



Annual Report 2019/20

Strategic Equality Plan



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales



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Arts Council of Wales is committed to making information available in large print, braille, audio and British Sign Language and will endeavour to provide information in languages other than Welsh or English on request.



“Coronavirus has greatly magnified the inequalities facing discriminated against minorities in Wales. Black Lives Matter and the UK disability arts alliance #WeShallNotBeRemoved have thrown a harsh spotlight on these inequalities and the Arts Council of Wales is more resolved than ever to listen and to act.”

Andrew Miller
Chair, Equalities Monitoring Group



Reflections, National Dance Company Wales. Film by Fearghus Ó Conchúir, performed by participants from Dance for Parkinson's (image: Jonathan Dunn)



Ballet Cymru, Wales Summer Dance School 2019 (image: Sian Trenberth Photography)

Introduction

The Public Sector Equality Duty sets out specific duties for the public sector in Wales to support and help progress on equalities work. For the Arts Council of Wales, reporting on Equalities is more than a legal requirement, it's fundamental to the delivery of our core priorities.

These priorities are set out in our corporate plan, "For the Benefit of All". We want to demonstrate more visibly that we embrace equality and celebrate diversity wherever it's found in race, gender, sexuality, age, language, disability or affluence. A generous, fair minded and tolerant society is instinctively inclusive and values and respects the creativity of **all** its citizens. And society's publicly funded institutions – the Arts Council included – must reflect this.

Publication of "For the Benefit of All" represented a major step forward. It sets out our ambitions and plans for increasing the number of people enjoying and taking part in the arts, targeting those people from communities and backgrounds that the arts in Wales still fail to fully represent.

Our vision is for a fair and equal Wales where the arts are widely and easily available for everyone. We're determined to champion diversity and to break down the barriers that prevent this from happening.

This report shows the progress that we've achieved in the third year of our Strategic Equality plan. However, it also sets out the challenges we still face and the work that we still need to do.

The end of this year, March 2020, saw the unprecedented onslaught of the Coronavirus/ Covid-19 crisis. The sudden onset of this global pandemic in a single night saw the suspension of all arts activities and a change in the living and working environment for everybody.

The arts and cultural sector came to a standstill and this has continued well into 2020/21. The suspension of live performance and public cultural activity has been one of the most comprehensive shocks to society's sense of well being, as well as to the economy. But public health crises aren't equal opportunities events: the poorest, the least well educated, the most marginalised and, as evidence now supports, disabled people are the worst affected.

It's clear that we're seeing a profound questioning and re formulation of values across all aspects of public life. Braver people aren't talking about a post Covid-19 'new normal' – 'normal' being neither possible nor, perhaps, what the public wants or deserves.

'Normal' hasn't served us well for a while. The prominence given to the lived experiences of Black Asian Minority Ethnic people in these past few months has filled our newspapers and

television screens. The tragic killing of George Floyd and the outpouring of grief and anger under the banner of Black Lives Matters has been as stark as it has been humbling. No one can now be unaware of the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 virus on Black Asian Minority Ethnic communities and disabled people. But if our culture is the reflection of who we are, then Black Lives Matter is telling us that we still haven't noticed that society is reinforcing discrimination and lack of equality.

It shouldn't be this way, but sometimes it needs a crisis to focus our attention on those whose rights and needs are being almost casually ignored. A powerful coalition of disabled people warned through their "We Shall Not Be Removed" campaign that they faced a social and health emergency with their community of disabled artists becoming increasingly isolated and threatened by the Covid-19 pandemic. It was an important moment to pause and take note.

So, we go forward with a new determination to do better. Entitlement to culture should not only be for those with privilege. And this is the challenge that the Arts Council continues to face. And we mustn't – and won't – 'waste' this opportunity to work harder to make the change that's needed.



Art Babas Extra 2020, Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

Our Equality Plan objectives

When we developed our plan in 2017 we wanted to focus on five areas. These were:

①

Engaging, consulting, informing and challenging ourselves and our partners

②

Developing a workforce that better reflects the diversity of Wales

③

Improving representation in the governance of arts organisations throughout Wales

④

Increasing the diversity of arts audiences

⑤

Increasing the diversity of arts participation

These five objectives cover all protected characteristics. However, in the current plan we give special emphasis to increasing engagement amongst people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and disabled people. We made this choice because these were the areas highlighted from our research and evidence gathering that particularly needed attention.

What key actions did we progress this year?

We have continued to support six organisations through our Creative Steps programme.

Creative Steps builds the capacity and confidence of culturally diverse organisations, helping them to grow to a position where they can compete for funding on a level playing field with more established organisations.

Two of the organisations supported through Creative Steps made significant progress. **Taking Flight Theatre Company** completed a third year of development and secured £67,290 of funding for a fourth year of development.

Fio completed a first year of development and secured funding of £85,000 for a second year. Both of these companies were also successful in their applications for project funding from our general lottery schemes.

Other companies were also supported. **G-Expressions** and **Sound Progression** were both successful in their first year of the programme receiving £35,800 and £30,000 respectively.

Butetown Arts and Culture Association received a further £25,000 towards its three stage development programme.

We also began work on reviewing the effectiveness of Creative Steps as part of the development of a new strategic equality programme. This work continues.

Four Wales based artists were successful in being awarded Unlimited commissions.

