



www.townsendproductions.org.uk

Project Access Strategy

Equality & Diversity Policy

Since 2011, Townsend Theatre Productions has strived to make access to the arts easier in all the regions they work in, and break down social, financial and cultural barriers to experiencing their activities and performances.

TTP enable people of all backgrounds to be decision-makers, choosing projects and performances that reflects the diversity of their particular region's communities and cultures. The company is committed to ensuring equity through investing in, and offering opportunities for, artists and creative professionals from under-represented and under-served communities.

TTP will sign up to the More Than A Moment Pledge (www.culturecentral.co.uk), the West Midlands' arts sector's promise to take radical, bold, and immediate action, to dismantle the systems that have for too long kept Black artists and creatives from achieving their potential in the arts and cultural industries.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP) is committed to promoting theatre as an activity for all.

TTP is committed to providing access for all people to the arts as participants, practitioners and audience, throughout the range of its activities.

Our Core Values are: Collaborative Authentic Accessible Brave Empowering

In order to achieve this TTP undertakes to ensure that all job applicants, employees, participants and audience members across the range of company activities are treated equitably and encouraged to develop and maximise their true potential irrespective of age, disability, gender including transgender, HIV/AIDS status, marital status including civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, political opinion, race/ethnicity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, spent convictions, trade union activity or membership, work pattern on the basis of

having or not having dependants, or on any other grounds which are irrelevant to decision-making.

TTP recognises discrimination as being a process of acting unfairly against an individual or group by exclusion, verbal comment, denigration, failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation.

TTP believes that the value of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy lies not merely in its intention but in its practical delivery. It is important, therefore, that the company also reflects, where possible, its EDI Policy within the content areas of its programme of work. The company has an EDI Action Plan detailing how it will deliver this policy as well as a specific Anti-Racism Action Plan.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team to monitor the effectiveness and develop where necessary the EDI Policy and the Action Plans and make reports to the Board of Trustees. Each member of the company has responsibility for their own compliance.

This policy and the associated Action Plans are monitored and reviewed annually by TTP's Board of Trustees.

Anti-Racism Action Plan

Introduction

The Anti-Racism Action Plan seeks to ensure that everything we do across the organisation is representative of the UK in the 21st century. We understand that there is much more we can do to represent and reflect the diversity of modern Britain both in terms of the work we present on stages, in our workshops and in the makeup of our Board, staff and freelance teams. This is an organic document and will respond, evolve and develop.

TTP are committed to better understanding the impact of our actions, both conscious and unconscious, and the responsibility we have to address processes and systems of racial inequality and racism, as well as instances as they arise.

TTP are vocal not only in our support of efforts to promote racial equality and diversity but also in our condemnation of racism, micro-aggressions and social discrimination whenever and wherever we see it. We have a zero-tolerance policy to racism within the company.

As a company TTP is committed to the transformative effects of the arts and presenting inspirational/aspirational role models for young people.

TTP commits to:

Reflect/Interrogate

TTP continually reviews structures and activities; how decisions are made, who works with the company and how conversations/discussions are framed.

- TTP will undertake an annual Equality Impact Assessment of our organisation

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a standing agenda item at every Trustees' Meeting
- A designated Trustee/s champion Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and are a point of contact for the wider staff team
- Monthly meetings consider diversity in all realms of operation
- Creative Self-Assessment; pre- and post- production assessment of performance against goals and targets; including representation in creative pool, casting/company recruitment, diverse storytelling, audience development

TTP are prepared to ask hard questions. TTP are an open and listening organisation and interrogate our actions and decisions.

Learn

TTP will embed continuing learning and development around issues of EDI as part of our staff induction and training. TTP work with people and organisations that know more than we do.

- TTP will undertake diversity and anti-racism training for Trustees/Senior Management Team, staff and practitioners
- Hold unconscious bias training for all Trustees and members of the Senior Management Team
- Trustee/employee induction processes include the above training and awareness
- Review mechanisms exist from Board level down, to monitor effectiveness of the EDI and Anti-Racism plan
- TTP to provide targeted support to staff and practitioners who experience racism to build skills and confidence

Train and Recruit

TTP's company wide recruitment is transparent, targeted and committed to increasing diversity and opportunity with the workforce. Our Practitioners must be representative of the people we lead workshops with and we seek to increase the number of people of ethnically diverse backgrounds, particularly African and Caribbean, South Asian, East Asian and South East Asian heritage, who engage with our training opportunities.

- Target recruitment to artists from the above backgrounds and mitigate socio-economic barriers to attendance
- Invest in specific recruitment budget to reach diverse candidates for all advertised roles
- Adapt recruitment packs and offer alternative application process where appropriate

- Ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities
- Capture of EDI monitoring data to review and better understand reach and benchmark effectiveness

Collaborate

TTP will ensure that the creative talent pool we work with fully reflects 21st century UK. The stories we tell will be considered in the light of diverse, lived experience. We will:

- Seek out and develop diverse storytelling
- Widen our creative network by collaborating with African and Caribbean, South Asian, East Asian and South East Asian led or focused companies, or those championing diversity
- Increase the number of artists from these backgrounds on our database of creatives, freelancers, stage management, etc
- Provide workshop and R&D opportunities outside of production cycles for artists from these backgrounds to develop a relationship with the company
- Identify and tackle barriers for artists who experience racism on tour and provide active support

Communicate and Promote

TTP articulate the work we do in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. TTP ensure our own teams are fully informed and feel able to contribute to discussions and are proud to advocate. TTP consider how we approach different audiences and tailor our messages accordingly. TTP seek to give confidence and reassurance to those we work with that we are open and inclusive.

- TTP do not use marginalising acronyms. TTP speak to the personal rather than the collective and avoid statistical terminology
- TTP's website, social and print media should always reflect the diversity of our audiences and participants both in tone and imagery
- TTP's production marketing and press is tailored, inclusive and aware

Advocate

TTP understand that it is not enough just to address our own shortcomings but to stand up when we see shortcomings elsewhere. To be active in our fellowship with colleagues to be part of wider action to force change. We will use our influence, where possible, to effect change. TTP will:

- Listen to, support, nurture and champion our entire team and model best practice
- Provide a safe and positive working environment and expect and demand the same from collaborators, co-producers, touring venues, etc

- Support industry wide initiatives, such as Culture Central's More Than A Moment, and provide active feedback/perspectives
- Champion diversity and inclusivity initiatives to dismantle systems that have kept black artists and creatives from achieving their potential in the arts and cultural industries.
- Review language use to identify and remove the use of outmoded and reductive terms and acronyms such as BAME, and ensure the language used is inclusive, friendly and welcoming to all.