

Toolkit Four

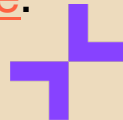
A toolkit to help artists and arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities understand a host, or commissioning organisation's approach and commitment to equity and inclusion.



Background

This toolkit has been developed as part of CVAN The Contemporary Visual Arts Network Fair and Equitable programme, a five-year commitment to instituting equity within the visual arts in England.

The programme aims to cultivate a visual arts sector and ecology that supports its leadership and enables artists and arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities to thrive. You can read more about the programme [here](#).



About this toolkit

Many organisations in the visual arts sector are looking to become more relevant, equitable and inclusive. This will hopefully mean more work with artists and arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities.

This toolkit aims to give artists and arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities insight into the extent of a commissioning, or host organisation's commitment to equity and inclusion work, as well as to the practical approach the organisation adopts to this work. By enabling artists and arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities to do this, we hope to reduce some of the extra work required of these individuals to repeatedly undertake this work themselves.

How to use this toolkit

- This toolkit has been designed for artists and arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities to **share** with host or commissioning organisation.
- Ideally, the toolkit will facilitate a group of artists or arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities to begin to develop a live version of this resource. Therefore, this toolkit can be used as a starting point; space has been left for it to be made bespoke if required.
- This, and the other CVAN Fair and Equitable toolkits are offered as resources that should grow and evolve. Some prompts may need editing, and some may not be relevant to all.
- **Note to artists and arts workers:** Although this toolkit may provide some insight into organisations that you would like to work with, it's important to note the limitations of this approach and consider using your usual and/or standard industry checks.
- **Note to organisations:** Some of the prompts and questions in this toolkit may not be relevant to your organisation or may not capture everything you want to share about your approach to equality and inclusion. Please add more information or raise additional points where relevant.
- Organisations can work through this toolkit individually or as a team. However, it's important to collaborate with boards and individuals who make up the governance structure to ensure buy-in from all levels.
- Take your time answering the prompts; revisit them, and repeat them regularly.
- As an organisation, you may wish to avoid artists and arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities having to request that you complete this resource by publicly responding to a version of these prompts – for example on your website – before being asked. This may also save your organisation time.

What this toolkit covers

The host organisations:

- 01 **Ambition**
- 02 **Culture**
- 03 **Way of working**
- 04 **Resourcing**
- 05 **Demographics**
- 06 **Power and intention**
- 07 **Talent development**

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The host organisation's ambition

The following prompts are designed to elicit responses from staff in the most senior positions of the host or commissioning organisation in order to help artists and arts workers better understand an organisation's commitment and approach to equality and inclusion. Responses are, of course, optional, and some prompts may not be relevant to every organisation due to its relative size and/or turnover.

Please respond to the following prompts:

What are your organisational ambitions for equality and inclusion both internally and externally?	
How would you rate your organisation's approach to equality and inclusion, and why? How would your audiences, workforce and stakeholders describe and rate your organisation's approach to equality and inclusion? How would the individual artists/freelancers you commission, employ and collaborate with describe and rate your organisation's approach to equality and inclusion? How do you know this?	
How informed is your workforce about equality and inclusion? How would you rate your workforce's confidence around equality and inclusion? How do you know this?	
Please feel free to use this space to add any additional prompts that might help you.	

The host organisation’s culture

Is your equity and inclusivity work siloed or is it central to your organisation? What is your organisation’s approach to learning more about equality and inclusion? In which areas does your organisation need to improve its knowledge and in which are you strongest?	
Are the lived experiences of your organisation’s staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities centred in the development of an inclusive culture, and if this happens, how does it happen? What is the process and what is the response rate?	
Are the skills and knowledge of your organisation’s staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities valued and perceived as important? If they are, how does this happen? Can you give examples?	
When undertaking equality and inclusion work, it sometimes happens that people from marginalised and underrepresented communities undertake extra work or are requested and required to trade off their lived experience. Naturally, it can be problematic to ask that people from marginalised and underrepresented communities take on extra unremunerated work to address issues that are not of their making without signalling there is interest in this work. These situations need navigating with respect and nuance. With this in mind, how does your organisation confidently ensure that additional work from staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities are remunerated generously?	
How does your organisation ensure that you have the full and ongoing consent of artists, arts workers, staff and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities when working on equality and inclusion projects?	
Are there any Equality Act protected characteristics that your organisation is most or least comfortable with, or least equipped to support to thrive? If so, why do you think this is?	
Please feel free to use this space to add any additional prompts that might help you	

