



AOSDÁNA

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Document

Aosdána, inaugurated in 1981, is an affiliation of creative artists. At our General Assembly in 2023 we agreed a *Statement of Values* and that a group of members would propose a policy on Equality Diversity and Inclusion for consideration by our assembly. This EDI Policy Document proposes a framework for the demonstration of our implementation of and appreciation of the Arts Council's EDI policy.

We are committed to non-discrimination related to the nine grounds under the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2018: gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

We are also committed to non-discrimination related to social class or socio-economic status.

Central to our ethos is Freedom of Artistic Expression, as expressed in Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights.

We request our members to have this policy in mind in all of its decisions and activities, and to ensure that Aosdána continues to represent all of those artists who have made, through their work, an outstanding contribution to the creative arts.

General Principles

Aosdána in all its work shall strive to be open, transparent and welcoming, free of harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, with particular regard for the protected characteristics above, and ensuring that individual differences and the contributions of all members are recognised and valued.

We want Aosdána in all its work to ensure that individual differences and the contributions of all members are recognised and valued, and that we uphold and implement this general principle as follows:

1/ Implication of EDI principles among ourselves.

We will ensure that there is a fair and welcoming environment for all of the members of Aosdána, facilitating a culture of openness and responsiveness, treating members with dignity and respect, and promoting a positive culture within our affiliation. We will ensure dignity in our relationships with those who work with us in line with the procedures and principles in Arts Council policy, and make these procedures readily and transparently available to our members.

2/ Acting on our policies in the public arena.

We will ensure that Aosdána continues to act as, and to be publicly perceived as, a fair and welcoming environment for all of its members and those it engages with, one which facilitates a culture of openness and responsiveness, treats members and administration with dignity and respect, and promotes a positive culture within our affiliation and in the wider cultural sphere. To this end we would ensure that the EDI policy and its implementation are known through publication on the website.

3/ Ensuring that Aosdána represents our artists.

Aosdána will continue to be representative of those artists in Ireland who, through their work, have made an outstanding contribution to the creative Arts. Aosdána will make improvements in its representation of protected groups as new places become available. This action should include attempting to establish whether our affiliation may have a conscious or unconscious bias in respect of the grounds described above.

The speed of this improvement is contingent upon the speed with which new places are opened up. At present, new places come about by (1) the death or withdrawal of existing members, and (2) the expansion of the permitted number of members (currently 250). Aosdána does not have control of these processes; at present it can only lobby for expansion of the permitted number.

In recent years Aosdána's ability to act on the fair representation of artistic excellence in Ireland has been curtailed by the limitation set on the overall number of members, even as the population expands in number and diversity.

We will therefore work with the Arts Council to undertake whatever action is considered necessary to improve the diversity of our representation of artists, under the existing rubric of recognition of artistic commitment and excellence that prevails in our selection procedures.

4/ Implementation

Aosdána commits to the formulation of an implementation plan in consultation with its members and with the Arts Council. The plan will consider all avenues to achieving real improvements in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion of our representation, our awareness, our understanding and our communication.

Approved by the Toscaireacht on 24.11.2024

Approved by the General Assembly on 4.09.2025