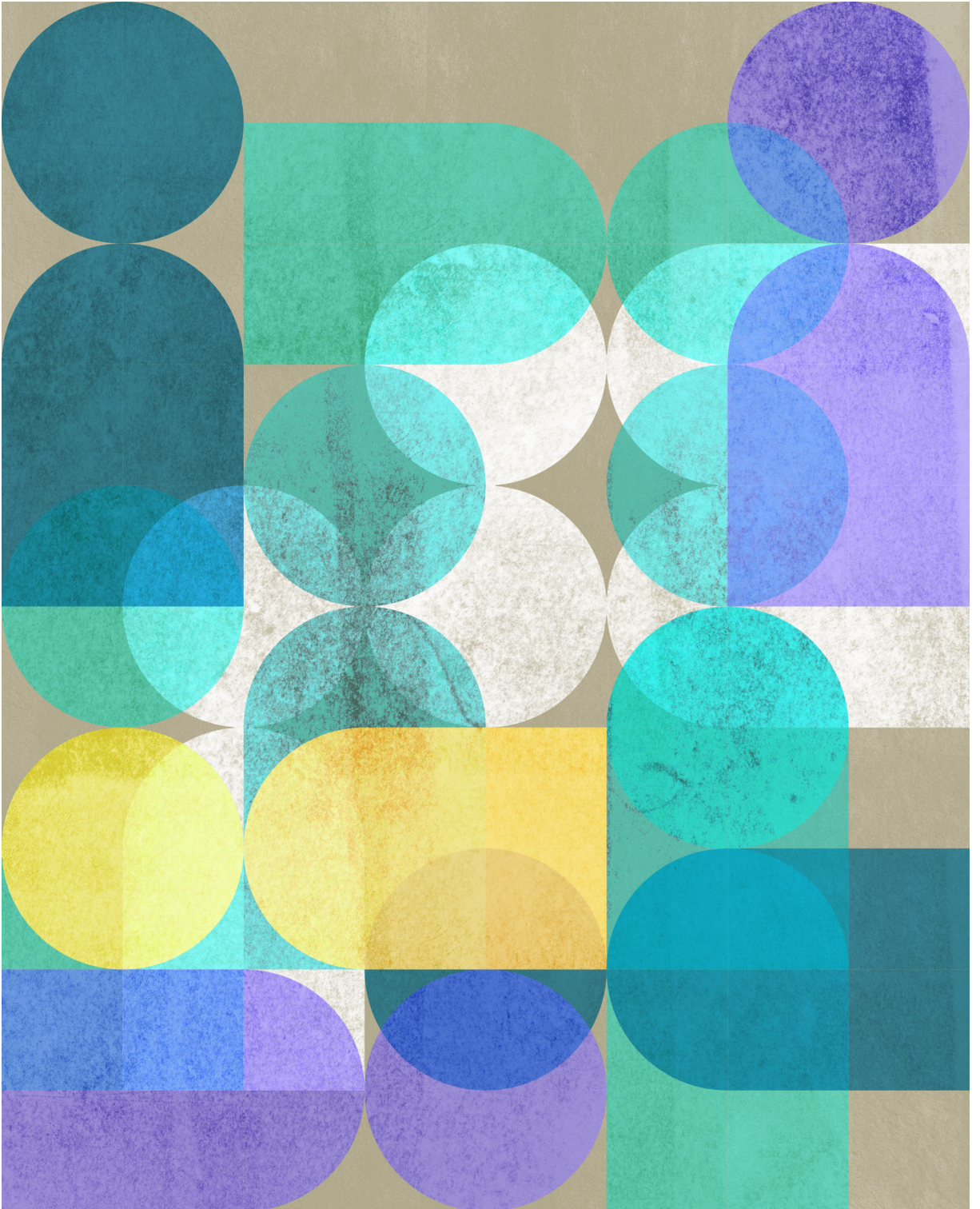




Arts Council
Equality, Human Rights
& Diversity Policy & Strategy



The Arts Council, in everything it does,
strives to respect, support and ensure the
inclusion of all voices and cultures that make
up Ireland today, from all sections of society,
from existing and new communities, and
from all social backgrounds, ethnicities and
traditions.

