

THE BLACK-E ARTS & COMMUNITY EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN

Diversity and Cultural Equity – is not just about policy, it is about who we choose to be.

Here at the Black-E we have survived and thrived because we are about communities and fostering authentic connection – local, regional national and global. We also accept that our work is about the arts of survival. This means we are committing to making visible the work of people and groups that have historically been marginalised, rendered unspoken, invisible, and not funded from the public purse.

We are also committed to harnessing the Equality Act 2010, together with the Human Rights Act, and other legislation to make sure we provide access, inclusion and opportunity for all people who remain underrepresented in the arts and cultural sector.

Our ambition is to achieve greater diversity and cultural equity in respect of disability, race and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and age. We want to ensure equitable access for people from working class backgrounds – because they built the Black-E and we know that there are other groups who are sometimes left behind – we have a duty to make sure no one is left behind.

ACTION PLAN – by 2026

- Improve the number and diversity of people we commission to make new work, lead workshops and work with our community. (by 10%)
- Develop a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community we serve. (100%)
- Support the wider performing arts sector with diversity and inclusion.
- Develop a culture where diversity is hard-wired into everything we do, understood by all, and creating opportunity for everyone to be a part of the conversation.
- Make sure that disabled access – includes creating opportunity for, and with people of all ages and cognitive ability to experience and take part in cultural activity. (increase our spend by 15%)
- Work to deliver better, more inclusive tools for evaluating our work and sharing conversations on quality and equality.

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1. The creation of contexts (both social and environmental) which encourage an improved and meaningful relationship between artists and communities for the creation, presentation, and promotion of contemporary work of high quality and originality.

This means that the Blackie is committed to: -

1. **access** - both providing access and improving access to the artist and for the artist, and for those individuals and groups already involved in the arts as well as for those with no previous involvement with the arts - for example by the provision of workshops both as part of the ongoing programme and in conjunction with residencies, performances; by establishing an on-going dialogue between artists and their audiences through repeated visits and work, and by running seminars, residencies, etc. which enable artists to meet and work together.
 2. **positive action** - in relation to artists who are discriminated against - and in relation to communities and individuals who are discriminated against or disadvantaged - to provide opportunities for such artists, communities, and individuals to give expression to their experience, their needs, and their aspirations, and to celebrate their achievements and rediscover their history.
 3. **education (learning and unlearning) and training** - both by and for artists - and both by and for communities and individuals - with a view to improving performance, understanding, and communication.
2. The creation of opportunities and contexts which enable people to actively participate in creative activities - a participation based in "doing" as well as "viewing" - in order, amongst other aims, to further democratise the arts. Indeed, since democracy rests on the creation of a common language, and since the arts remain among the most restricted of languages, such involvement aims to promote democratisation not only through a shared understanding of these languages but also through growth and development in the languages themselves.

This means the Blackie is committed to: -

1. the creation and exploration of forms in which "**audience participation**" is fundamental.

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2. **experiment** - to contribute to the research and development which is essential if new forms and techniques are to emerge to give expression to the worlds of today and tomorrow.
3. The recognition and valuing of cultural diversity, **this means the Blackie is committed to:**
 1. promoting work which reflects the experience and concerns of those groups within our society whose voices have been marginalised, anthropologised or ignored.
 2. programming across the spectrum of creative activities - the fine arts, the popular arts, the performing arts, the making arts, creative and co-operative games, contemporary media, and traditional crafts - to promote and develop harmony rather than hierarchy between forms, and additionally to promote and develop cross-fertilisation and positive interaction between forms.
 3. a perspective of the arts which is local, regional, national, and international - to stimulate and develop a sense of cultural and geographical inter-relatedness and variety.

IN CONCLUSION

From all the above it can be seen that, in committing itself to exploring and recreating the relationship between contemporary society and the contemporary artist and between contemporary society and creative activities and opportunities, the Blackie is committing itself to a two-in-one duality - to the development of communities and to the development of artists. In terms of communities, then such a commitment is based on a recognition of the role of the arts in community development: every community issue is also an issue to be explored through the arts. In terms of artists, then such a commitment is based on the complementary recognition that - only given the opportunity - everyone is an artist. And if all the earlier text had to be summed up in seven words?

CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL QUALITY AND EQUALITY

The Trustees of the Black-E