



Rua Red Gender Equality & Diversity Policy

Statement

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 County.

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 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 description, and this work is understood to be a critical part of their role at Rua Red.

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 strives to engage all people of the county. Rua Red is located in one of the most culturally rich and diverse counties in Ireland; over 60 languages are spoken and over 93 nationalities have made South Dublin County their home.

Rua Red commits to monitoring and evaluating our practises and systems regarding Gender Equality and Diversity throughout our programmes, which will be achieved over five-year periods, therefore providing adequate flexibility to manage the artistic direction of the programme. The second period will be measured from 2024-2028.

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.

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

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.

Community & 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 invite audiences and visitors to engage with the Arts 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.

Commitments for 2024/5

- 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 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 consultancy Peninsula.
- The Board and Director recognises the need for staff training in Gender Equality and Diversity and commits to staff training every 2 years.
- Within Rua Red's existing 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 in relation to this policy.
- A copy of the policy will be given and explained fully to each existing and incoming staff member.
- 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 our many community groups, artistic programme attendees and audiences, education groups, and café users.
- Rua Red will undertake a piece of in-depth research in conjunction with South Dublin County Council to gain a deeper understanding the reach, pattern, and diversity of our audiences.
- A 'Welcome Team' will be introduced at Rua Red with over 4,000 people passing through our doors and engaging with our programmes and facilities every week, 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) 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.