



# Skimstone Arts



## Skimstone Arts

**Skimstone Arts is a registered charity Charity registration number: 1182284**  
Charity name: SKIMSTONE ARTS

## **Equality & Diversity Policy** **Revised: February 2024**

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***Our Mission Statement: Skimstone Arts supports diverse artists and those at risk of isolation to make work with, for and about the world that matters to them.***

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## Introduction

**Skimstone Arts** is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

**Skimstone Arts** considers it a fundamental responsibility to exercise equality and diversity

in all areas of its activities including:

- employment practice
- company structure, organization and development
- artistic processes and programming
- marketing and publicity
- training and professional development

## The Need For A Policy

There is certain injustice and inequality in society which can prevent certain groups and individuals from exercising their full rights and entitlements. In order to redress this imbalance of opportunity and to make progress towards a more inclusive, just and socially aware society that celebrates the skills and achievements of all, Skimstone Arts needs a statement of opportunity, a policy for guidance, and an actionable plan for Skimstone Arts staff to follow throughout all practice.

Skimstone Arts has a fundamental aim: the empowerment of all people who work with and become involved in the company. This has a direct influence on the direction and management of arts activities, and must be guided by adherence to equality of opportunity.

As a music based and multi arts company with a proven track record of working with a diverse range of people in an equally diverse range of settings, Skimstone Arts is well placed to promote good practice and has a responsibility to ensure that its activities follow principles of equality of opportunity. A policy is needed for the encouragement of company members and others involved in Skimstone Arts ' activities.

As a charity, Skimstone Arts has a responsibility to operate in a principled way and in accordance with the requirements of funding bodies. There is also a framework of legislation which must be adhered to: Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts 1944 and 1958, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. (In this respect Skimstone Arts recognises that the relevant Acts provide only a minimal level of protection)

## Key Aims

The primary aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society, participants and our audiences, and for each member to feel respected and able to give their best.

Skimstone Arts in providing artistic, creative and social action opportunities e.g. engagement, live and online broadcasts, performances, events and exhibitions is also committed against unlawful discrimination of any member of the public

This policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Skimstone Arts commits to:

- encourage and develop equality and diversity in the workplace, communities and audiences, as they are good practice and make social and cultural sense
- providing proper guidance and training for Skimstone Arts staff to follow to uphold this policy
- create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- Always considering the accessibility of every type of activity carried out by Skimstone Arts, ensuring no individual is discriminated against due to mobility or social/mental health issues.

This commitment includes senior staff and all other part time/ freelance/ artists/ young people, volunteers about their rights and responsibilities under the equality policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help Skimstone Arts provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

Skimstone Arts will provide the necessary encouragement and guidance to all members of the company and everyone that becomes involved in its activities so that they are able to:

- take practical steps to translate the policy into practice
- monitor and review the policy and its implementation on a basis decided by board members, and wherever relevant enforce the policy through disciplinary and grievance procedures where necessary.

## **The Policy**

Skimstone Arts is opposed to discrimination on any grounds and recognises the need to take positive action to eliminate discrimination and disadvantage.

### **Employment Practice**

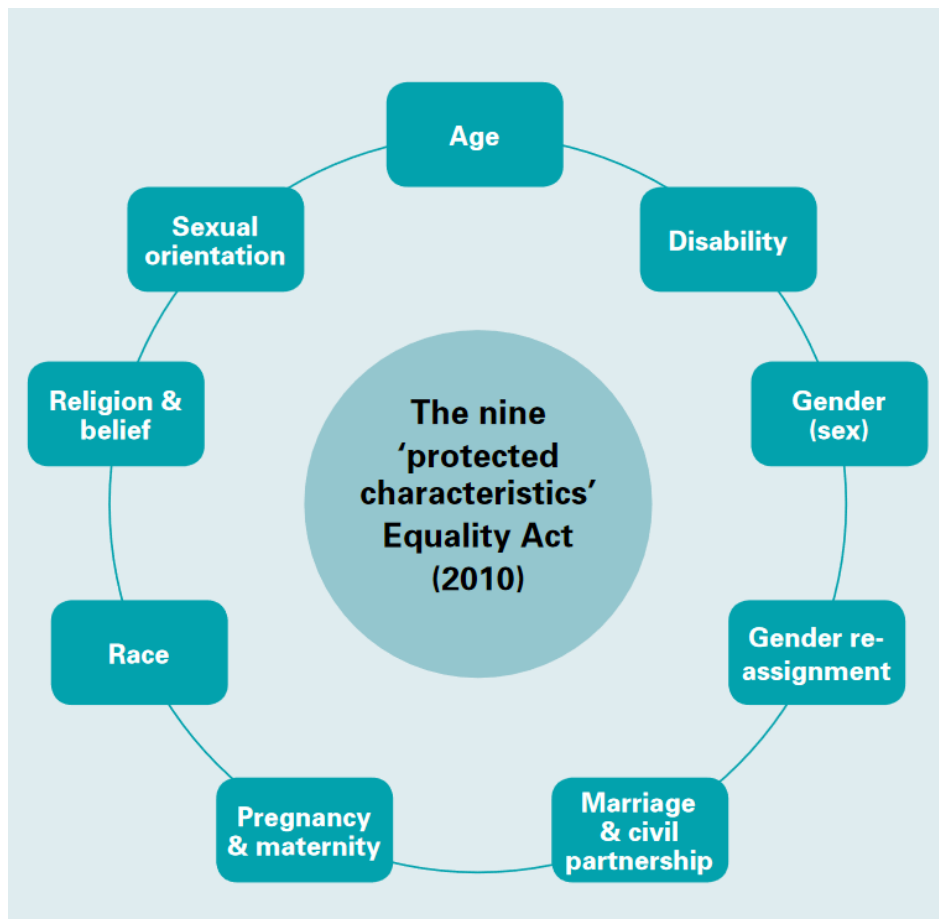
No company member, potential company member or any other person who becomes involved in Skimstone Arts' activities shall receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of: gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age, care of dependants, political or religious belief, class or education. Selection criteria and procedures will be kept under review to ensure that individuals are selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Skimstone Arts is for everybody.