Unlimited is a prestigious UK scheme to commission leading disabled artists. Here in Wales these included **Suzie Larke, Jonny Cotsen, Stephanie Beck** and **Stammermouth**.

We developed our partnership with Unlimited during the year. Lottery funding enabled the creation of a new strand of work – **Unlimited Present** in venues across Wales. These events provided a platform to showcase work by disabled artists. They also brought together disabled artists, audiences and cultural sector partners to discuss and debate local and national issues around producing and presenting work by disabled artists. The programme was nearing conclusion when ‘lockdown’ intervened and the final events had to be cancelled.

Our Hynt access card scheme has continued to be a highlight of our work.

Over **18,000** people in Wales are now Hynt card holders. **41** venues in Wales are signed up to the scheme and we have been actively involved in a commissioned piece of work exploring the potential for a UK wide access card scheme.



We have a well established partnership with the Arts Marketing Association (AMA).

We supported 3 bursary places for Wales based marketing officers to attend the AMA Inclusivity & Audiences Day. We also funded 4 AMA Membership Bursaries for disabled or Black Asian Minority Ethnic individuals, or those working for a diversity-led or Black Asian Minority Ethnic-led organisation.

Our Sharing Together networking scheme supported 7 exciting new initiatives.

These included:

- **Blind Bookworms Book Club** - a multi-sensory book club led by a network of visually impaired young people, but open to all
- the **City & County of Swansea** were supported to set up a regional network of emerging Creative Producers from Black Asian Minority Ethnic and/or diverse backgrounds
- **Jonny Cotsen** – a Deaf artist convened a network across all artforms, bring together artists, facilitators and young people/students across Wales
- **Susan McGowen** drew together a network focussing on ‘Mothers who Make’ and promoting pregnancy and maternity
- **Taking Flight** organised a networking/symposium event promoting inclusion, looking specifically how to make spaces and performances relaxed and accessible
- **Engage Visual Arts & Galleries Area Group Network** focussed on diversifying the cultural workforce and cultural entitlement
- **Youth Arts Network** organised networking events promoting support, access and inclusion across the arts for young people.

Night Out increased the number of Black Asian Minority Ethnic communities promoting events.

Our community touring scheme programme encouraged Black and Minority Ethnic communities to become more regular promoters of Night Out events. The scheme also offered opportunities for disabled artists and artists from Black Asian Minority Ethnic backgrounds to present their work. These have included Jonny Cotsen, Gods and Kings, Samina Chawdhury and Circus Raj.

Equalities has been central to the development of our Arts and Health development programme.

There has been a focus on arts and older people, disabled people and mental health. This includes the cARTrefu Cymru programme being delivered in partnership with Age Cymru and The Baring Foundation.

A new programme of work launched this year is Creative Pathways.

This includes a partnership with Weston Jerwood to make 7 bursaries available in Wales designed to provide a step change opportunity for talented people from socio-economic backgrounds that are currently under-represented across the arts.

We also established a collaborative working relationship with Creative and Cultural Skills to explore establishing an arts based Cultural Ambitions programme. This focussed on developing pathways for young people facing disadvantage which prevents them from accessing careers in the arts.

**JERWOOD
ARTS**

**creative
& cultural
skills**

We made significant progress in making our Arts Council website more accessible.

Our new website was launched in May. It provided a significant step forward and since then we've taken action to ensure that all PDF documents on our website are accessible to screen readers. All our social media video posts are also subtitled in both Welsh and English to ensure accessibility to all, and our internal staff videos are also subtitled to ensure they can be understood by all staff members.

In our response to Covid-19 we took this work a step further and made our funding guidelines available in alternative formats including BSL. We also published new guidance on Developing Visually Impaired Audiences to join our suite of disability support documents.

We commissioned an ‘access toolkit’ to support smaller value applicants to assess their own accessibility.

The aim of this was to encourage applicants who might otherwise have been required to undertake a comparatively expensive access audit to make an application to the small Capital access programme for funding to address outstanding issues.

All 67 of our Arts Portfolio clients submitted detailed Strategic Equality Plans.

We launched our Arts Portfolio Investment Review signalling an expectation that the outcome would see a shift in the representation and visibility of people from protected characteristic backgrounds. We specifically identified the need for change in relation to workforce diversity, leadership and wider public engagement.



Aisha Bywaters speaks at Ffilm Cymru’s Launchpad training event for Black Asian Minority Ethnic creative talent (image: David Lennon)

What did we say we would do better this year?

In our 2018/19 annual monitoring report we identified 6 key areas that we needed to focus on in 2019/20. These were as follows:

- **We said we would continue to raise the profile of our equalities work and look for opportunities to do this in the next Arts Council of Wales conference.** The conference which was originally scheduled for April was moved to a September date and planning was progressing well. Our ambition for the central focus to be on diversity and equality continued to be at the heart of our planning. However, with the onset of Covid-19 and the lockdown in March we took the difficult decision to cancel the event. Covid-19 has revealed the importance in finding a new opportunity to highlight Black Lives Matter and We Shall Not be Removed.
- We have shared news stories and case studies through our many outlets including website and social media and this work again increased significantly as we moved into the early weeks of 2020/21.
- **We said that a key focus of our plan in 2019-20 will be to work to diversify the Arts Council's workforce and the workforce across the arts sector.** We set in motion a series of actions to address this. Learning from our public sector partnership and the joint SEP, progressing conversations with **Cardiff and Vale College** and **Sgïl Cymru** around apprenticeships, the work of our Creative Pathways group.

