



EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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About Second Wave

Second Wave empowers young people's creativity and activism through engaging young people as performers, writers, lyricists and technicians - developing new productions and youth-led creative outreach projects in the community. We run regular workshops for young people aged 11-25 years old from our dedicated studio space in Deptford. We also organise representation at public buildings such as civic suites, MP surgeries, local authority meetings and parliamentary offices. Our staff team often accompany young people to other venues such as youth centres, youth clubs, theatres, cinemas and museums.

Purpose and scope of this statement

Second Wave Centre for Youth Arts is committed to encouraging equity, equality and diversity among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our members, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- **provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.**
- **not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.**
- **oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.**

The organisation commits to:

- **encourage equality and diversity in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.**
- **create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.**

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equity policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

- **take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities**

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- **make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.**
- **decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)**
- **review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law**

- **monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equity and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equity policy**

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equity policy, and any sporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The equity policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions and/or employee representatives.

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in the employee's contract and follows ACAS guidelines. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

The Context of Our Work: Participation & Empowerment

Second Wave aims to realise the potential of participatory youth activities in a safe and creative learning environment. This involves the empowerment of young people by means of community engagement and access to skills in a youth-centred context. As a community-based organisation Second Wave includes young activists and young artists in local and London-wide partnerships and initiatives. This involves developing their knowledge, abilities and skills as the next generation of community leaders.

Essential features of this work are the promotion of equity, equality and the nurturing of cultural diversity throughout the activities, events and initiatives fostered by Second Wave as a Centre for Youth Arts.

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for equity in action. This has emerged gradually from a process of consultation that has explored the role a youth arts centre should play in the life of its community. The participants in that process of consultation have been young people, volunteers, staff, arts practitioners, and representatives of the wider community. The process of consultation has stimulated

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an ongoing dialogue between a range of interested parties, including discussions, conversations, seminars, evaluations, questionnaires, feedback and research, and encompassing several different features of Second Wave within this active debate.

Some of the questions raised in this approach concern the issue of good practice and how quality can be measured in the context of participatory youth arts. These questions have informed the policy and strengthened recognition of shared values. The underlying principles by which Second Wave defines its approach - in working with and supporting the progression of young people include:

- **A belief in the entitlement of young people to gain access to high quality arts activities and to gain recognition for their achievements in the community;**
- **Respect for and encouragement of the principles of equity, equality and diversity in the design and delivery of these opportunities;**
- **A commitment to overcome discrimination and disadvantage in working with individuals, groups and communities;**
- **An ambition to open up new areas for progression, accreditation, training and employment, and to overcome under-representation;**
- **Recognition of the importance of challenging prejudice and actively promoting creative methods that are valued for their standards of integrity and ethical practice.**

Second Wave's key objectives in seeking to consolidate and improve its practice include the promotion of:

- **youth culture and social responsibility;**
- **new audiences and participants who are new to the arts;**
- **specific outreach initiatives designed to make contact with marginalised communities;**
- **professional development including traineeships, apprenticeships and the development of professional standards;**
- **high standards of management, governance and trusteeship;**
- **the empowerment of under-represented groups through decision-making - within the organisation, in the wider community and via the structure of local democracy;**
- **practice-based action research;**
- **new approaches to community partnership work.**

The value of youth arts is inseparable from effective engagement with members of BME communities and other marginalised groups. The questions of safety and

freedom across diverse cultural activities, inter-faith issues, and throughout the lives of different communities have never been more important or more complex.

A forward-looking approach to these issues is the best way of providing new opportunities to address the challenges faced by young people.

Second Wave is committed to counteracting negative stereotypes, questioning unfair practice, and overcoming under-representation & discrimination. The policy requires practical and creative ways of improving access to and participation in the delivery of Second Wave's programme. This includes supporting young volunteers, training new practitioners, and developing their professional skills.

As a Third-Party Reporting Site for Hate Crime, Second Wave is strongly committed challenging prejudice, verbal & physical abuse, harassment and discriminatory according to their:

- **Disability**
- **Race or ethnic identity**
- **Religion or belief**
- **Gender or sexual identity**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Age**
- **Immigration status or nationality.**

Ongoing Consultation and Discussion

The process of consultation and discussion is led by Ann Considine, Director of Second Wave. Issues of equity and opportunity are continually explored in a variety of contexts, with particular focus on the views and aspirations of young people who seek to increase their participation in Second Wave's programme. These questions of under-representation, access and progression include:

- *Entitlement*: how should Second Wave guarantee access to high quality arts activities for young people from marginalised and disengaged groups?
- *Recognition*: how can creativity, as a mode of learning and self-development, be recognised & accredited to meet the aspirations of young people?
- *Barriers*: what are the institutional and economic barriers which continue to deny young people full access to the arts?
- *Community factors*: what are the wider social factors which inhibit young people, particularly of BME backgrounds, from participating in the creative sector?

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- *Support*: how should young people be supported through a youth arts process, in identifying their interests, fulfilling their potential and pursuing their journeys as young artists and arts practitioners?
- *Values*: how can Second Wave continue to learn why the arts are important to young people and how should it make use of those insights?
- *Sustainable development*: how can long-term participation be built which supports the interests of individuals and communities on a sustainable basis?

