

ENGLISH FOLK EXPO

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY STATEMENT

English Folk Expo (EEx) recognises that in our society groups and individuals have been, and continue to be, discriminated against on the basis of race, colour, national origins, culture, gender, marital or parental status, disability, class, sexual orientation, age, political or religious beliefs. EEx is committed to counteracting this by the promotion of equal opportunities in all aspects of its operation, including on our stages, at our events, in our staff team and on our board.

In 2021, English Folk Expo began to formally benchmark and track the protected characteristics of the people we work with, employ and volunteer with us, including Trustees. For the first time, this gives us a benchmarking position.

We want the English folk, roots and acoustic music sector to properly reflect the demography of England as defined by the ONS. To this end, we will seek to ensure that each year our stages, programmes, audiences and our team mirror our society.

There may be occasions where we actively decide to go beyond these guidelines in order to provide leadership and change across the sector.

Through this policy, EEx strives to:

1. Be a flagship for excellence and inclusion in folk, roots and acoustic music;
2. Ensure our beneficiaries, including volunteers, artists and audiences, our workforce and our Board of Trustees are more diverse and representative of the wider national community within which we operate;
3. Become more inclusive and welcoming in our activities, processes, communications and wider organisational culture.
4. Show by example that increasing the diversity artists, industry and music fans enables us to deliver richer and more relevant programmes.

EEx embraces the following principles and beliefs, which underpin the actions we will take to address inequality and lack of representation and create a culture of belonging:

- EEx opposes all forms of discrimination and should continue to take a role in addressing bias and discrimination in the music sector;
- EEx recognises individual differences and values the contributions of all;
- Anyone coming into contact with EEx, including volunteers, audiences, artists, staff, music industry representatives and Trustees, will be treated fairly and with respect - no forms of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated;
- Being inclusive and championing excellence are compatible values which sit at the heart of all of EEx's work

- Equality, diversity and inclusion are an integral part of fostering innovative and inspiring artistic and professional practice - creating more opportunities for excellence in every aspect of the organisation and wider sector;
- EEx undertakes equal opportunity monitoring for all areas of recruitment to ensure we not only recruit appropriately but are also reaching diverse communities in the recruitment process;
- All EEx programmes and activities should be accessible and appropriate to the needs of different groups, with inclusion and diversity embedded into all planning and communications;
- Selection for EEx opportunities should be on the basis of skills and potential, and active review of our processes and decisions is needed to identify and mitigate the risk of bias
- It is EEx's own responsibility to develop a better understanding of the challenges and barriers to participation and engagement in its programmes and to take proactive steps to remove systemic inequalities.
- We must be transparent about inequalities within EEx and our actions to address them.

Equality, diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of all individuals working or volunteering for and on behalf of EEx and is fully supported and embraced by the Board of Trustees.

MEANINGFULNESS

The EDI data collected in 2021 will form a baseline for measuring progress against this policy. We will seek to improve on this baseline year on year until such a time as each dedicated programme area and our staff and Trustees reflect the demographic makeup of England. In some cases, we may choose to surpass these targets where appropriate and impactful.

As a guide in 2021, approximate demographic headlines in England include:

- 15% black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups
- 50% female
- 20% neurodivergent or disabled
- 5% LGBTQI+
- 25% 0-20 / 20-40 / 40-60 / 60+

DEFINITIONS

Equality is about fairness and fair access and we believe in equality for all people. However, because society is not equal, we consider equity in our approach, focussing on support for those who need it most.

Diversity is the range of human differences and the inclusion and representation of people with different characteristics and individual traits. For us this includes protected characteristics as defined by the UK Equality Act 2010 and other factors such as socio-economic and geographical backgrounds, different perspectives and life experiences.

Inclusion means we are committed to ensuring everyone coming into contact with EEx feels welcome, no one feels uncomfortable and everyone is able to thrive and contribute equally regardless of background or circumstance.

The Equality Act 2010 designates nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. Our work on equality, diversity, and inclusivity is not limited to these areas; in particular we note the issue of socio-economic inequality.