We had advice from **Stonewall Cymru**, following which we reviewed and revised our application forms and job adverts. We continued to target our recruitment to representative bodies and diverse communities.

- **We said we would improve the number of people with protected characteristics employed by our Arts Portfolio Wales (APW) and represented on their Boards of Management.** Our Arts Portfolio Wales organisations are required to submit strategic equality action plans as a condition of funding. Although all have met this condition, and the general quality of the plans has improved, we're not seeing evidence of the impact of the actions set out in the plans.
- We had also progressed conversations with **BECTU** about their **Theatre Diversity Action Plan** and agreed a set of actions that would help drive improvement in workforce diversity across this part of the sector. These actions stalled once again with the onset of Covid-19.

So what does our data tell us about how well we have done?

The data tells us that diversifying our own workforce continues to be a key challenge. We currently have 93 members of staff. Of those 93, 84.9% identify as White British, White English, White Irish, White Northern Irish or White Welsh.

Some members of staff still opt not to answer this question and the data in relation to other ethnic background is suppressed due to the low numbers. Similarly 89.1% of job applicants identified themselves as being from a White background.

In other data:

8.6% of our staff and 13% of job applicants identified themselves as having a disability

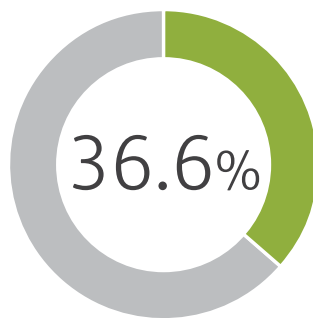
71% of our staff identify as heterosexual or straight and 5.4% as gay/lesbian

for job applicants, the numbers are similar for heterosexual/straight at 76.1%, but only 2.2% identify as gay/lesbian

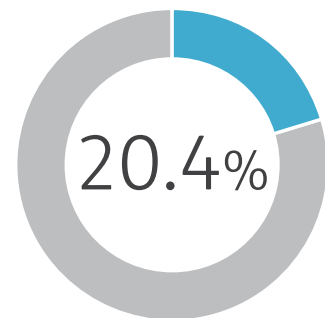
the age profile of our staff varies considerably, as does that of job applicants:



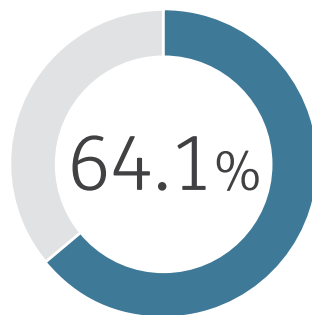
staff aged 20-29



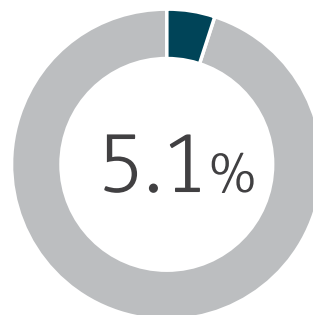
staff aged 40-49



staff aged 50-59



applicants aged 20-29



applicants aged 50-59

Our APW data has been taken from 39 organisations that submitted by the deadline.

Other portfolio members were impacted by Covid-19 and unable to meet the submission date. These figures will change as more results are received, but the data considered by the monitoring group was based on comparators across the two years from the 39 organisations only. This told us that overall employment numbers had decreased by 12% and that these were predominantly people employed on casual and zero hour contracts.

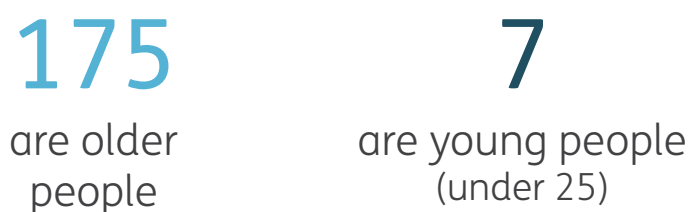
The number of disabled people employed has increased by a fifth but the number of Black Asian Minority Ethnic employees, older employees and those with specific religious beliefs had decreased by around a quarter.

Out of 2,107 employees



In relation to APW Boards of management, the overall number decreased slightly but there was a modest increase amongst members from protected characteristic groups.

Out of 349 people



We committed to launching new Lottery programmes.

Based on the feedback we have received from the sector and other stakeholders, we undertook to make our application process easier to access. We also made changes to ensure that our decision making aligns more closely with our equality objectives.

The programme was launched in 2019.

Our lottery data shows us that **173** applications were received from **145** unique organisations:

9

of these were received from disability led organisations, **6** of which were funded

8

were submitted by Black Asian Minority Ethnic led organisations, **4** of which were funded

12

were submitted by LGB led organisations, **7** of which were funded

264 applications were received from individuals, **88** of whom submitted an equality monitoring form:

10

of those who completed forms identified as a disabled person and of these, **6** received funding

The data in relation to Black Asian Minority Ethnic individuals had to be ‘suppressed’ as it was too small a sample, but the information tells us that

13

individuals identified as “non-white”.

Further data can be found on our [website](#)

Conclusions

Our monitoring group has concluded:

- 1** Two key areas of our work are failing to address the issues we identified as being central to our current strategic equality plan.
- 2** Actions taken to date are not leading to progress around diversifying the arts workforce or increasing opportunities for artists from diverse backgrounds to engage with the arts in Wales.

