



Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IDEA) Policy Major Update May 2024

IDEA Officer: Rose Kent

Table of Contents

1	Policy.....	2
2	Internal Implementation	5
3	External Implementation	6
4	Monitoring and Review	7

1 Policy

1.1 Accessible Arts & Media (AAM) is committed to inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility (IDEA).

- Inclusion is when everyone feels like they are seen, heard, valued and belong, meaning they can be their authentic selves and be fully involved.
- Diversity is the full range of identity 'dimensions' (or experiences) that make us uniquely and authentically human, e.g. our age, race, gender etc.
- Equity is a type of fairness that aims to increase inclusion by reducing the inequalities people face due to structural discrimination, contextual factors or other barriers
- Accessibility is about dismantling barriers to enable full participation, including the opportunities we offer, the language we use, the information we share (and how), and the physical and virtual spaces we create.

1.2 Ensuring inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility is fundamental to all AAM's activities, its governance and to the way in which it treats participants, staff, volunteers and stakeholders.

1.3 AAM strategies and actions are underpinned by a commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility for all. In doing so, AAM can aim to ensure equal opportunities for all.

1.4 AAM believes that IDEA enriches its artistic portfolio, enhances the skills base of its staff and artists, and contributes fresh ideas and perceptions to its development.

1.5 AAM values and relies on the diversity of its trustees, staff, artists, volunteers and participants for a rich and changing cultural and social context. AAM will update its policy and practice based on developments in the make-up of society and any new forms of discrimination and injustice that may arise.

1.6 We aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to our organisation's aims, and to develop an organisational culture that positively values IDEA.

1.7 In order to do so, AAM will keep an IDEA Action Plan to support its progress and to hold itself to account

1.8 AAM will promote the following basic rights for everyone associated with it:

- to be treated with respect and dignity
- to be treated fairly at all times regardless of colour, race, age, nationality, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and with consideration of needs for flexible hours and work patterns.

- 1.9 AAM also recognises its legislative responsibilities under the Equalities Act (2010) to ensure fair and equal treatment for all people in the United Kingdom.
- 1.10 By law, AAM must not discriminate against individuals or groups with any of the following “protected characteristics”. People with these with these characteristics can be known as “protected groups”.
- 1.11 Protected characteristics under UK law are:
- Age
 - Disability (learning, sensory, mental or physical, including progressive illnesses)
 - Gender/gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Race (includes colour, ethnic/national origin and nationality)
 - Religion or belief (or lack of)
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 1.12 **Disability** is a term applied to a person who has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a ‘substantial’ (more than minor or trivial) and ‘long-term’ (12 months or more) adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities, including eating, washing, walking, doing shopping. Anybody who has cancer, MS or has HIV/AIDS is automatically protected under the Equality Act and there are special rules about [recurring or fluctuating conditions](#), e.g., arthritis.
- 1.13 AAM aims to extend such protections, e.g. the lack of discrimination, where possible and lawful, to include:
- Political belief (or lack of)
 - Socio economic background
 - Parental status
 - Caring responsibilities and dependants leave
 - Trade Union membership or activities
 - Employment status
 - Unrelated criminal convictions
- 1.14 Positive action (see 1.17) cannot be provided to these groups, as they are not protected groups under the Equality Act (2010). Other provisions and protections may be possible and are investigated on a case-by-case basis.

- 1.15 AAM recognises that many people in our society experience discrimination. Discrimination is acting unfairly against a group or individual through, for example, exclusion, verbal comment, denigration, harassment, victimisation, a failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation. UK law defines different types of discrimination:
- **Direct Discrimination** is when you treat someone less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic for unlawful means, for example not employing someone because of their gender or disability.
 - **Indirect Discrimination** is when an employer has a policy, practice or procedure that applies to everyone but might disadvantage a particular group, and which cannot be justified in relation to the job, for example, requiring all staff to work on a day that a religion mandates their followers do not work.
 - **Harassment** is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment for that person.
 - **Victimisation** is when you treat someone less favourably or discriminate against them because they have pursued or intend to pursue their rights relating to alleged discrimination within AAM.
 - **Positive discrimination** is where a disadvantaged or underrepresented group that shares a protected characteristic is treated preferentially (but not in accordance with the legal criteria or existing exemptions) to address inequality. This is unlawful in the UK.
- 1.16 All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not. Staff and volunteers have a duty to co-operate with AAM to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility and in preventing discrimination.
- 1.17 AAM is actively committed to promoting inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility in all areas of employment practice, including opportunities for creative work placements and volunteering. In doing so, AAM may deploy **positive action**.
- 1.18 **Positive action** is where an employer treats a group that shares a protected characteristic more favourably than others, where this is a proportionate way to enable or encourage members of that group to overcome or minimise a disadvantage, have their different needs met, participate in a particular activity.
- 1.19 Unlike positive discrimination, positive action is lawful in the UK. Where AAM implements positive action, it gives due attention to the legal risks of doing so, and first consults the UK Government's [checklist for implementing positive action lawfully](#).
- 1.20 Examples of positive action include:
- setting targets for engagement, applications and/or employment from groups with a shared protected characteristic. Targets differ from *quotas* as targets are not mandatory

and can be used to make improvements without compromising the ability for employers to put forward the best candidates for roles.

