

## **Policy: Inclusion and Equalities**

**V4: December 2018**

**Prepared by Clare Reddington and Watershed Inclusion Group**

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Inclusion Working Group, Watershed Senior Management Team and Watershed Board and informed by the results of Watershed's monitoring processes. This policy is distributed to all staff and board members and revisited annually in Watershed's Business Development Meetings.

It sits alongside the Ethics policy, the Employee Handbook, the Dignity and Respect at Work policy and the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policies.

### **Introduction**

**“Diversity is inviting people to the party, inclusivity is asking them to dance”**

Vernā Myers, 2015

Watershed seeks to be inclusive across all areas of our business. By producing authentic, welcoming spaces and engaged programmes, we strive to reflect, include and champion audiences and artists from all backgrounds.

### **Overview of approach**

Watershed's emphasis on interdisciplinarity, accessibility and open innovation ensures that diversity is a driving force within our work.

We believe that to release the true potential of the artists and audiences we work with, we must draw from the widest possible pool of collaborators and ask them to engage with people not like them (in cultural background, ethnicity, discipline, age etc). Our work is curated to programme difference, and open calls and community partnerships ensure it is vibrantly mixed.

Diversity is inherent in our approach to supporting a thriving cultural ecology. However, the case for inclusion as a matter of social justice and institutional responsibility has further to progress and with greater urgency (in both Watershed and society as a whole).

In recent years we have explicitly moved our thinking from growing diversity to building inclusion for minority and excluded groups. We seek to apply this thinking across programmes, audiences, participants and staffing.

Underpinned by our values, Watershed's approach to being authentically, thoughtfully and sustainably inclusive is enabled by collaboration, responsibility and openness.

**“It's brilliantly accessible... You don't have to ask staff it is just second nature of them to ask a question”** Stephen Lightbown in Bristol 24/7's video about access in cultural venues.

## **Key areas of activity:**

Audience development and Programming are addressed in Watershed's Business and Programme Plans.

### **Inclusion Working Group**

Watershed's Inclusion Working Group (IWG) meets monthly and features team and board members from every part of the business. Its aim is to explore how we can remove physical, social, economic, cultural and attitudinal barriers to engaging with Watershed across all aspects of what we do.

It aims to be a place to guide, identify and prioritise how Watershed works with specific groups, rather than acting as a delivery agent for the whole organisation.

#### **Purpose**

- Guide consistency of approach across and through the organisation
- Join up and shine a light on strong activity that already exists within Watershed
- Ensure mobility for the staff who work here across departments / physical space
- Share learning with the wider culture sector
- Link to Bristol accessible venue group

Questions and recommendations are actioned within the business area they relate to - ensuring inclusion is a shared agenda across Watershed. Where necessary specific working groups / strategic pieces of work are commissioned.

The Group has a core membership but agendas are circulated across the organisation with attendance open (and invited where appropriate), and minutes circulated openly.

The group produces a year round programme of meetings where partners, organisations and individuals are invited to discuss the following question:

“In your experience, what are the questions Watershed should ask itself around making our space and our programme more welcoming?”

We use these opportunities to gain greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities of specific groups, but understand that one person is not representative of a whole group.

The group signs up to the following code of practice:

- We will feel free to ask open questions and raise difficult issues in an open and supported environment.
- We will check each other's language, thoughts and privilege with a spirit of goodwill.
- We will admit our imperfections and presume we are acting in the best spirit.

### **Recruitment and opportunities**

Watershed is working hard to recruit staff, artists and practitioners from diverse backgrounds, and this is a key area for future development.

We work with partners to ensure our open calls for commissions and residencies reach as far and wide as possible, and advertise opportunities and jobs in the local press as well as in culture sector communications channels. We have developed specific wording (around race and disability) for open calls and job adverts to encourage applications from Deaf and disabled people, and people from BAME backgrounds.

We seek to ensure our recruitment and selection panels include a balance of gender, race and age. This includes paying people from outside our organisation to participate in recruitment panels and inviting Rife Content Creators to participate - both to offer their insight and to gain experience.

By June 2019 we will have implemented a new recruitment strategy which has inclusion at its heart.

This will ensure that how we describe jobs, how we advertise roles, and how we conduct selection and interview processes are fully inclusive.

We will also review leadership and progression, to promote inclusion at every level of the organisation.

### **Human Resources**

Watershed ensures it meets the terms of the Equality Act 2010 and Equality Duty 2011, in order to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

Watershed maintains and extends a fair working environment for all employees through the development and implementation of policies and good practice to promote equal opportunities in employment at every stage. This includes:

- Advertisement of new posts
- Recruitment processes
- Training and development opportunities
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Disciplinary and grievance
- Dismissal and redundancy
- Customer service

Our HR policies ensure that no prospective or actual member of staff will be treated less favorably than any other, whether before, during or after employment at Watershed. This applies to all aspects of Watershed's employment practice from recruitment and pay to conduct at work and termination of employment.