The host organisation's ways of working

Who do you feel is most committed to equality and inclusion within your organisation, and what does this commitment look like?	
How do you identify, prevent, discontinue and learn from the policies, processes, culture and behaviours that may be detrimental to your organisation's artists, arts workers, staff and freelancers from underrepresented and marginalised communities?	
Do you have a clear complaint and grievance process that is publicly available and accessible to staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers? Do you have whistleblowing, code of conduct or relevant equality and inclusion policies? Have you had any feedback about these processes and policies from marginalised and underrepresented communities? How has your organisation acted on equality and inclusion feedback to date?	
Without breaking confidence or anonymity, has your organisation had any formal or informal complaints relating to equality and inclusion that you are able to share? What did you learn from this?	
What metrics do you use to gauge equality and fairness in your organisation?	
Do you belong to any networks and/or industry bodies that inform best practice and relevant ways of working with freelance artists and arts workers?	

The host organisation's ways of working continued

What is your position and experience of working with access riders, inclusive working agreements and upholding reasonable adjustments for staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities?	
Without breaking confidence or anonymity, what barriers have artists, arts workers, staff and stakeholders from marginalised and underrepresented communities experienced in your organisation? How does your organisation know this? How has this been addressed?	
What is your organisational response to the global Black Lives Matter reckoning? How does it inform your approach to anti-racism?	
What immediate action will you take if your staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities are in situations where they could be treated better?	
How does your organisation approach and support the safety of staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities whilst they're working with you?	
Do you provide any employee assistance, specifically for staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities? If you have a standard offer of employee assistance, is it able to properly support artists, arts workers and staff from marginalised and underrepresented communities, considering the disproportionate impact of structural health provision and wider inequalities on marginalised and underrepresented people? How is the assistance offered relative to demand, scale and financial turnover of your organisation?	

The host organisation's ways of working continued

Do you use any recognised pay guidelines to work out pay for freelancers? If you do, what are they?	
Are your payment systems set up to ensure freelancers are paid in a timely manner? Does this include expenses?	
Are your contracts in plain language and available in accessible formats?	
Do artists, arts workers, and freelancers have a clear point of contact when starting work with you?	
Please feel free to use this space to add any additional prompts that might help you	

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The host organisation’s resourcing for equity and inclusion work

Approximately, how much of your organisational budget is used and ringfenced for equality and inclusion work?	
Approximately, how much of your staff time is spent on equality and inclusion work?	
Do you have in-house access and inclusion expertise and if so, how does this access support work?	
Does your budget include access and inclusion provisions to provide relevant support when and where needed?	
How do you ensure there is sufficient evolving capacity and budget in place to provide the support you offer artists, arts workers, staff and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities?	
Please feel free to use this space to add any additional prompts that might help you	

The host organisation's demographics

As far as you're able to, please share the following information:

A breakdown of your organisation's staff demographics against each protected characteristic for your permanent, contracted and freelance staff.	
A breakdown of your organisation's staff demographics in the most senior positions for your permanent, contracted and freelance staff.	
A breakdown of your organisation's staff demographics in relation to intersectionality for your permanent, contracted and freelance staff.	
A breakdown of the demographics of your organisation's commissioned and exhibiting artists.	
The demographics of your audiences.	
The Equality Act protected characteristics that your organisation lacks at senior staff level if any.	
Please feel free to use this space to add any additional prompts that might help you	