The monitoring group asked itself 3 key questions based on its review of the data:

- 1** What action do we need to take right now?
- 2** What change do we need to make this year?
- 3** What change do we need to make to our current Strategic Equality Plan?



Big Splash, The Riverfront, Newport (image: Kirsten Mcternan)

What action do we need to take right now?

Five key urgent actions emerged out of the monitoring groups review of our annual report and discussions about the unprecedented situation our communities and our sector find themselves living in. These are:

- ① To establish within a matter of weeks a series of conversations between our Council and individual artists. These conversations should focus on providing an opportunity for these individuals to be heard. For Black artists to share their experiences of living and working in Wales and to provide opportunities for disabled artists to have the same conversations.
- ② We need to explore re-scheduling our conference to provide a platform for the important discussion and debate we had envisaged taking place at the start of the year.
- ③ We need to publish this annual report for 2019/20, taking account of how we make it accessible to a range of different audiences. In publishing the report, we need to consider how we can encourage people to feedback on our findings and our conclusions and enter in to dialogue with us about how bring about change.
- ④ We need to develop and publish a Covid-19 recovery plan that has equalities at the heart and require our APWs to do the same.
- ⑤ As our progress towards diversifying our own workforce continues to be slow, we need to take bold steps now to initiate change. A major step forward would be establishing an Agent for Change role within the Council.
- ⑥ We will make the Strategic Equalities monitoring Group a full committee of Council alongside ARAC and Capital.

What change do we need to make this year?

The review of our annual report informs the development of a series of actions that need to be progressed during the course of the following year. The year in question is 2020/21.

The key actions for our current year plan are:

- We've recognised that we're failing to bring about substantive change in diversifying the workforce and boards of management of those organisations we fund.

The annual review highlighted weaknesses in our own monitoring and in how we are ensuring progress is made. We'll improve how we monitor both the implementation and the impact of our funded organisations' equality action plans. We'll explore with our APWs how these could be published. We will examine our approach to collecting data from our APWs and link this work more closely with the monitoring of their action plans.

- We'll change our own Board culture by creating a working group to explore how we can be less formal.

We will learn from the change online meetings have brought about in how our meetings are conducted and explore how we can invite public in to observe.



Canfod y Gân Project, Canolfan Gerdd William Mathias (image: Iolo Penri)

- **We'll make substantial changes and improvements to how we are addressing equalities within our lottery funding programme.**

It's clear from reviewing progress that change needs to happen at all stages of our process. We need to draw on knowledge and expertise elsewhere to explore how we encourage applications from more diverse organisations and individuals and how we support applicants through to success. We need to consider bringing a more diverse range of experiences into our decision making and we need to develop a new approach to how we monitor where our funding goes and the impact it has. Part of this will be to examine why the Covid-19 Urgent response Fund saw an increase on the numbers of individuals applying to us for funding.

- **We'll continue our work around reviewing and revising our approach to research and monitoring.**

We'll address issues highlighted above and look at how we build in measures around poverty.

- **We'll advance our work on diversifying our own workforce.**

Drawing on the skills and experience of an Agent for Change, strategic partners and individuals, both internally and externally, we'll look closely at how we're perceived as an organisation and develop actions to address this. We'll move forward with our apprenticeships and actively recruit.

- **We'll continue to deliver what's working well.**

We'll maintain our successful programmes but also build in opportunities for reflection and review, drawing on the experiences of organisations and individuals involved in our work.

What change do we need to make to our current Strategic Equality Plan?

Our monitoring group felt that the objectives in our plan still remain necessary, but we'll revisit the actions and publish a new plan, that reflects the changes we have identified. This should bring it in line with the Wales timeline for Public Body SEPs and that also reflects the objectives as set out in the joint Public Body SEP.

The clear message from the external members of our monitoring group was the plan needs to look and “feel” different. It needs to reflect the cultural shift that has taken place over the first weeks and months of 2020/21.

Strategic Equality Monitoring Group

The monitoring of the Arts Council of Wales' responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty is something that Council has taken very seriously. It has set the bar high and is keen - not only to meet our obligations fully - but to champion the principles underpinning the legislation.

The day to day responsibility for ensuring that we are making progress with this work has been delegated to a SEP (strategic equality plan) Monitoring Group with a Council member as Chair. Our Chair in 2019/20 was Andrew Miller and we were delighted to welcome two new external advisors, Shereen Williams and Lara Ratnaraja, who joined our existing advisors, Ele Hicks and Guto Gwilym, Council member Devinda de Silva and colleagues from across the Council staff.

The Monitoring Group reports directly to Council on the performance of those activities within the plan and the PSED requires the Council to publish an annual progress report.

Independent members

Andrew Miller

Andrew Miller is an arts consultant and broadcaster. His 30-year career spans the UK's cultural industries from media and education to arts and culture. Starting out in broadcasting in the 1980s, Andrew belongs to the first generation of disabled presenters of mainstream British television and he went on to become a producer and director of BAFTA nominated arts and music documentaries.

Later occupying senior roles at Arts Council England, Royal & Derngate Theatres and the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama - where Andrew established a new, highly successful multi-artform complex in Cardiff and became the first wheelchair user to lead a major UK venue. More recently he has been assisting the University of Oxford shape the artistic programme and purpose of the new Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities due to open in 2024.

