



## **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

Revised September 2022

### **IN A NUTSHELL**

- SLiDE cares deeply about creating opportunities for people to come together and dance without meeting any obstacles that prevent them from doing so.
- SLiDE wants everyone who works or participates in its activities to feel equally valued regardless of their identity or background.
- SLiDE has a clear policy and codes of conduct to ensure everyone plays their part in creating a safe, supportive and welcoming environment in which people feel they belong and can achieve their best.

### **1. Statement**

SLiDE is fully dedicated to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in every area of its work. The company strives to ensure that anyone can access and engage with its programme regardless of their identity or association with any of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. These are disability, race, sex/gender, age, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, religion and or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership status (Equality Act 2010) and, in addition, social economic and educational attainment (Arts Council England).

SLiDE takes positive measures to ensure all feel valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential within the scope of their engagement with the company.

### **2. Scope**

Anyone who is engaged by SLiDE in whatever work capacity (e.g. Board, practitioners, office team, volunteers etc) or who engages in SLiDE's activities (e.g. participants) is expected to understand and uphold the principles of this policy.

This policy is not an action plan, but it links to other relevant Policies and Procedures in which SLiDE outlines specific EDI-related actions in the various areas of the company's work.

SLiDE's programme focuses on creating opportunities for people to engage in high quality inclusive dance projects, which involves removing access barriers to dance that are experienced by disabled people and elderly people in particular. SLiDE recognises that the protected characteristics of disability and age also often intersect with socio-economic attainment and race, and that people with intersectional identities encounter even more obstacles to engage in dance.

While SLiDE's work is in fact the practical application of its EDI policy, SLiDE recognises that EDI work takes sustained effort, commitment and a willingness to learn from mistakes. It is a continual process, not an endpoint, and should be subject to regular evaluation and improvement. This policy is therefore reviewed annually by the Board to ensure that SLiDE continues to improve its practices and processes to remove access barriers and create opportunity wherever possible.

This policy will be made available to all SLiDE team members (Trustees, freelancers, volunteers and prospective job applicants). Current and prospective participants, parents, carers and funders can also request a copy at any time.

### 3. Further policy references

This policy should be understood with further reference to the following P&Ps:

- Dignity at Work policy, including Bullying & Harassment statement
- Codes of conduct
- Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Recruitment, induction and training procedures
- Complaints procedure
- SLiDE GUIDE

### 4. Definitions

**Diversity** - ensuring that there is fair visible and non-visible representation of people from all kinds of backgrounds and identities, reflecting the diversity of the local community.

**Equity** - levelling the playing field to ensure everyone can access the same opportunities.

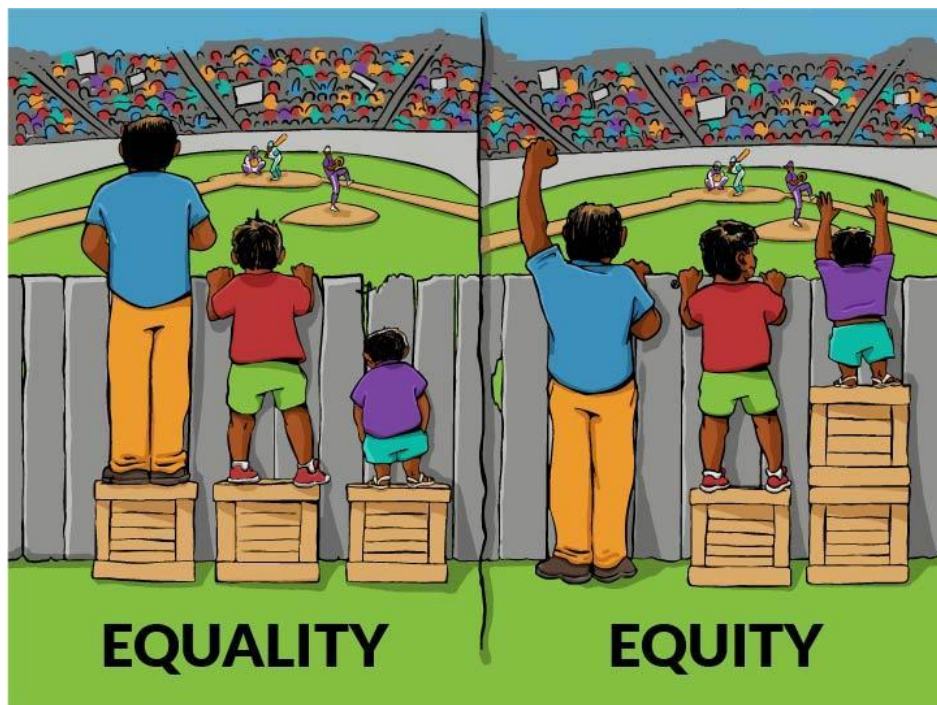


Image credit - Interaction Institute for Social Change | Artist: Angus Maguire.