The host organisation's intention and approach to power dynamics

Is your organisation striving to work with more artists, arts workers, staff and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities, and why is it, or is it not doing so?	
To what extent does the structure of your organisation include artists and arts workers from marginalised and underrepresented communities?	
How does your organisation give staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities power and agency?	
Dissenting voices within a business are healthy and necessary. Is your organisation confident and comfortable listening and responding to a range of views about your organisation? Does the culture of your organisation allow for dissenting voices, and if so, what does this look like or how does it happen? What changes and developments, if any, have been instigated by listening to dissenting voices?	
Would staff, artists, arts workers and freelancers from marginalised and underrepresented communities say they are authentically listened to by your organisation? If so, how do you know this, and how does this happen?	
How does your organisation encourage and support people with intersectional voices to lead?	
How does your organisation react when people from marginalised and underrepresented communities make complaints? Complaining often requires a huge amount of courage, energy and effort on the part of the complainant/s. How are complainants supported?	
Please feel free to use this space to add any additional prompts that might help you	

The host organisation's approach to talent development

How do you regularly identify the needs and interests of the staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from underrepresented and marginalised communities with whom you work? Who is responsible for actioning this?	
What is your current approach to assisting staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from underrepresented and marginalised communities to sustain and build a career?	
What kind of bespoke development opportunities other than standard pay and remuneration are available for staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from underrepresented and marginalised communities? ie introductions to networks, funders, stakeholders and those with influence; offering invitations to work in new spaces and within new conversations; offers of peer support, time for professional development, mentoring, coaching or co-creation, travel/Go & See bursaries, funding application support etc.	
Do you have a published talent development commitment plan for staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from underrepresented and marginalised communities with whom you work, and, if so, where can this be found?	
What wider development opportunities for artists and arts workers from underrepresented and marginalised communities are you involved in beyond your organisation's standard offer? ie do you support any professional development programmes for artists and arts workers from marginalised communities, or are you part of any networks or campaigns?	
How do you ensure that there are sufficient resources to offer ongoing and relevant development opportunities to artists, arts workers, staff and freelancers from underrepresented and marginalised communities with whom you work?	

The host organisation’s approach to talent development continued

Do you welcome access riders and/or inclusive working documents from staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers? Or, do you provide rider templates?	
Are your staff trained to uphold and embed reasonable adjustments? How are they aware of the reasonable adjustments required to meet the specific needs of your staff, artists, arts workers and freelancers?	
Is your organisation able to respond quickly to any needs of artists, arts workers, and freelancers? How does this happen?	
How does your organisation intentionally and authentically care for staff, artists, arts workers, and freelancers from underrepresented and marginalised communities with whom you work? And how do you measure or gauge the effectiveness of your approach?	
Please feel free to use this space to add any additional prompts that might help you	

In conclusion

Developing an organisational culture and approach of inclusion and equity is a continuous process of improvement and not a one-off initiative. Organisational policies, ways of working, culture etc, need to be considered and reflected on to enable change and growth, and to ensure relevance.

This toolkit may begin to give you a snapshot of an organisation's approach to equality and inclusion. However, it's important to note that organisations continue to evolve and change. It's also important to note the limitations of this sort of approach, especially when gauging authentic care, intentionality and a genuine approach. Therefore, as an artist or arts worker, please be sure to use this toolkit as a starting point, or as one of many approaches to help understand an organisation's current approach and commitment to equity and inclusion.

Footnote

This toolkit was created and developed by Monique Jivram. Monique's career spans more than ten years in arts organisations as a funder and practitioner in inclusive community, public engagement and visual arts programming. Operating at the intersection of curation and inclusive public programming, Monique's work focuses on improved inclusion, more efficient distribution of resources, and supporting underrepresented people to thrive in the arts sector.

This toolkit repeats and builds on from some of the sections in the above-cited research report: [*Fostering Equity in the Visual Arts Sector*](#). Written by Dr Cecilia Wee and Veionella Spaine with further programme support from Rukhsana Jahangir.