### **Process of Employment**

- job descriptions, person specifications and clear guidelines about the company's requirements and expectations of company members will be drawn up and distributed upon request.
- any potential company member will undergo the same appointments procedure, interview panels will be composed with a balance of representation.
- interview panels will be made aware of Skimstone Arts' Equal Opportunities Policy and briefing will include the inadmissibility of discriminatory questions.

### **Monitoring**

In order to evaluate the progress of the policy, Skimstone Arts will monitor job applications, individual and group requests to become involved with company activities with regard to the nine protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act. Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality policy, and the **Equality and Diversity action plan**, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.



## **Terms and Conditions of Employment**

Skimstone Arts will always strive to meet the special needs of company members and those involved in company activities within the terms and conditions of their employment or experiences with the company.

## **Organisational Structure**

Equality of opportunity relates to all aspects and areas of Skimstone Arts' activities and as such it has to be reflected in the structure of the organisation. Representation and participation by all sections of the community will be addressed in the membership of the Board of Directors and in any other body of people involved with the company and its activities.

Skimstone Arts' commitment to Equality and Diversity will be manifested in the following ways:

- developing a dialogue with the arts community and other social, business, cultural and educational organisations
- consulting specialist organisations representing people currently unable to participate in or access opportunities in the arts.
- monitoring this aspect of the Equal Opportunities policy will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors, Artistic Director and other company members through the implementation of Equality and Diversity training during induction.

## **Artistic Programming And Planning**

In planning a programme of artistic activity or specific arts project, criteria will be informed by equal opportunities considerations. This means that particular reference may be made to the form and content of an arts project and to the make up of the participating group or company. All activity of Skimstone Arts must be socially conscious of the message of each project and how it will be perceived by it's audience.

Monitoring this aspect of the policy will be carried out through an analysis of Skimstone Arts' activities and project evaluations.

## **Marketing and Publicity**

Equal opportunities considerations inform Skimstone Arts' marketing and publicity profile.

In practice this means:

- ensuring that text and images on all promotional material reflects the commitment to equal opportunities, and does not contain negative or discriminatory images;
- allocating and adapting additional resources to ensure that alternative communication styles are catered for
- working and forming partnerships with other organisations concerned with the promotion of the arts to groups and individuals with specific access or participation needs.

## **Training**

An equal opportunities policy will not operate itself; it requires commitment, understanding and training where necessary for all people responsible for its implementation. This will be ensured by including Equality and Diversity training in induction, as well as through Skimstone's Equality and Diversity Action Plan.

## **Harrassment**

All staff and volunteers should understand they, as well as staff management , can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, part time/ freelance/ artists/ young people, volunteers, communities and the public.

We take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, part time/ freelance/ artists/ young people, volunteers, communities and the public and any others in the course of Skimstone Arts' work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under Skimstone Arts' grievance and disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly

serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

Opportunities for training, development and progress will be made available to all staff and volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency and impact of Skimstone Arts.

Decisions concerning staff and volunteers will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)

Employment practices and procedures will be reviewed at appropriate intervals to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law

The make-up of the workforce will be monitored with regards to information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality policy.

Skimstone Arts' working conditions will be reviewed at appropriate intervals to ensure no individual is discriminated against due to poor physical or social standards

Skimstone Arts is an active member of Culture Against Racism and Black Lives Matter.

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