or employed by sector organisations remains low. And there is growing evidence that the sectors remain closed off to those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The Boards of cultural and creative organisations also tend to be homogeneous.

We want to see recipients of our funds ensuring their recruitment procedures are fair and accessible and that all opportunities are advertised and promoted widely. We expect funded organisations to monitor the protected characteristics of all employees, including the artists they work with, and their Board members. We want to support capacity building and, over time, the development of more diversity in the leadership of organisations. To increase the diversity of senior leaders, staff and boards, organisations can consider targeted recruitment measures and developing plans to attract new recruits to reflect society more broadly. Organisations’ wider policies and practices can also help increase diversity, for example those addressing flexible or family-friendly working. In support of EDI aims both staff and Boards should ideally receive regular equalities training.

We also want to actively support diversity-led organisations. ‘Diversity-led’ is a working definition. We recognise that a single individual cannot be ‘diverse’ and that being ‘diversity-led’ comes from the range of experiences and perspectives present in an organisation’s leadership. Leadership relates to Boards, directors and/or leadership teams, as well as the mission and impact of the organisation.

‘Diversity-led’ can mean that there are a range of protected characteristics and lived experiences held by the majority of those leading the organisation. Or it can mean that the leadership team is made up of people of a single protected characteristic or lived experience that is persistently under-represented in the sector.

‘Diversity-led’ can also mean that working practices and programme are designed around the needs of staff, artists, audiences and participants with these protected characteristics and lived experiences.

Specifically, Creative Scotland considers the following characteristics to be indicators of 'diversity-led' organisations:

1. The majority of those leading your organisation hold a range of protected characteristics and wider lived experiences, as set out above. This might include Boards, leadership teams, advisory groups and/or participants with meaningful influence.
2. Your leadership team is made up of people with a single specific protected characteristic or lived experience that is persistently under-represented in the sector.
3. Your programme and working practices are designed around the needs of staff, artists, audiences and participants with these protected characteristics and lived experiences.
4. Your impact as an organisation is measured in terms of benefit to people with protected characteristics and lived experience.

Creative outputs

Conditions of greater equality, diversity and inclusion are the building blocks for great work to be produced. Inclusivity of outlook and practice creates a better, richer and more dynamic culture and creative sector, characterised by innovation, risk taking and experimentation. We believe this happens when art and creativity is allowed to thrive in a climate of inclusion and without barriers stemming its growth and direction.

Experience shows that organisations that embrace EDI are more successful creatively, as they recognise the rich artistic and creative opportunities offered by a diversity of experiences and perspectives. Where relevant we expect applicants to consider whether their work effectively tells the stories of diverse communities and supports the diversity of representation on stage, in publications or in the work produced or exhibited.

A strong approach to EDI can help organisations diversify their audiences and strengthen the impact of their creative work. Participating in artistic and creative activity can foster empathy and deepen connections, help to develop social bonds and create a sense of community. Applicants should consider how they can reach a wider range of people who might be better representative of their community, involving and including people and places who might not normally be visible or who might face barriers to engagement. Embracing EDI can also help organisations to be more economically viable and sustainable. It makes good business sense to diversify audiences and better reflect the changing population of Scotland today.

Accessibility

Accessibility relates to how open and available something is to as many people as possible. Accessibility is about removing the barriers – be they physical, financial or attitudinal - and relate to all aspects of an organisation's work.

How you put your access plans into practice will depend on the nature of your work, your organisation, who you engage with and how you engage with them. Some key areas include:

Using accessible venues or spaces

Clearly communicating the accessibility of buildings and activity

Considering event and exhibition times

Ticket pricing and options

Having a range of appropriate formats and approaches – for example Dementia-friendly, relaxed performances or quiet spaces

Providing a range of interpretation options and accessible formats such as BSL, audio-description, translations, Braille, captions etc

The accessibility of your website, online and hybrid work

Accessible marketing and promotional materials – and how you let people know about your activity

Fair, accessible and inclusive recruitment and employment practices for your staff and any artists, freelancers and volunteers you work with.

Further information and supporting resources

Below are links to policies, guidance and research which may be helpful. Please note that it is not necessary to read these in order to apply but may help you understand the wider context in which your work fits:

- [**Scottish Government's Covid Recovery Strategy: For a fairer future**](#)
- [**Creative Scotland Equalities Outcomes**](#)
- [**Creative Scotland Equalities Mainstreaming**](#)
- [**Creative Scotland EDI toolkit for regularly funded organisations**](#)
- [**Seven Inclusive Principles**](#)
- [**ISAN Access toolkit**](#)
- [**Disability Arts Accessibility Resources**](#)
- [**Unlimited Accessible Marketing Guide**](#)
- [**Attitude is Everything resources**](#)
- [**Neuk Collective resources – working with Neurodivergent artists**](#)
- [**Unlimited - Ten Top Tips for Running Accessible Events**](#)
- [**Creative Scotland Gaelic Language Plan**](#)
- [**Creative Scotland Scots Language Policy**](#)



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