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Hawick, Roxburghshire, TD9 9EH  
Scotland, UK

## **EQUALITIES, ACCESS & DIVERSITY POLICY**

[Revision June 2015]

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by Alchemy Film & Arts and impacts upon staff, key participants, volunteers, freelance contractors, partner venues, filmmakers and our audiences. Alchemy Film & Arts will monitor the implementation and application of this Equalities, Access & Diversity Policy and ensure that it reflects and meets the needs of the diverse community we serve.

Alchemy Film & Arts Festival recognises that many types of discrimination may arise within society and we are committed to achieving equality of opportunity in all aspects of our work. We operate within an agreed set of values and principles, within which our commitment to Equalities, Access & Diversity is central. These values include:

- **Participation:** To actively encourage full participation by all sectors of society in our festival, our programmes, projects and our organisation, regardless of age, ability or disability, marital status, family responsibility, race, colour, ethnic background, nationality, religion or political belief, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- **Inclusion:** As an organisation, we have a positive attitude toward full inclusion, aiming to promote equality, diversity and ease of access at all levels of our activity.

We aim to carry these values forward in specific ways:

- **An obligation to respect this policy:** Alchemy Film & Arts places an obligation upon all our trustees, staff, volunteers, and contractors to respect and act in accordance with this policy. All contractors, staff, trustees and volunteers will be made aware of the contents of this policy and provided with a copy.
- **Treating people equally:** All members of the public, audience members, participants, trustees, staff, volunteers, artists, filmmakers and suppliers will be treated equally. No-one will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, ability or disability, marital status, family responsibility, race, colour, ethnic background, nationality, religion or political belief, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- **Equality of opportunity in recruitment:** Alchemy Film & Arts is committed to conducting open, fair and equitable recruitment processes. Recruitment of staff, contractors, volunteers, and trustees will be conducted within the non-discriminatory spirit of this policy, ensuring equality of opportunity for all.
- **The right to a safe environment:** Harassment of staff, trustees, participants, contractors, volunteers or the general public on the grounds of sex, race, religion, age or disability is wholly unacceptable. Sexually discriminatory remarks, verbal or physical advances, racial insults, sexist or racist jokes, or any kind of physical aggression or physical intimidation will not be tolerated.
- **Open access calls for entries:** Our 'call for entries' for residencies, programmes for young people and submissions of films and proposals to the festival will be made as widely accessible as



possible. We are committed to an open and inclusive process, which drives up equality and diversity of ideas and content within our programmes. All filmmakers and artists submitting work will experience fairness and equality of opportunity in the way their work is reviewed, and in the methods and criteria by which it is judged.

- **Representative selection panels:** Selection panels for participants in any programme, the festival or residencies, paid or free-lance opportunities in the team, through to Trustees, will wherever possible be constituted of an equitable mix of ages, genders and identities. This promotes a positive, open and non-discriminatory atmosphere and process.
- **Accessibility at venues:** Wherever possible Alchemy Film & Arts will ensure that our activities take place in venues and premises which are accessible to all. We will also endeavour to promote the values of equality and diversity with our partner venues, and will request copies of their own access and equality policies. Wherever possible we will offer special facilities and extra support for disabled people to enable their full participation in our activities.
- **Broad participation:** We will actively encourage and enable people from under-represented groups to attend and participate in our Festival and other programmes. Intergenerational work is a key priority, reflecting an important and growing demographic within the Borders population.
- **Free access events:** We are committed to providing a range of free-access events and activities. As part of this we bring projects to the high street and former industrial buildings within Hawick, and produce events in rural situations, opening access to arts experiences for new audiences, the unexpected visitor, and diverse communities who may not normally be financially or physically able to access such experiences.
- **Diversity in programming:** Alchemy Film & Arts is committed to exploring diverse cultures, beliefs and orientations across its range of cultural programming activities. We strive to give full voice to a diversity of societies and their differing cultural, racial, religious and sexual values, while always seeking to provide appropriate warning and contextualisation for programme content that may cause offence. Alchemy Film & Arts will make best endeavours not to showcase content that is gratuitously offensive or which promotes discriminatory behaviour.

### **Implementation of this policy:**

This responsibility for implementing this policy lies with the Board of Trustees, and will be actively supported and implemented by all paid members of staff, including freelance contractors. Alchemy Film & Arts aim to comply with relevant legislation and regulations:

- The Race Relations Act 1976; the Sex Discrimination Act 1975; the Equal Pay Act 1970, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Any complaint or grievance under this policy should be made in writing to the Chairman, or any Trustee or Board Member of Alchemy Film & Arts, who will bring the matter to the attention of the rest of the Board of Trustees. The matter will then be formally investigated by one or more board members who will report back to the Board of Trustees. If the complaint or grievance is considered reasonable, the Board of Trustees shall decide by majority vote on the appropriate action to be taken.

Richard Ashrowan, Creative Director, Alchemy Film & Arts, June 2015.