



Rua Red Gender Equality and Diversity Policy

April 2021

The staff and board of Rua Red South Dublin Arts Centre believe that the organisation should represent and serve the whole of society, with a focus on the exceptionally diverse catchment area of South Dublin.

This policy is a clear statement by Rua Red that we put equality and diversity at the core of what we do. We are asking all our artists, stakeholders and staff to sign up to this ethos, as individuals and as part of an organisation, and to take the time to examine and improve their own practices and systems in relation to gender equality and diversity on an ongoing basis.

At Rua Red we acknowledge that the arts, like all professional sectors, continues to reflect the inequalities that exist in society, where some people are less visible and less well served than others due to bias and discrimination, conscious and unconscious. As an arts centre that supports, commissions and exhibits the work of artists who are committed to producing work within a socio-political framework, it is vitally important to us that our organisation embeds the ethos of inclusion and of welcome into our daily work.

We understand that many people experience barriers, visible and invisible, to an enriching engagement with the arts both socially and professionally, and it is our intention to work on identifying and removing as many of those barriers as we can. It is something that we commit to working on across the organisation, internally, collectively, actively and on an ongoing basis.

While gender discrimination affects the greatest number of people in our society, we understand that other discriminatory factors can compound that disadvantage. These include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, physical ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and socio-economic factors. We commit to examination and continuous improvement of Rua Red's systems and operational procedures with a broad understanding of all types of discrimination in mind.

This policy is a living document, and one that is intended to be reviewed annually. While the work around creating an increasingly diverse and equitable organisation, we understand that it is a process of trial and error and will take time. It is important to the board and staff that we find practical solutions that are not empty box-ticking exercises, nor simply pay lip service to this policy. We aim to provide the diverse citizens of South Dublin with an increasingly welcoming and creatively exciting space, to engage, work with, and learn from them, and to ultimately set an example for the broader society.

We welcome constructive feedback on this policy and on our activities in this area – please contact mboyle@ruared.ie.

Board and staffing

The board and staff of Rua Red are invested in furthering the aims of this policy on an ongoing basis, and in all areas of the organisation's operations. Gender equality and diversity will be an agenda item at all board meetings, and a regular agenda item at staff meetings.

The ongoing necessity for measurement and evolution of this policy, will be overseen by the board on an annual basis. A sub-committee of the board will be formed and tasked with this oversight, and staff members will be identified as the dedicated gender equality and diversity representatives. This responsibility will be included in their role description, and will be understood to be a critical part of their work at Rua Red.

An annual list of commitments will be compiled with the input of staff, executive and board, and will be assessed at the close of each year.

The methodologies of assessment will be tested and developed over time and with the input of the staff and executive.

The results of the annual evaluation will be included in the annual board report.

Community and Education

The education and outreach programme at Rua Red reflects the organisation's interest in place, politics and people through a challenging programme of events, workshops, screenings and performances that allow audiences and visitors to engage with the exhibitions through the mediums of music, dance, theatre and visual art.

The ethos of Rua Red's Education and Outreach Programme is to engage, reflect, explore and enjoy contemporary art practice. We believe it is important to create new ways and methods for people to engage with contemporary art and we do this by working with individuals, groups and communities that may not always have perceived the arts as welcoming or accessible to them.

The Outreach and Education team will continue to work alongside local schools, community groups, colleges and other organisations to ensure access, learning and development opportunities are made available to the widest possible demographic and that Rua Red's approach to gender equality and diversity is embedded in all of these outreach activities. It will strive to foster connection with groups that do not currently have a relationship with the centre, and to maintain and deepen the connection with those who do.

Programming

Rua Red exhibits the work of established Irish and International artists who are committed to producing work within a social political framework. The galleries are programmed 12-18 months in advance. Selection is made by invited Curators and the Director.

Rua Red's programme ethos is committed to producing work that is deeply connected and responds to South Dublin County's people through its history, politics and contemporary concerns. We believe that in doing this we create a programme which is relevant and strives to engage all people of the county.

Rua Red commits to achieving gender equality and diversity in our programme, which will be achieved over five-year periods, therefore providing adequate flexibility to manage the artistic direction of the programme. The first period will be measured from 2019-2023.

Commitments for 2021

- Gender equality and diversity will become an agenda item at all board meetings, and a regular agenda item at staff meetings.
- Rua Red South Dublin Arts Centre will continue its consistent approach to ensuring gender equality on its Board and Governance structures, and will proactively work to improve the diversity of the Board as vacancies arise.
- The Rua Red Board of Directors will update the organisation's mission statement and constitution.
- An equality and diversity committee comprising board members and members of the staff will be formed, with the remit of furthering the aims of this policy, reviewing the policy, and annual reporting.
- Rua Red commits to checking and eradicating any discriminatory wage gap of employees, freelance staff and fees for artists and performers.
- Rua Red will review maternity, paternity support and support for carers in conjunction with the company's HR company Peninsula.
- The board and Director recognises the need for staff training in gender equality and diversity, and commit to researching and providing necessary support for the team.
- Within Rua Red's existing HR policies the issue of gender equality and diversity will remain of central importance. There will be a review of recruitment advertising to reflect the ethos of this policy, the addition of the policy to the Staff Handbook, and a commitment to conduct an annual refresher for all staff in relation to this policy. A copy of the policy will also be given and explained fully to each existing and incoming staff member.
- The tenant agreement for long and short term studio rental will be updated to reflect the ethos of this policy.
- The staff will identify ways in which the organisation can build on the existing diversity of the building's users, and investigate ways in which cross-pollination can be promoted between rental groups, artistic programme attendees and audiences, education groups, and café users.

Authorship

This policy was published in May 2021 and was developed by the Board of Directors and the Executive Director, in consultation with the staff of Rua Red, and with input from consultant Olwen Dawe and the Trans Equality Network of Ireland.