Uniquely, Andrew is a member of the National Councils of both Arts Council England & The Arts Council of Wales - where he has been a member since 2012. He is also a non-executive director of Welsh National Opera and from 2015-19 served on the board of the UK digital arts agency The Space. Andrew chairs the British Film Institute's Disability Advisory Forum and is Disability Advisor to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

In 2018 he was appointed as the UK Government's first Disability Champion for Arts & Culture, establishing the role as a powerful platform to campaign for greater inclusion across the arts, museum and film sectors. In 2019 he was named in The Shaw Trust Power100 of the most influential disabled people in the UK and appeared in The Stage 100 influencers in British Theatre. In 2020 he co-founded #WeShallNotBeRemoved, a national emergency campaign to safeguard the future of disability arts through and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Lara Ratnaraja

Lara is a freelance consultant specialising in diversity, leadership, collaboration, ideas, innovation cultural policy implementation within the HE, cultural and digital sector.

She develops and delivers projects and policy on how culture and digital technology intersect for a number of national partners as well as programmes around leadership, resilience and business development for the arts.

She is currently delivering and developing cross sector projects with private, public, HE and other education partners.

She co-produced RE:Present and ASTONish; leadership development programmes which supported the development of cultural leaders from diverse backgrounds so that the cultural ecology of the city better reflects its changing demographic. Funding partners were Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council.

She was also a broker on the University of Birmingham AHRC Funded CATH Project (Collaborative Triple Helix) which developed 19 collaborative projects across the East and West Midlands with academics, cultural organisations and digital SMEs. The research project led to long term collaborative working and investment. She subsequently became Senior Research Facilitator leveraging investment for further knowledge transfer and research collaborations between academics, cultural organisations and artists across the sector.

Lara has also developed, managed and delivered successful ERDF, ESF, ACE and other funded and non funded programmes and projects cross sectors and is well respected as a key influencer in the development of sector policy.

She is on the Board of Derby Theatres and Vivid Projects and the Advisory Groups for Coventry Biennial and SHOUT Festival. She is all on the Midlands Area Council for Arts Council England and is a Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre Industry Champion.

Guto Gwilym-Taylor

Guto is a Welsh Language Officer at Audit Wales and has been working there for four years, being the chair of their LGBTQ network Spectrum for three of those, helping to set up the South Wales LGBTQ Network Chairs Forum and being a member of Pride in Public Sector, a consortium of LGBT staff networks across the UK public sector. He is also a Special Sergeant at South Wales Police based in Cardiff Central.

Ele Hicks

Ele has been involved in community activism and voluntary groups in various fields for over 25 years, co-organising her first community group at 13.

Since 2001, Ele has worked primarily in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender and Disability fields, as well as cross-strand equality. This has included elected roles in Swansea University Students' Union as the LGBT and Disabled Students Officers, National Union of Students (NUS) UK LGBT committee Disabled Students' representative, and NUS Wales Disabled Students Officer.

Ele has run a wide variety of campaigns, training, events and initiatives within these roles, including the first Wales Disability Pride event, positive mental health campaigns and lobbying and delivering a wide range of equality training. She has worked in third sector equality charities since 2006 delivering equality policy, training, volunteer management, citizen involvement, events and funding.

In her spare time, Ele is on the committees of Bi Cymru and Bi Swansea, co-ordinating activities, campaigns, events and groups around bisexual issues in Wales.

Ele has worked for Diverse Cymru for over 8 years, as their Policy Manager. This role involves responding to consultations and initiatives that are relevant to equality from a variety of public sector organisations; engaging with diverse people in Wales across the protected characteristics; managing and delivering specialist equality research; representing views and issues at strategic meetings; and delivering a wide-range of equality and diversity training and consultancy.

Shereen Williams

Shereen Williams is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales. Prior to taking up this role in January 2019, she worked in local government for nearly a decade. As a local government officer, she worked across Newport and Monmouthshire Local Authorities as the Connected Communities Manager and before that as the Regional Community Cohesion Co-ordinator for East Gwent. The team she managed were responsible for the delivery of strategic priorities including Migration,

VAWDASV, Welsh Language, Equalities and Community Cohesion. During her time in local government she oversaw several key projects as part of her role, including the relocation of former British Army translators from Afghanistan and the resettlement of Syrian Refugees in East Gwent.

Over the past 15 years, she has volunteered in a total of 30 roles in the Third Sector as well as for statutory bodies and is currently a trustee of St John Ambulance Cymru and the Institute of Welsh Affairs. She is also the Vice Chair of governors of Llanwern High School and is a serving magistrate in Gwent.

For her work in the Third Sector, Shereen was presented with the Uthman Dan Fodio Award for Excellence in Community Development at the UK Muslim News Awards in 2009 and the Welsh Government Recognising Achievement Award for services to Community Cohesion in. In 2017 she was awarded an honorary MBE for community service and in 2018 she was recognised by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) in their Influential Leaders Challenge, which honours notable international alumni from AACSB-accredited business schools. In February 2020, she was made an Officer of the Order of St John.

Devinda De Silva

Devinda has over 20 years' experience working within the field of social change. He has worked in partnership with communities across Wales and internationally, focusing on the arts and its ability to address inequality, develop practices based around co-creation and to encourage greater and more meaningful participation.