In answer to these questions at Second Wave has produced a phased approach to participation, in which the interests and needs of young people are recognised at different stages of their personal and social development. This phased model of participation is linked to various insights offered by the longitudinal research of the American academic, Shirley Brice Heath. As young people gain confidence in their own abilities, they seek further challenges and additional levels of responsibility. With well-informed sustained support, young people can then negotiate necessary transitions within a creative process, encompassing different phases of participation and promoting increasing levels of peer-support and community leadership. Such a process will normally take place over a period of years, rather than months.

Young people witness this process at work in the transitions they make for themselves, and see being made by their peers, for example, in assuming the role of a volunteer, then supporting a workshop process, and then gradually acquiring their own leadership experiences and skills in the wider participative context of a youth arts centre.

Our Vision

The participatory emphasis of Second Wave implies a wider social agenda with a remit to promote an intentional community of practice. One aim is to draw participants from the periphery into the centre of these activities, and to encourage the leadership and professional skills of previously-marginalised participants and practitioners. Another central purpose of Second Wave is to encourage and support the involvement of under-represented groups and communities in every area of creative activity and at every level of decision-making. The process of open discussion which informs this policy is an ongoing organisational responsibility linked to issues of governance, information-gathering, reflection, evaluation, organisational development and review.

Second Wave: Equalities in a Youth Arts Context

Key indicators include:

- Second Wave promotes a progressive rationale and pro-active approach to issues of equity of opportunity and under-representation in all aspects of its work.
- Under-represented groups are entitled to receive fair treatment and are encouraged to progress at all levels of the organisation.
- The organisation offers positive working conditions for its staff, trainees and volunteers.
- Recruitment processes are fair, open and non-discriminatory.
- Second Wave's equal opportunities policy is perceived to be an integral feature of its work and effectively translated into practice.
- Trustees, staff, volunteers, artists and participants feel valued for the contribution they make to the organisation.
- Professional development and personal progression are seen to be positive features of Second Wave's approach.
- Commitment to the recognition of achievement and consistently high-quality provision are valued features of the organisation.
- The management structure is flexible, responsive and open to new ideas.

In relation to Second Wave's external commitments:

- Second Wave has progressive policies and positive methods for attracting, welcoming and sustaining new participants, particularly young people from minority or marginalised communities.
- Staff, volunteers and young people work effectively together in reaching excluded groups and broadening participation.
- Positive efforts are made to build community partnerships and develop good practice.
- Commitments to equity, equality are well-documented and publicised, and are reflected in the organisation's community-based methods of working.
- Progress is reviewed regularly on the basis of feedback and evaluation.
- Equality indicators are a key feature of the recruitment process & levels of staff retention are high.
- Opportunities for professional development, training and apprenticeships are valued as practice-based initiatives, designed and delivered in-house by a creative team of experienced youth arts practitioners.

A self-questioning approach on these issues is valued as an aid to continual improvement. For each identified objective, specific questions are formulated which lead to possible ways forward.

- *Registration, record-keeping and monitoring processes.*
Are the present systems adequate and working effectively? How could they be improved for equity purposes?
- *Community outreach.*
Are some local communities/ groups not being reached (e.g. the Refugee and migrant network & young people at risk)? How can Second Wave's partnerships with these groups be strengthened?
- *Local decision-making.*
Are young people being represented in decision-making at an organisational level and in local democratic processes? How can these aspects of participation be enhanced?
- *Peer-support, community leadership and professional development.*
Are participants being offered the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential in community leaders? What additional support and training could be offered by Second Wave?
- *Recruitment and induction.*
Are possible inequalities being identified in this process? How can these be corrected?
- *Attracting and sustaining new audiences.*
Is Second Wave making best use of the feedback and responses gained from its participants and audiences? Could any new methods of recording feedback be developed?
- *Information-sharing with the wider community.*
Is clear information about Second Wave reaching the widest possible constituency? How could young people, volunteers and staff play a more prominent role in information-sharing activities?
- *Evaluation and research.*
Is it feasible for Second Wave to develop a wider community of practice, based on an open process of collaboration and action research? How can this process be designed to encompass a wide range of cultural interests, local priorities, diversity of groups & individuals, and creative methods of interaction?
- *Themes and narratives.*
Are the themes and stories being explored within the artistic programme of direct relevance and importance to issues of equality? How are these themes identified

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and developed through discussion and collaboration with young participants and the local community?

- *Freedom and social justice.*

Is Second Wave's youth and community agenda meeting the needs of young people for change and improvement? What are the issues which most concern young people and influence the quality of their daily lives? And how can these be addressed?

- *Management and governance.*

How can Second Wave ensure that the principle of equity and equality underpins all aspects of management and governance? Are management roles and responsibilities regularly reviewed to identify any evidence of under-representation or inequality?

- *Aims, targets and accountability.*

As an organisation, does Second Wave reflect the cultural diversity of the community it is funded to serve? Can priorities be identified for measuring progress clearly with appropriate monitoring procedures?

Implementing the Policy

Second Wave has 40 years' experience of working with young people, particularly young people from BME and marginalised/under-represented communities who comprise 85-90% of participants. This plan puts young people at the centre of its equalities strategy and commits Second Wave to listening carefully to their views and responding to their calls for action. It is based on the belief that every young person has the right to participate in the widest possible range of creative and community activities. To achieve this Second Wave will reflect and value the artistic choices of young people from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, engaging them in all the decisions that affect their interests, and opening up new areas of opportunity and recognition for their abilities.

The Director and Trustees of Second Wave recognise their responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy and recording progress in fulfilling its objectives.

Ann Considine, Director

Cheryl Brown, Chair of Trustees

Second Wave