Our values, ethics policy, employee handbook and Dignity and Respect at Work policy provide guidance on expected standards to staff and consultants we work with.

Watershed's Creative Director/CEO and the Inclusion Group Chair are responsible for updating and coordinating this policy. The Watershed Executive will ensure it is delivered and monitored. It is their duty to ensure that managers receive guidance on the proper application of the policy, that adequate recording systems are established, and that the monitoring of procedures and selection decisions are carried out.

Managers and supervisors are responsible for the practical application of the Inclusion and Equalities Policy and in particular to ensure that:

- All employees are aware of their responsibilities
- Employment decisions are not discriminatory
- Proper records of employment decisions are maintained
- Fair standards of employment practice are maintained
- Employment practices are reviewed regularly by monitoring records of employment decisions.

Individual employees have a responsibility for ensuring that they meet the aims of the Inclusion policy and do not unlawfully discriminate during the course of their employment.

Watershed employees who feel that they have been harassed, bullied, victimised or discriminated against as a result of a protected characteristic will have automatic recourse to Watershed's Dignity and Respect at Work Policy (see Appendix 8 in the employee handbook).

Any accusations of harassment, bullying, victimisation or discriminatory behaviour on the grounds of a protected characteristic against an employee of Watershed will be dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure (see section 5.2 in the employee handbook) which is revisited annually.

Watershed complies with the Equal Pay Act (1970) and regulations from the European Commission regarding the rights of women in the workplace. Statutes place particular responsibilities on employers in relation to maternity/paternity leave.

Watershed aims to ensure that the access needs of staff are met. Where staff can no longer perform their duties due to new access needs, every effort will be made to find them suitable alternative employment within Watershed.

Watershed recognises same sex partners as having the same rights and entitlements as heterosexual partners in relation to maternity/paternity leave / pay and all other leave entitlements.

Watershed will undertake an annual staff survey to understand the demographic of its workforce and to take appropriate measures to ensure it is representative of the population of Bristol.

## **How we work**

### **Watershed is COLLABORATIVE**

We believe our best work is done in partnership. This takes many forms - from those we have worked with over many years, to those we collaborate with on specific themes or opportunities.

We are committed to cross-sector and cross-community collaboration as the best way to nurture the creative ecosystem of Bristol. Rather than creating tokenistic or parachuted programmes, we believe in working with the partners who are already active in a specific community or group - finding ways to learn from them, champion them, and pay them properly in order to add value to both of us.

Watershed's 2019 - 2022 business plan identifies the following priority groups:

1. Young people (under 24)
2. People from BAME backgrounds
3. Disabled, Deaf and Hard of Hearing audiences

In order to create an appropriate invite and offer for these specific groups, we consult and collaborate with individuals and partners including: Ujima, Come the Rev, Unlimited, BBC See Hear, VS1 Productions, Creative Youth Network, Mind, Elmfield School for the Deaf, Freedom Youth LGBTQ+, Young People's Festival of Ideas and South Bristol Youth.

### **Watershed is Open**

Watershed seeks to be welcoming to everybody, all of the time. Our operations teams and front of house staff receive continuous training in accessibility and engagement.

Watershed is fully accessible to wheelchairs and our accessible toilets include baby changing facilities. Guide dogs are welcome and there are two disabled badge holders' parking spaces close to the building. Induction loops are available in all 3 Cinemas and 2 of the event spaces and our cinemas are equipped to offer Audio Description and Descriptive Subtitling when available.

We believe that to release the true potential of the artists, young people and audiences we work with, we must draw from the widest possible pool of collaborators and support them to engage with people not like them (cultural background, ethnicity, discipline, age and ability). In all areas of the programme, this mix is achieved by investing in producing teams who are highly knowledgeable and well connected to partners and programmes across the city.

We ensure our programmes are designed with flexibility and responsiveness at their heart, enabling us to respond to access requirements as they arise and be responsible to the changing needs of audiences and participants..

We maintain openness to new individual and organisational collaborations. Ways to initiate a conversation include:

Through the Pervasive Media Studio - an open, free to join community. In addition every Friday, the Studio hosts a free lunchtime talk with a tour, introduction to residents and an open offer to hot desk.

BFI Hub South West - Widely advertised networking, events and funding opportunities

Rife Magazine: open calls for contributors and regularly reviewed projects.

Organisations wishing to work with us outside of these mechanisms should contact Watershed's Creative Director: [clare.reddington@watershed.co.uk](mailto:clare.reddington@watershed.co.uk)

## **Watershed is RESPONSIBLE**

Watershed acknowledges the power of making specific invitations to specific people, of making them specifically welcome.

We take responsibility for the cultural ecology of Bristol - investing time and effort in supporting and growing other organisations rather than simply seeking to benefit ourselves.

Watershed has worked hard to build a mixed business model, loyal audiences and strong profile - this institutional resilience gives us a position of privilege, which we work hard to recognise - sharing our assets where we can and striving to ensure we do not make assumptions about others' ability to commit time and resource to projects. In addition, we use our profile to act as an ally and advocate for people working in the creative sector of Bristol who are from minority groups or who are working in new ways to promote and support them.

