Applied Arts SCOTLAND

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

On 22 June 2020, the Applied Arts Scotland (AAS) Board published an Anti-Racism Statement responding to the global Black Lives Matter movement. In it, we committed to identifying and dismantling barriers to participation at AAS and among the wider craft sector, taking a wide view across all protected characteristics and other non-protected characteristics that can limit access to and participation in the craft sector.

We have an Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy in place, but we recognise that this alone is not enough – we need more radical and sustained action to represent black, indigenous, people of colour (BIPOC) makers within our community, as well as makers who are unfairly disadvantaged in other ways.

Board members acknowledge that we may learn things as we go that make us feel uncomfortable, and that we all need to become comfortable with being in that uncomfortable position. We hope to get there with care, honest critique, and through challenging ourselves to act.

This will require sustained work and consistent action. We will start off by looking at:
- The ways in which we advertise for members.
- How we recruit board members.
- How we define our membership criteria.
- How we advertise opportunities.
- How we organise events.
- How we curate our online content.
- The lens through which our stories are told.
- Who we partner with.

Detailed on the following pages are the actions that will underpin this. Our plans will evolve as we learn.

This is a live document that will be kept under review at regular AAS Board meetings, and version-controlled. It will be updated as actions are completed or change, or as new actions are identified. Our actions will be SMART and appropriately resourced.

This is version 1, correct at 23 July 2020. See www.appliedartsscotland.org.uk for the latest version.

AAS-Specific Actions

BOARD

- Document EDI training undertaken by board members, through AAS or other routes.

    o Identify additional training needs & ways to address these.

- Add equality, diversity and inclusion as a specific standing agenda item at Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting. This will include review of actions in this plan, along with agreeing resource and timelines.

- Consider setting up a working group to move forward actions between board meetings. Who should be on this? What about external advisors?

- Invite Dr Karen Patel to the July 2020 board meeting to discuss her research into diversity in the UK craft sector.

    o Consider how this research should inform our plans moving forwards.

    o Consider ways AAS can partner to extend this work into Scotland.

- Undertake an anonymous census of current board members to give a snapshot of current representation (to include all protected characteristics and other factors such as deprivation, (craft) education and health status).

    o Assess how the board membership distribution compares with Scottish population data.

    o Assess how board membership distribution compares with Scottish and UK craft sector data.

    o Use insights to identify specific demographics for targeted development.

    o This gives a baseline – consider how frequently we should repeat to assess change.

- Survey current and past board members to document how they were recruited onto the board of AAS.

    o Consider alternative methods to recruit board members, with reference to best practice advice from (e.g.) SVCO.

    o Undertake a formal skills audit & use results to inform future board member recruitment.

    o Identify & implement ways to encourage applications from individuals from under-represented demographics.

MEMBERSHIP

- Undertake an anonymous census of our existing members to give a snapshot of current representation (to include all protected characteristics and other factors such as deprivation and health status).
  - Consider different ways in which the census could be completed (digitally, physically)
  - Assess how the membership distribution compares with Scottish population data
  - Assess how membership distribution compares with Scottish and UK craft sector data.
  - Use insights to identify specific demographics for targeted development.
  - This gives a baseline – consider how frequently we should repeat to assess change.

- Review/document the places where we currently advertise our membership.
  - Where possible, identify the demographic that most often accesses these places. What demographics are we (not) accessing?
  - What other channels could we use to access different demographics?
  - Create a list of places where membership will be advertised in the future.
  - Review list of places at frequency to be determined.

- Review membership criteria, considering the ways in which these criteria might be difficult to achieve for specific demographic groups.
  - Identify ways in which criteria can be modified or expanded to allow for different experiences, and implement these.
  - Engage in wider discussion with sector & researchers to identify alternative metrics/methods that support quality-based assessment criteria.

OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

- Review how we write / talk about opportunities and events that actively encourages and welcomes engagement from specific demographic groups.

  - Identify best practice around language use for specific demographics.

  - Implement best practice when advertising events & opportunities.

- Review/document the ways in which we have advertised recent opportunities (e.g. residencies, workshops) that are open to non-members. Assume any open to members only are advertised via membership list.

  - What demographics are we accessing?

  - What other channels could we use to access different demographics?

  - Create a list of places where opportunities will be advertised in the future.

  - Review list of places at frequency to be determined.

- Review/document who has applied for recent opportunities (e.g. residencies, workshops) whether open to members only or non-members too.

  - What are the characteristics of the makers who applied for these opportunities?

  - What are the characteristics of the makers who took part?

  - Develop [or identify existing] short EDI survey to be submitted as part of the application for future opportunities.

- Review/document the ways in which we have organised recent events (e.g. exhibition/ symposium, train the trainer).

  - How was EDI considered during the organisation phase?

  - Which protected characteristics were considered in selection of venue(s), programme structure, organising committee, selection panel, speakers/presenters, etc? Which were missed?

  - Create an EDI checklist for future event organisation [or identify a best practice version used elsewhere] that considers EDI alongside physical and digital accessibility.

- Review our full programme of opportunities and events.

  - Identify where we are offering sector-wide activity.

  - Identify where we can actively realise targeted activity for specific demographics.

ONLINE PRESENCE

- Review website, social media and newsletter – images and text.

  - If you were (e.g.) black/disabled/LGBTQ+/self-taught, would the website/socials/newsletter make it feel that you would be welcomed and valued as a member of AAS?

  - What do our images convey about our "ideal member"?

  - Whose voices do we promote in (e.g.) blog posts? Are these representative of our membership, the Scottish population, our projects, the partners we engage with, non-AAS participants in AAS projects?

  - Are we perpetuating the idea of a "white saviour" in our international projects through the images we present or the language we use when describing our experiences of this work?

  - What could we change quickly about our online content?

  - What else could we change and how do we do it?

  - Consider working with a partner to undertake this work, e.g. as a piece of research that includes an objective review of our content plus solicits opinions from members and non-members across all demographics.

PARTNERS & SUBCONTRACTORS

- Review/document the partner organisations we work with.

  - Do they have an equalities policy and/or EDI strategy? Do we require it as part of our due diligence? How do we know how they implement/review it?

  - Define a minimum set of EDI criteria we require before AAS will engage with new partners.

- Review/document how AAS subcontract out tasks, e.g. accounting, website maintenance.

  - How are tasks advertised? How/where do we recruit from? Does this need to be changed?

Wider Craft Sector Actions

- Support MAKE Manifesto, specifically action 1 'We celebrate Scotland's makers as a diverse, inclusive, pioneering force for quality' and one of the three priorities identified at the MAKE | Happen event by the sector that they feel most strongly about developing: 'Craft, Diversity and Inclusion.'

- Proactively identify, record and discuss good practice in EDI in the global craft sector that AAS can learn from.

- Join the Craft Coalition together with Craft Scotland and other craft organisations in Scotland.

- Work cross-sector to understand the demographics of the making community in Scotland and barriers to membership of or participation in craft organisations and craft generally.

- Share learning from own action plan with the wider craft community and creative industries sector.

- Facilitate conversations between makers around anti-racism, building on conversations on identity as part of the British Council's Crafting Futures / Meet Make Collaborate projects.

- Work with partner organisations to reach under-represented demographics.