



Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Policy

Mission Statement:

Cork Midsummer Festival (CMF) is an annual multi-disciplinary arts festival that uses the city as its backdrop and inspiration. CMF provides high-quality arts events, both national and international, for audiences of all ages. Its programme provides opportunities for significant public participation and engagement, supports the development of emerging artists across all artforms, and provides a unique platform for work by local and national artists.

We Believe:

Cork Midsummer Festival believes that every person has the right to engage with, create, experience and participate in the arts. Cork Midsummer Festival is committed to creating an inclusive, creative and equitable environment for artists and communities. We believe that culture is enhanced by the individuality of all people, and we welcome everyone regardless of their background, gender, identity, orientation, or abilities. We aspire to be a festival where diversity of thought and representation is embraced within our team, board, programme and the communities we collaborate with.

Equality Statement

Our policy is to be fair and consistent in all aspects of our work. We recognise, respect and value differences and diversity. Cork Midsummer Festival is committed to supporting equity of access, participation and opportunity to engage with the festival.

Cork Midsummer Festival is an equal opportunity employer. Individuals are selected on the basis of their abilities and merits to perform the tasks required. Staff appointments are made based upon demonstrably objective criteria and recruitment procedures are always adhered to. CMF provides equal opportunities to all employees in access to employment, conditions of employment, training or experience in relation to employment, promotion, and in other employment decisions.

Board Members must comply with employment equality and equal status legislation. When taking decisions, the Board of Cork Midsummer Festival shall ensure that the principle of equality of treatment is respected.

Human Rights Statement

Cork Midsummer Festival works to ensure that all employees, artists and participants are treated fairly, equally and are not discriminated against on any of the nine protected characteristics covered by the [Equal Status Acts](#): gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, membership of the Traveller community; as well as tenth ground of socio-economic status.

Cork Midsummer Festival is committed to upholding rights as outlined in the [UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), and the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#). Cork Midsummer Festival commits to due diligence to identify and act upon actual and potential human rights risks for our workers, supply chains and services used. CMF seeks to uphold *“the right to freedom of artistic expression and creativity, which includes the right to freely experience and contribute to artistic expressions and creations, through individual or joint practice, to have access to and enjoy the arts, and to disseminate their expressions and creations.”*

Through our programmes and participatory projects, the festival seeks to support the universal right to access and to participate in the arts. As outlined in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights; *“Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.”*

Diversity Statement

Cork Midsummer Festival respects all employees, colleagues, artists, partners, funders and stakeholders without regard to their differences or similarities. Our actions must demonstrate and confirm our respect for each other and each other's contributions.

CMF is committed to the principles of equality of access, participation and outcomes. It aims to create an environment of fairness, equity, and respect for cultural and social diversity, which is free from discrimination, harassment and vilification as determined by current and future legislation.

Key Marginalised Communities Cork Midsummer have identified:

Working to connect and support marginalised groups to engage with the Cork Midsummer programme is an important focus of the festival.

Through our programme curation and participatory work, we continue to make long-term links with under-represented communities and artists from backgrounds including;

- Travellers
- LGBTQ+ community
- Disability groups (Cope Foundation, Enable Ireland, Cork Deaf Community Choir)
- Youth
- Older adults
- Migrant communities

- Communities in areas of disadvantage, particularly in the Northside of Cork City.

This work actively involves artists and participants from under-represented communities being embedded in the artistic process of creating work and gives them a voice within the festival. Cork Midsummer commits to continue developing ambitious programmes and participatory projects with less represented communities, in collaboration with partners who are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Through Creative Enquires, surveys and conversations with participants and audiences, we will seek input from more diverse voices and to understand wider perspectives of how they engage with or could engage with the festival. Targets in relation to diversity are being identified and agreed through our current strategic process.

Our Commitment to Equality, Human Rights & Diversity

Cork Midsummer Festival commits to:

LEADERSHIP & CULTURE

- nurture an equitable workplace, striving to support all employees, artists, art workers, suppliers, volunteers and participants;
- treat everyone with dignity and respect in a fair and consistent manner;
- strive to ensure equality of access and opportunity across the nine protected characteristics covered by the equality legislation - gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community, as well as socio-economic status;
- ensure inappropriate behaviour, including discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment or victimisation, is not tolerated;
- undertake due diligence to identify and act upon actual and potential human rights risks for our workers, supply chains and services used;
- make reasonable accommodation for those with disabilities and those requiring additional supports;
- work to dismantle any inequities in our policies, procedures and programmes, and regularly evaluate our progress;
- work toward more diverse representation within our board, staff, and volunteers;
- continue commitment to supporting participation and access, as demonstrated by the implementation of fulltime Head of Participation & Engagement role,
- promote equality and implement positive action;

POLICY

- ensuring CMF decisions, actions and priorities are shaped by our policies: Equality, Human Rights & Diversity Policy; Gender Policy; Artist fair-pay Policy; Child Protection Policy;

- implement new policies to address: Anti-bullying and Harassment; Grievances; Disability & Inclusion;
- update CMF's participating artists agreement to include terms of fair treatment and inclusive workplace;

PROGRAMME & PRODUCTION

- recognise that it is our responsibility to create a programme that reflects the diversity of the city;
- continue our conscious commitment to diverse representation within our programme;
- regularly seek submissions through open calls, to create a level field;
- give priority to projects with access considerations;
- in project planning consider accessibility from start, including within budget;
- provide guidance to support consideration of diversity and access throughout project planning;

OPERATIONS

- operate as an equal opportunities employer;
- implement salary ranges on job postings;
- seek to promote opportunities and recruitment notices to wider communities;
- be conscious of supplier diversity;
- implement an employee / artist wellbeing programme to support mental health;

PARTICIPATION & COLLABORATION

- continue to develop projects in collaboration with underrepresented communities;
- collaborate with partners committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- seek input from more diverse voices and to understand wider perspectives, through further Creative Enquires, surveys and conversations;
- consciously heighten our awareness of what barriers others may face and explore how we can increase accessibility and accommodate those with other needs;

COMMUNICATION

- ensure imaging and video content reflects the diversity of the communities we are representing;
- utilise Plain English, reviewing content to ensure the widest accessibility;
- standardise information including accessibility symbols / accessibility information;
- implement content warnings, for content that could trigger (content warning packs);
- consider how we use language to communicate intent, welcome and accessibility;
- include text information in emails with images to function with screen readers;
- work toward universal design with clear graphics to support easier comprehension;

EVALUATION

- seek feedback from CMF Board, stakeholders and sectoral experts to ensure that CMF's policy reflects current industry standards.
- regularly consult, review and reflect on this policy as a living document;
- conduct a full review at least every 3 years.

Supporting Policies

The festival's policies including Code of Behaviour; Gender Policy; Artist Fair-pay Policy; Child Protection Policy & Statement; Employee Handbook; Health & Safety Statement are available in the shared google drive.

The festival's grievance / complaints procedure and disciplinary policy is available in the shared drive within our Bullying & Harassment Policy. Use of the festival's complaints and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

Commitment from Leadership

This Equality, Human Rights & Diversity Policy is fully supported by the Cork Midsummer Festival Board and has been agreed by all full-time employees.

Each employee is personally responsible and accountable for ensuring that their actions and behaviours reflect this policy.

This policy was reviewed by Cork Midsummer Festival Board in 2026 and will be reviewed by the Board every three years.