



Gender Equality & Diversity Policy

Statement

At all times we work to make Rua Red, South Dublin Arts Centre a space where respect, equality, diversity, inclusion, and hospitality are embedded into the core of everything that we undertake and deliver.

This policy stands as a clear statement and action plan by Rua Red to put this into practice at every level of our work, in how we structure and govern this organisation, and how we carry out our day-to-day activities. We are asking our community of artists, collaborators, 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 each of our 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 exciting space, to engage their creativity, to work with and to 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 remain 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.

Staff members identified as Gender Equality and Diversity representatives have responsibility to develop and support Gender Equality and Diversity included in their role, and this work is understood to be a critical part of their role at Rua Red: Steph Saidha, Learning and Engagement Coordinator and Subhashini Goda, Intercultural Artists Network Coordinator.

An annual list of commitments is compiled with the input of staff, executive and board, and assessed at the close of each year. This is an evolving policy, and 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.

Programming

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 relatable to all people of the county. Rua Red is in one of the most culturally rich and diverse counties in Ireland; 52 languages are spoken and 120 nationalities have made South Dublin County their home.

Rua Red commits to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of our practises and systems regarding Gender Equality and Diversity throughout our programmes.

Exhibiting Artists

Rua Red Gallery 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. 'Targeted Communities' is a defined programming strand where artists are supported to make work that engages with specific communities that are hard to reach or historically underserved. Additional resources are directed to these projects to remove or lessen barriers to engagement.

Resident Organisations

Rua Red supports creative individuals and organisations by providing serviced office spaces at affordable rates. The purpose of our spaces is to support and develop the arts infrastructure in South Dublin County. Rua Red is a thriving creative community that is a nurturing environment to support artistic development and production. Residents must be actively using the space for arts and cultural activities; adding value to the arts infrastructure in South Dublin County; and to encourage or improve the level of public engagement in the arts and/or support the development of contemporary art practices.

Resident Studio Artists

Rua Red offers low-cost working spaces for visual artists. Studios are allocated by panel selection for a period of between 1 to 3 years. The studio programme is viewed by the Board and Management of Rua Red as integral to the success of the organisation and must support and enhance its remit. Rua Red currently operates 9 studio spaces: 2 emerging artists studios; 5 studios for mid-career/established artists; DoubleTake Studio (led by Tallaght Community Arts), a facilitated studio for artists with disabilities; and a Traveller led Studio residency supported by Mount Street Club Trust.

Artists in Residence

Each year various artist residencies take place at Rua Red, developing new work, engaging with community and place, and utilising the resources and facilities available here. Residencies include Research Residencies, Dance Artist in Residence, Young People, Children and Education Residency. Residency proposals are developed in collaboration with the artists and Rua Red Director and Staff.

Artist Facilitators

A panel of artist facilitators support the delivery of the organisation's education and engagement programme. Applications are invited through open call from facilitators in any discipline: visual art, dance, music, poetry, storytelling, and more. Individual artists are approached to join the panel should any specific need arise.

Members

With over 4,000 people passing through our doors and engaging with our programmes and facilities every week, Rua Red currently facilitates approx. 4500 workspace and event bookings a year by over 600 member organisations and individuals; Rehearsals, Classes, Performances, Workshops. The activities engage with a broad spectrum of the communities that we serve connecting a broad diversity of artists, audiences and local communities.

South Dublin Intercultural Artist Network

Rua Red supports a network of artists from culturally diverse backgrounds providing regular newsletters, meet ups, information sessions, talks, bursary opportunities. The South Dublin Intercultural Artists' Network is an initiative supported by South Dublin County Council Arts Office, and is hosted and developed by Rua Red.

Learning and Engagement

The Learning and Engagement Programme at Rua Red reflects the organisation's interest in providing a relevant, radical, and relatable art programme that consciously seeks to find new ways for people to engage with contemporary art. Events, workshops, screenings, and performances that invite audiences and visitors to engage, reflect, explore, and enjoy with the arts through the mediums of music, dance, theatre, and visual art.

We believe it is important to create new pathways 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 organisation 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.

Rua Red's approach to Gender Equality and Diversity is embedded in all these outreach activities. We will strive to diversify our audiences and foster connection with groups that do not currently have a relationship with the organisation, and to maintain and deepen the connection with those who do.

Commitments for 2026/7

- Gender Equality and Diversity will remain an agenda item at all board meetings, and a regular agenda item at staff meeting to monitor and further the aims of this policy, and review and revise the policy.
- 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.
- Rua Red commits to eradicating any discriminatory wage gap of employees, freelance staff and fees for artists and performers.
- Rua Red provides maternity, paternity support, and support for carers in conjunction with the company's HR consultancy Peninsula.
- Staff training will be provided in areas that will further support them to engage effectively with the people and communities that we serve; Equality and Diversity, Cultural Competency, Plain English and other trainings as they become available.
- Within Rua Red's HR policies, the issue of Gender Equality and Diversity will remain of central importance. Recruitment advertising reflects 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 and board in relation to this policy.
- Targeted programmes will be prioritised, specifically work with Traveller Creatives, the Intercultural Artist Network, establish an Arts and Health Residency, and deepen connections with established community partners such as the International Organisation for Migration.
- All staff have a responsibility to proactively identify ways in which the organisation can improve in its welcome and the hospitality of the space for the many community groups, artistic programme attendees and audiences, education groups, and café users.

- Rua Red will build on its research and analysis capacity to gain a deeper understanding the reach, pattern, and diversity of our audiences.
- The 'Welcome Team' will continue to develop, introduced in 2024 the Welcome Team are responsible for actively creating a hospitable welcome at Rua Red and addressing every aspect of the visitor experience, setting the tone for everyone's experience of the organisation.

Authorship

This policy was first published in May 2021 (updated June 2024 and August 2026) It 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.