As National Theatre Wales' Head of Collaboration, he has led the creation and development of the TEAM programme – the company's pioneering approach to engagement.

Meeting our Legislative Responsibilities

During 2019/20 we monitored our progress with the day to day tasks required to meet our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. We published the results of our discussions in a mid-year review.

Our plan continues to address the general duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In relation to the specific duties for Wales, we have:

- Continued to monitor and report on pay differences with specific reference to gender pay gaps.
- Collated and monitored employment data, including applications for posts within the Arts Council (although we're still to progress our work around monitoring of training and professional development amongst our staff).
- Continued to produce detailed equality impact assessments for all policies, programmes and projects.
- Included equalities expectations in our procurement policy and processes but have not yet developed a process for monitoring progress against these expectations.

Evidence of the 5 Ways of Working

The integration of our work with the work of other public bodies

We joined a network of 11 public bodies to develop shared equality objectives for the next phase of the PSED action planning. This work, which included a series of stakeholder sessions across Wales facilitated by Diverse Cymru resulted in a joint SEP due to be published at the end of March.

The publication and launch were postponed because of the onset of Covid-19. The network includes bodies such as Natural Resources Wales, Sports Wales, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Velindre University NHS Trust, Welsh Language Commissioner, Careers Wales, amongst others.

This partnership will continue with a commitment to monitor our progress against the objectives and share learning and emerging best practise

Increasing the number of collaborations and partnerships we're involved with

Strong collaborations and partnerships continue to be critical to our work. During the year we've made progress in relation to the strategic level partnerships that we've nurtured and established.

We've continued to work closely with other Arts Councils across the UK, learning from their work and sharing our own. A specific focus for 2019/20 has been our involvement in a study exploring the potential for a UK wide access card scheme. Although not directly involved in the commissioning of this work, we've been able to share our experience of running the Hynt scheme in Wales and have indicated our eagerness to continue to be part of this development moving forward.

We're working with key equality bodies to help drive our work forward. These include Stonewall Cymru, Diverse Cymru, Chwarae Teg, Older People's Commissioners Office, Race Council Cymru, Health Boards, Public Health Wales.

We've partnered with trusts and foundations to develop collaborations such as the Baring Foundation and the **cARTrefu** project to take the creative arts into care homes.

Listening to our staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries

Our equality monitoring group involves staff from across the organisation as well as external advisors.

Consulting with wider stakeholders – especially those organisations and individuals that we don't already have an ongoing relationship with – continues to be a key aim and ongoing challenge for us.

This is an area of our work brought into sharp focus at the end of the 2019/20 financial year and the beginning of 2020/21. It's a way of working that requires a significant shift to ensure we hear from, and engage with, the range of voices - artists and communities- that have until now felt excluded from our considerations.

We recognise that we need to improve and transform how we involve stakeholders and beneficiaries more deeply in the design and creation of our policies and programmes.

Preventing Harm

Our equalities objectives have been designed to address the prevention agenda.

Thinking Long Term

This continues to be a key driver for our work. Considering the longer term impact of what we do now has become more embedded in our planning.



Criv Celf Illustration Masterclass with Jon Williams, Mission Gallery

Unlimited 2019-20

Unlimited is an arts commissioning programme that supports the creation of new work by disabled artists, and enables it to reach UK and international audiences.

The aim of Unlimited is to change perceptions of disabled people by commissioning disabled artists in the UK and internationally to make new, ground-breaking and high-quality work. Alongside this Unlimited is about building a community of [Unlimited Allies](#) who help to embed the work of disabled artists in the mainstream cultural sector and improve access for artists and audiences.

The Arts Council of Wales have been part of the programme since 2014, and have supported 7 commissions for Welsh/Wales based artists via its financial contribution, together with support, training and opportunities for alumni and shortlisted artists.

Wales current Unlimited awards were made in 2018/19 and continued to be live throughout 2019/20.

Suzie Larke received a main line award for “Unseen” A production of photographic work, with the tour currently postponed although it is hoped that large scale works will form a focal point of the Unlimited Southbank Festival in Autumn 2021. This commission has generated a good deal of interest from the BBC and also International promoters. Here’s a link to more info on Unlimited’s website about her commission:

<https://weareunlimited.org.uk/commission/suzie-larke-unseen/>



Suzie Larke
'Unseen'

Jonny Cotsen received an R & D award for Hearing Hearing Aids

“I often wonder what it would be like to hear an entire conversation? If I could then I wouldn’t be me! I wouldn’t be Deaf. Do hearing people ever wish they were deaf? Would a hearing person allow me to take them into the deaf world? Would they feel like they had a superpower?” – Jonny Cotsen.