We evaluate programmes and projects with external consultants and create project videos and case studies which document learning and outcomes. These are shared with audiences, partners and peers. We will seek to publish learning about our approach to inclusion (what has worked and most crucially what has not, in order to support change within our sector and to share our institutional ability to invest resource where others can't.

We conduct regular demographic surveys with a robust sample of visitors (3 times per year) to build an accurate picture of Watershed users and undertake an annual staff survey to understand our team's demographic.

All of our project videos are captioned, to ensure knowledge exchange is not only directed at hearing practitioners and ensure the public events relating to talent development programme have BSL interpretation.

We strive to ensure all public panels and events are representative of the population of Bristol.

## Appendix 1

### **Inclusion and Equalities Targets and Actions 2019 - 2020**

Target / Action	Delivery	Person / People Responsible	When
Ensure the IWG is representative of the whole organisation and an effective mechanism to foster two way communication of groups work, feedback loop	Continuous use of Inclusivity Trello Board to make the work of the IWG and all teams more transparent and easier to engage with.	Helen Jaffa / Zahra Ash Harper / Louise Gardner	Continuous + Monthly meetings of IWG

and evaluation.	Share the knowledge and the learning  <a href="https://trello.com/b/tg94YGBG/inclusivity">https://trello.com/b/tg94YGBG/inclusivity</a>		
	Agendas for monthly IWG and minutes of meetings circulated across the organisation.	Helen Jaffa / Zahra Ash Harper / Louise Gardner	Ongoing
Watershed staff and board reflect demographic breakdown of Bristol	Openly share data internally and with stakeholders around the diversity of staff, Board and programme participants	Louise Gardner / Layla Barron	Continuous
	Open call for new Watershed board members	Miriam Randall / James Touzel	March 2019
	Annual Staff and Board Demographic Survey	Louise Gardner / Layla Barron	May 2019 (Training Day)
	Pervasive Media Studio Residents survey	Jo Lansdowne	May 2019 (Training Day)
	Design and implement new recruitment strategy giving all staff clear guidance on best practice at every stage	Kirsty Young	May 2019
HR policies and procedures are developed and maintained with inclusion at the core	Regular monitoring and review of HR policies and practices to ensure they are up to date with	Kirsty Young	Ongoing (minimum annually)

	changes in legislation, updated Watershed inclusion practices and best practice.		
Watershed employees are fully aware of Inclusion and ethics policy and able to tackle equalities issues and identify / action poor behaviour.	All new staff receive a full induction on commencing employment, including being asked about their access needs.	Laura Walder	Ongoing
	Inclusion policy published and linked on all Job and opportunities page of website	Louise Gardner and Kirsty Young	February 2019
	Keep managers aware and in touch with policies, ethics and inclusion by ensuring they are part of Business Development meeting agendas on a regular basis,	Clare Reddington and Louise Gardner	Part of at least three BDM agendas in 2019/20
Watershed teams receive consistent and regular support in relation to understanding their responsibilities for access and inclusion.	IWG issues/updates that relate to HR (eg reasonable adjustments, mental health) are communicated to managers and supervisors at Management group sessions	Miriam Randall / Kirsty Young	Quarterly in 2019/20
	Inclusion is a priority in the new Wellbeing policy	Miriam Randall / Kirsty Young	Completed by end of 2019
Knowledge Exchange - Externa: Watershed shares openly	Commission and publish online case studies around Watershed's	Jo Lansdowne / Louise Gardner	4 articles per year

approaches that haven't worked as well as those that have.	approach to inclusion.		
Knowledge Exchange - Internal:	Encourage and develop use of the Inclusion Trello Board to share and champion our work amongst our teams. <a href="https://trello.com/b/tg94YGBG/inclusivity">https://trello.com/b/tg94YGBG/inclusivity</a>	Helen Jaffa / Zahra Ash Harper / Louise Gardner	Ongoing
Partnership	All partners, Festivals and external people booking Watershed spaces are made aware of our values, inclusion practices and ethics policy.	Miriam Randall / James Taljaard / Layla Barron	New partnership / collaboration agreement in place by May 2019.
	Safeguarding policy and standards developed and communicated to partners	Kirsty Young / Miriam Randall	May 2019
Physical accessibility	Physical audit of building	Laura Walder	March 2019
Ensure our online presence is inclusive and accessible.	Commission an audit the accessibility of our online presence.	Louise Gardner / David Redfern	By end of 2019
Budget / Resource for Inclusion work	Central budget line for Inclusion work and ensure that projects have budget attached for access and inclusion.	Louise Gardner / Jo Landsdowne	April 2019

## FEEDBACK

How are we doing? If you have questions comments, feedback or ideas about what we could do better or differently, please get in touch.

You can contact Louise Gardner, Head of Communications ([louise@watershed.co.uk](mailto:louise@watershed.co.uk))