- encouraging people with a shared protected characteristic to apply where they are under-represented or face additional barriers
- programmes of training or support for employees or potential employees from a group with a shared protected characteristic where they are under-represented or face additional barriers

2 Internal Implementation

- 2.1 The Board of AAM has overall responsibility for the development and strategic delivery of this policy and its associated IDEA Action Plan.
- 2.2 The policy is reviewed by the Board biennially, or with any significant change in legislation and/or relevant challenge encountered by the organisation, whichever is sooner. The IDEA Action Plan is reviewed quarterly by the Board.
- 2.3 AAM's Director and IDEA Officer are responsible for the effective operational implementation of this policy and its associated Action Plan.
- 2.4 All employees, volunteers (including Board members) and freelancers have a duty as part of their involvement with AAM to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice, including (but not limited to) adhering to this policy at all times, and contributing towards the development and delivery of items on the IDEA Action Plan.
- 2.5 This duty extends across all engagements that employees, volunteers (including Board members) and freelancers have with and/or on behalf of AAM, including (but not limited to) any and all engagements with AAM audiences, participants, volunteers, freelancers, employees, partners and associates, both physically and virtually/remotely.
- 2.6 Breaches of the IDEA Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action against employees, appropriate action against a member of the Board or withdrawal of freelance agreements or volunteer agreements.
- 2.7 AAM will ensure that all new employees, volunteers, freelancers and trustees receive induction on the policy and that partners will be fully informed. Appropriate training and guidance, including annual appraisals and Continuing Professional Development, will be provided as required to employees and volunteers develop their understanding, practice and wider inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility within the organisation.
- 2.8 Everyone involved with AAM has the right to be treated fairly and not to be discriminated against. AAM will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints about unlawful discrimination from employees, freelancers, volunteers or Board members. All allegations of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, confidentially and speedily in line with the Procedure outlined in Section 4.

- 2.9 Employees, freelancers and Board members are asked to complete an internal, voluntary and anonymous IDEA monitoring form to give insight into AAM's recruitment and retention procedures, to monitor progress, identify areas of improvement and to ascertain any relevant group-wide needs
- 2.10 AAM will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises, and offer, where appropriate, additional support to employees, volunteers and Board members to ensure they are able to take a full and active part in AAM's activities and operations, and discharge their duties in completeness.
- 2.11 Employees, freelancers and Board members are encouraged to share any access needs with AAM so that reasonable adjustment may be made.
- 2.12 In line with AAM's Safeguarding Policy, all employees and volunteers who meet the legal threshold must receive Certification from the Disclosure and Barring Service. AAM undertakes to maintain the confidentiality of disclosures and not to allow their content to unduly prejudice the employee's suitability for employment. The same understanding is taken towards regulations under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
- 2.13 The principles of IDEA apply to all personnel matters, including (but not limited to) induction, promotion, transfer, training, sickness, benefits, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions of employment, including remuneration, flexible working, TOIL, working from home etc.

3 External Implementation

- 3.1 Everyone involved with AMM has the right to be treated fairly and not to be discriminated against. AAM will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints about unlawful discrimination raised by participants, audiences, associates, partners or any other relevant third parties. All allegations of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, confidentially and speedily in line with the Procedure outlined in Section 4.
- 3.2 AAM will, where practicable, make all services and activities accessible to all those appropriate for the service/activity. AAM will make all relevant reasonable adjustments to ensure those with access needs are not excluded and can participate.
- 3.3 Reasonable adjustments vary significantly across AAM's work, reflecting the needs of the people we work with. These adjustments can be explained to those interested in learning more about our services and activities.
- 3.4 AAM is committed to implementing its IDEA policy at all stages of recruitment and selection processes. The recruitment process will be conducted in such a way as to result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in respect of abilities and qualifications.

- 3.5 Where relevant, and in line with UK law, AAM may use both [Genuine Occupational Requirements](#) and [positive action](#) (see 1.18-1.20) to inform the selection of a successful candidate.
- 3.6 AAM embraces the strength that IDEA can provide a workforce, therefore disseminates information for employment across a wide range of networks and platforms. The following should be read in conjunction with AAM's Recruitment Policy.
- 3.7 To ensure progress is made and best practice pursued, areas of development for the external implementation of our IDEA policy, including (but not limited to) the areas outlined above, will be itemised on the IDEA Action Plan.

4 Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the Board to monitor the effectiveness, and to review and develop, this policy where necessary. This is a standing agenda item of the HR and Governance Subgroup. Amendments are proposed to the Board for approval and action taken as necessary.

Date approved: May 2024

Next review date: May 2026