The R&D was completed just before Covid-19 put us into lockdown, an immersive project using senses and technology to explore communication. This will now move to completion touring. You can read more about the project here:

<https://weareunlimited.org.uk/commission/jonny-cotsen-hha-hearing-hearing-aids/>



Nye Russell Thompsin/
Stammermouth

Nye Russell Thompsin/Stammermouth received an R & D award for It HZ

This was completed and has potential to move quickly to a make and tour phase. This was delayed due to a resurgence in popularity of a previous Unlimited supported work (Just a Few Words – awarded when he was based in England) which undertook two separate touring opportunities in Mexico. The subject matter of the new work is intrusive negative thoughts which is very timely. Read more here:

<https://weareunlimited.org.uk/commission/stammermouth-it-hz/>

Stephanie Back received an emerging artists award for ISILY

This piece was developed and is now being supported directly by Arts Council of Wales (via a second application). The further development of the piece was postponed due to Covid-19 but Unlimited paid Stephanie to tell more about the project in a recent blog -

<https://weareunlimited.org.uk/i-said-i-love-you-a-peek-into-our-tri-lingual-theatre-world/>



Stephanie Back, ISILY

Unlimited Connects Wales

Supported via Lottery funding Unlimited Connects Wales provided an opportunity for us and Unlimited to undertake a programme of work aimed at increasing opportunities for disabled artists in Wales to showcase their work.

This project focused on amplifying the impact of disabled artists in Wales. We know that simply commissioning work isn't enough - the sector has to be engaged for work to thrive. We want to be part of a cultural sector in Wales that keeps moving forward. Hence developing this additional project in 2019/2020, now extended into 2020/21 due to Covid-19. The project delivered a series of events across Wales where conversations about disabled artists, access and audiences took place, exploring how to embed practice throughout the sector.

Eight events were planned, of which five were able to take place - in the Wales Millennium Centre (Cardiff), Torch Theatre (Milford Haven), Y Ffwrnes (Llanelli), Theatr Brycheiniog (Brecon) and Galeri (Caernarfon). Two of the proposed events were cancelled, in Aberystwyth and Swansea, due to Covid, but a final online event was held on 5th August entitled "Unlimited Connects Wales: Into the Future.

A link to the report can be found here:

https://weareunlimited.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/UNLIMITED_Online-Event-Prog_ARTWORK.pdf

Creative Steps

Fio Creative Steps journey

Fio is a Black Asian Minority Ethnic-led theatre company based in Cardiff. It has developed a track record for new productions; artists' training and development; and community engagement. All its work engages with social justice. Fio is committed to changing lives by providing underrepresented people with a means to tell their story. Its ambition is to turn these marginalised voices into projects and performances that resonate with audiences.

Fio started its Creative Steps journey in December 2016 when the company was awarded a small grant to enable it to work with a fundraising specialist to develop and start implementing a fundraising strategy. This was followed by a further small grant in June 2017 that enabled Fio to work with a business development consultant to undertake a period of organisational diagnostics with the aim of agreeing the appropriate next steps for Fio to take in regards to its business development.

Building on recommendations from these smaller interventions, Fio was awarded a Creative Steps Year 1 grant of £50,000 in June 2018. This project was originally scheduled to end in May 2019 but was extended to October 2019. In this initial period, Fio worked with consultants to develop its Business Plan, carried out a Governance Health Check and developed its Board. As well as contributing to the Artistic Director's role, the original application included two new part time posts; Executive Producer and Finance Manager. The Finance Manager role was successfully embedded into the staff team and had a significant impact on Fio's financial management and systems. However, the Executive Producer was less successful and the company instead worked with consultants to take forward the business development work.

Fio's current Creative Steps grant of £85,000 was awarded in December 2019 and is scheduled to run until the end of March 2021. This grant continues to support the roles of Artistic Director and Finance Manager roles and was intended to re-visit the role of a full time Executive Producer. However, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic brought about a pause in the programme of work.

Whilst in receipt of Creative Steps funding for the business development side of the company's work, Fio has also been successful in its applications to the Arts Council of Wales Lottery programmes, which have funded the creation, production and touring of work throughout Wales. These have included support for the productions Swarm, The Mountaintop, Orchard of Lost Souls, the Island, an Artists development programme and Fio: Futures. The company have received a total investment of £494,801 since its inclusion in the Creative Steps programme in 2016.

Taking Flight Creative Steps journey

Taking Flight is a Disability Led Theatre organisation that has been in receipt of Creative Steps funding to support their Business Development since February 2016. The company initially entered the programme following an unsuccessful application to our last investment review which resulted in feedback from our Council to work with them through Creative Steps to support their development.

Taking Flight has developed over this period and significantly strengthened its organisational capacity. It is now working as a highly respected 'go to' organisation, in Wales and the UK, specialising in both creating work and supporting others to create and present inclusive and accessible work.

Creative Steps funding has enabled the organisation to build its capacity through the employment of a Business Development Manager and contributions towards the salaries of its Artistic Director and Development Director. The development of the company and the board of trustees has led to the transition of the company to a Disability Led organisation. Their current Creative Steps grant is supporting them to continue this work with a specific focus on raising its profile through realising its language policy, increasing visibility through their web and social media platforms, as well as through a freelance marketing post.

During this time, as well as increasing its earned income and generating funds from other trusts and foundations, the company has also been successful in being awarded funding from Arts Council of Wales Lottery programmes. During this time they have created and toured productions such as The Tempest Inclusive, You've Got Dragons and Peeling. They have also delivered a range of training and audience development programmes focussing on improving accessibility to theatre. The company have received a total investment of £602,065 since its inclusion in the Creative Steps programme.



You've Got Dragons
Taking Flight Theatre Company

Race Council Cymru Creative Steps journey

Race Council Cymru (RCC) is the overarching body established by ethnic minority communities across Wales that works to celebrate diversity, and to combat racial prejudice and race discrimination. It is at the forefront in promoting the arts, heritage and cultural activities of black communities. Since its establishment in 2010, RCC has developed its role as an organisation dedicated to promoting black achievement by providing opportunities for people of African and African-Caribbean backgrounds to take part in exciting creative arts and to share their cultural heritage with all the peoples of Wales.