**Inclusion** - where people can feel comfortable being themselves and that they belong

An organisation can be diverse without being inclusive. For example, an organisation might employ people from various different backgrounds, but may not promote a culture in which people feel equally valued or that they belong. “Diversity is being invited to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance.” (Vema Myers)

## **5. What is discrimination?**

Discrimination can occur in a number of ways, which are described in detail in Appendix 1 below.

Discrimination occurs on a wide spectrum from subtle microaggressions to extreme abuse. Discrimination of any kind that is found to be intentional will not be tolerated and will be subject to swift action in line with SLiDE's 'Code of Conduct,' 'Dignity at Work' policy and 'Complaints procedure'.

Where instances of unintentional discrimination occur, for instance through poorly phrased language or prejudiced assumptions based on unconscious bias, these will be addressed appropriately through sensitive conversations and relevant training.

SLiDE's workforce is strongly encouraged to do the work of self-directed learning to better understand their personal privileges as well as the lived experiences of those who experience different kinds of discrimination on a regular basis. A suggested resource list is provided in Appendix 2 below.

## **6. Implementation of this policy across SLiDE's work**

The principles of this EDI policy should be followed across SLiDE's entire programme.

### **a. Language**

Language changes all the time and so SLiDE's organisational language will be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

SLiDE's understanding of disability follows the Social Model of Disability which regards a person as disabled, not because of their impairment, but because of the infrastructural and attitudinal barriers in society that prevent them from fully accessing opportunities in life and work.

In line with this, SLiDE uses the terms disabled and non-disabled people.

It is also important to remember that a person with an impairment may not themselves identify as disabled.

If a SLiDE member is interviewed or their work mentioned in social media or the press, SLiDE will ensure that they are referred to according to their self-identity (e.g. personal pronouns, ethnic identity, disability).

SLiDE will avoid using generalist labels that reduce the wide diversity of different lived experiences to a single reductive term (e.g. BAME).

SLiDE will ensure that any communications or written content use uncomplicated, accessible language, wherever possible.

### **b. Communications**

SLiDE uses a range of communication tools, offering a variety of access points to its work, e.g. through social media and newsletters, and in different formats, e.g. written text, videos, imagery, audio.

Images and footage are chosen to reflect the visibly diverse community that engages with SLiDE's work.

In advertising its work SLiDE uses a broad range of platforms on social media and through making use of its network of inclusive arts organisations and partners in order to promote SLiDE's work beyond its direct community.

### **c. Recruitment**

SLiDE aims to develop a workforce that fairly reflects the diversity of the community it serves.

The recruitment procedure contains more detail on the specific measures to ensure SLiDE reaches a wide diversity of applicants and offers a fully accessible application process.

Example measures include: advertising vacancies specifically to underrepresented communities, guaranteeing interviews to those who both meet the essential criteria and identify as having lived experience of racism or ableism, giving shortlisted candidates the interview questions in advance of interview.

### **d. Accessible work processes**

SLiDE endeavours to ensure that every team member (e.g. office team, practitioner, Trustee) is fully equipped to fulfil their role to the best of their potential.

SLiDE regularly seeks advice and feedback for improving the accessibility of its processes (e.g. governance) and implements improvements as swiftly as possible.

SLiDE will offer administrative advice to any person requiring support from the government's Access to Work scheme.

### **e. Participation**

SLiDE actively promotes inclusion and belonging through its participatory work. Its artistic practice is founded in co-creative methods, ensuring that all participants have an active role in the creative decision-making and production process.

Leaders and assistants will communicate clearly and actively to create a positive, inclusive atmosphere, based on respect for people's differences.

SLiDE's workshop design and delivery are informed by best practice. SLiDE's pool of lead practitioners are all highly experienced in inclusive practice and dance assistants are encouraged to increase their skills and knowledge of practice through continuous professional development.

SLiDE maintains a fair pricing policy with measures in place for concessions and we apply for funding to make sure projects are accessible for everyone regardless of income.

The code of conduct for participants is explicitly clear on SLiDE's standards for respectful, supportive behaviour as well as outlining the immediate consequences,

should a participant engage in any form of bullying or harassment, including discriminatory behaviour.

These standards apply equally whether for in-person or online participation.

**f. Public events and performances (audiences and accessibility)**

SLiDE uses venues for events and performances that have access and facilities for disabled patrons, and regular workshops are held in venues that are easily accessible by different modes of transport. SLiDE is committed to accessibility in our performances such as BSL interpreters and relaxed performances to support as wide a range of access needs as possible.

Workshops and projects are designed to meet the needs of all people including those with physical and/or learning difficulties, varying ranges of dance ability and ages through the use of support team members, volunteers and differentiation.

**g. Organisational strategy development**

As a charity operating within the typical financial and capacity constraints of not-for-profit work, SLiDE has to be ambitious yet realistic in what it can impactfully do to improve diversity, equity and inclusion across its programme.

SLiDE's organisational strategy is developed in line with what does and doesn't work, incorporating feedback from regular end-of-term surveys from participants or conversations with team members. Questions of access, inclusion and belonging sit at the heart of this and inform the process of improving SLiDE's processes and practice.

**7. Complaints**

Complaints or allegations of discriminatory behaviour should be raised with the Artistic Director (or with the Board if it relates to the Artistic Director) who will take swift action in accordance with SLiDE's complaints procedure.

**Recommendations for next year's review:**

Board to consider the terminology used in this policy and how it can be made more culturally relevant to SLiDE's work - e.g. to better consider the concept of 'belonging' in SLiDE's work and - if appropriate - potentially revise the policy title to 'Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and Belonging'

## **Appendix 1 - Forms of discrimination (as defined under the Equality Act 2010)**

*Direct Discrimination* – treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others because they are, for example, a lesbian or gay man or because they have an illness or disability. Refusing to employ someone for one of these reasons would constitute such discrimination.

*Indirect Discrimination* – where there is a requirement or condition which applies equally to everyone but which, in practice, has an adverse effect on a particular group and cannot be justified. For example, an unnecessary physical or age requirement can discriminate against women or disabled people.

*Associative Discrimination* - treating a person less favourably because they are associated with another person with a protected characteristic. For example, refusing to employ a person who cares for a disabled relative on the assumption that they would be unreliable.

*Perceptive Discrimination* – subjecting a person to unfavourable treatment on the basis of a perceived protected characteristic. For example, rejecting a job application from a person on the basis of the possible ethnicity of their surname.

*Harassment* – Discrimination also covers actions which amount to abuse and/or harassment of people or groups, because they have a protected characteristic. SLiDE acknowledges responsibility for taking reasonable steps to ensure that there is no discrimination by any SLiDE team members or participants and to take appropriate action to prevent any recurrence if necessary.

*Victimisation* – occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because they have/she/he has pursued or intends to pursue their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.

*Disability Discrimination* – unfavourable treatment of a person because of something arising from their disability eg criticising their slowness in working caused by medication or lack of mobility.

*Institutional Racism* – the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, age, sexual orientation or ethnic origin. It can be seen, for example, in the processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination or in unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.

*Racist Incidents* – any incident reported to the board of trustees as a racist incident will be investigated. If the victim doesn't want to complain, another person may do so.

## Appendix 2 - Recommended resources

(N.B. these do not form part of the policy and are personal recommendations from the SLiDE team and trustees)

On unconscious bias

- <https://tapthefeed.com/features/joshua-luke-smith-shares-poem-check-your-blind-spot>

On racial justice

- *Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race* by Reni Eddo-Lodge
- *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernadine Evaristo

On disability justice

- Social Model of Disability - <https://www.scope.org.uk/about-us/social-model-of-disability/>
- *Crippled: Austerity and the demonisation of disabled people* by Frances Ryan
- *Care work: Dreaming Disability Justice* by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha

Resources for future organisational EDI work

- <https://incarts.uk/edi-training-1>
- <https://www.creativescotland.com/resources/professional-resources/guidance-and-toolkits/equalities.-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plans-a-toolkit>
- <https://jerwoodarts.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Socio-economic-Diversity-and-Inclusion-in-the-Arts-A-Toolkit-for-Employers.pdf>
- <https://www.incartsunlock.co.uk/>
- <https://ccskills.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Best-Practice-Recruitment-Guide-for-Creative-Leaders.pdf>
- <https://www.theurbankitchen.co.uk/pages/anti-racism-resources>
- <https://www.shapearts.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=d9c870ae-6ea8-4ed8-b88e-b08684b791ba>
- <https://www.marketing-interactive.com/6-principles-of-inclusive-marketing>