Our funding relationship with RCC began in 2016 when we awarded the organisation a grant of £20,000 to support a series of Black History Month activities (workshops and performances) across Wales, including events at the Wales Millennium Centre in October 2016. The project also included undertaking focussed Business Development work to inform the future of the event. This followed a consistent period of Arts Council support for Black History Month activities since 2008, initially through grants awarded to Black Voluntary Sector Network Wales and then through Diverse Cymru. RCC took on the management of the programme following discussions with the Black History Month Steering Group.



RCC took on the role at a time when Black History Month events and partnerships had been formed across Wales and year on year programme was an established feature. There was a pattern of strong engagement with communities and vibrant events taking place each year, providing opportunities for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic artists, but there was a recognition that the programme could benefit from building connections with the wider arts sector, and in so doing enable the initiative to reach its full potential. This first grant to RCC included the development of a Strategy that has informed the ongoing delivery of its work in this respect.

In 2017, we began to see the impact of this development with the Wales Millennium Centre investing £10,000 towards a youth curated event at the centre and a strengthened relationship with the National Museums and Galleries.

In 2018, increased investment allowed RCC to employ an Arts Development Officer to help improve the artistic direction of its programming, build new arts and funding partnerships and develop youth engagement programmes. This year also saw the beginnings of a year round programme through BHCymru 365.

Following a successful year in 2018, particularly in terms of developing arts sector partnerships, a significant increase in Arts Council investment in 2019 supported RCC to deliver a substantially expanded programme in 2019/20. Black History Month continues to be its annual flagship arts activity, attracting attention, providing platforms for black talent and engaging new audiences with black culture, but, in line with its strategy, it has expanded its delivery of high-quality arts events throughout the year (BHC365), working with arts sector partners. The Arts Development Officer role has helped the organisation attract more partnership funding and in-kind support and has brought more strategic focus. This post is now supported by a part-time Arts Development Officer for North Wales to help reach out to communities, venues and business partners and embed BHM and BHC365 into the artistic culture of the area.

RCC has successfully developed partnerships with numerous arts organisations including Wales Millennium Centre, National Museum and Galleries Wales, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Ty Pawb, the National Slate Museum, Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Riverfront Theatre Newport, Swansea Grand Theatre and Swansea Council. These partnerships are helping RCC to take forward its strategy of promoting existing and emerging black talent and attracting new audiences.

They also continue to provide opportunities for young black people to engage in artistic development work such as performance, production and arts management. This year, its partners in delivering these training opportunities include WMC, RWCM&D, Riverfront Theatre and Neuadd Ogwen. Swansea council are now supporting a BHM launch in partnership with RCC and with 14 local Black Asian Minority Ethnic community groups, along with a year-long BHC365 programme supported by BBC Horizons mentors and UWTSO. Zimbabwe Newport Volunteering Association are leading many Black Asian Minority Ethnic community & youth groups to work with the Riverfront Theatre, Newport, to deliver a launch event as well as a BHC365 programme. The strategy aims for these young people to be the managers and deliverers of high-quality BHM events into the future.

Throughout this period RCC and Arts Council of Wales has had a mutually supportive relationship and we are also in discussions around how we might be able to support the development of their Hub initiative at Swansea Grant Theatre. The organisation have received a total investment of £229.790 since its inclusion in the Creative Steps programme.

G-expressions Creative Steps journey

G-expressions is a Black Asian Minority Ethnic-led organisation that has been in receipt of Creative Steps funding to support their Business Development since January 2019. It works through dance and theatre with marginalised young people in Newport, many from Black and Asian backgrounds. The organisation came to the scheme with extensive and well-established community connections and a very successful track record of engaging and working with young people identified as being “marginalised”. However, the structure of the company and its business approach needed development to enable them to thrive.

In January 2019 they received a small Creative Steps grant to work with a business consultant to carry out an organisational diagnostic check, looking at the business plan, structure and legal status, as well as areas such as fundraising. This first phase of development was successfully completed involving the whole team and young people. Creative Steps has supported the team’s development and confidence and in their completion report for this first stage they stated ‘the G-Expressions team would like to share that they experienced the best feeling ever as soon as the Business Plan was complete. Knowing how it was created, the time it took, the people involved throughout those four months of working side by side, listening to one another, respecting each other’s views/ideas and incorporating that into one working document, highlighted the important fact that young people have a lot to give when it comes to their own self development and adults need to find ways of including them in the development phase of any process that is meant to contribute to young people’s self-development’.



G-expressions

Before applying for their first full year of Creative Steps funding G-Expressions was already enthusiastically putting its new business plan into action, for example, establishing a new partnership with Aneurin Bevan UHB.

In November 2019, G-expressions were awarded a Year 1 Creative Steps grant of £35,800 to enable them to continue on their business development journey. Despite the challenges that Covid-19 is presenting it is already making progress against their business development goals. There's a sense of the team working together to support its community of young people creatively, working now in different ways.

During this time G-Expressions has also been successful in being awarded other Arts Council of Wales Funding, including funding towards a dance development programme and GK Digital Takeover. The organisation has received a total investment of £91,800 since its inclusion in the Creative Steps programme.



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales

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