This Equality, Human Rights and Diversity [EHRD] Policy builds on a range of existing Arts Council work areas, developments and policies including an [Arts & Disability policy](#), a [Cultural Diversity and the Arts policy](#), and a [Dignity at Work policy](#). It recognises that whilst developmental initiatives have been promoted and supported by the Arts Council over many years, our work in advancing change has still been too limited and too compartmentalised. We are deeply aware that, within the arts in Ireland, many inequities still exist and that there is a substantial number of people who continue to experience barriers to engaging with and participating in the arts because of their socio-economic background, their ethnicity or religion, their sexual orientation or gender identity, their family status, their age, their membership of the Traveller Community, or through lack of accommodation of a disability. Further, as evidenced by movements such as *Waking the Feminists*, *Sounding the Feminists* and *Fair Plé*, women artists across a range of artistic disciplines continue to encounter serious impediments to advancing their careers and repertoire in a way that equates with their male peers.

Through previous research and developmental work the Arts Council has gained significant insight into the essential role diversity and equality plays in releasing the full potential of Ireland's artistic and cultural talent and engaging people from every background and perspective in the arts. Harnessing diversity provides unparalleled opportunity for creative collaboration, innovation and learning. We also believe that through promoting equality, human rights and diversity in the arts in Ireland, we can benefit from rich artistic outcomes and contemporary practice that is challenging, relevant and more accurately reflective of our society today.

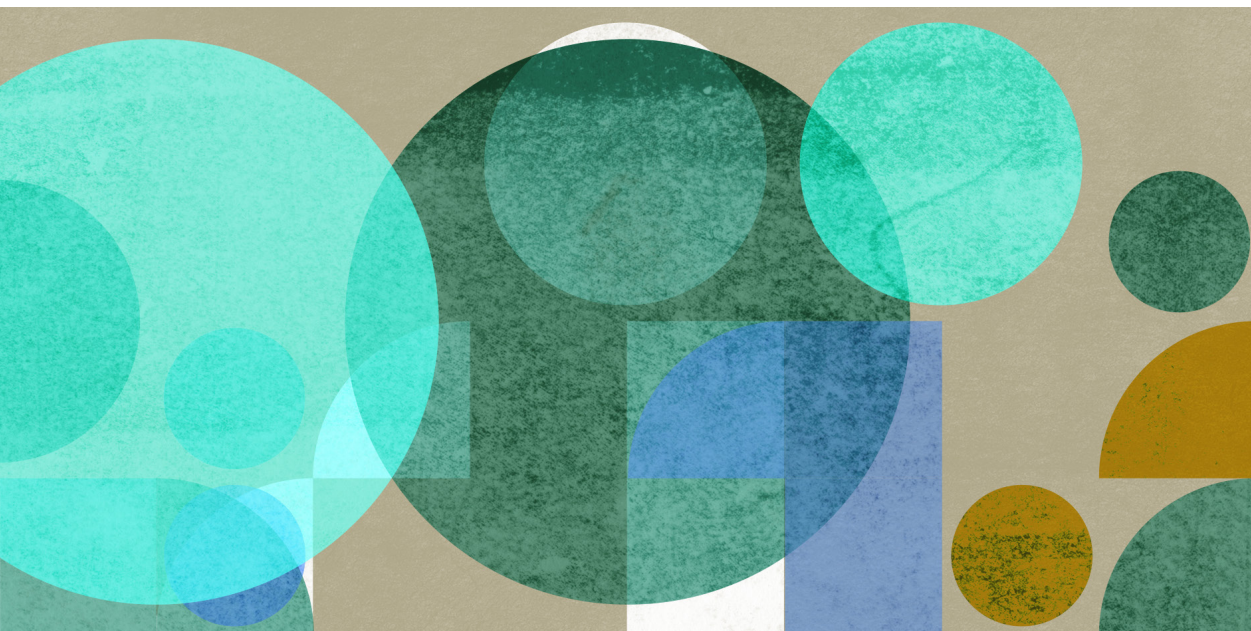


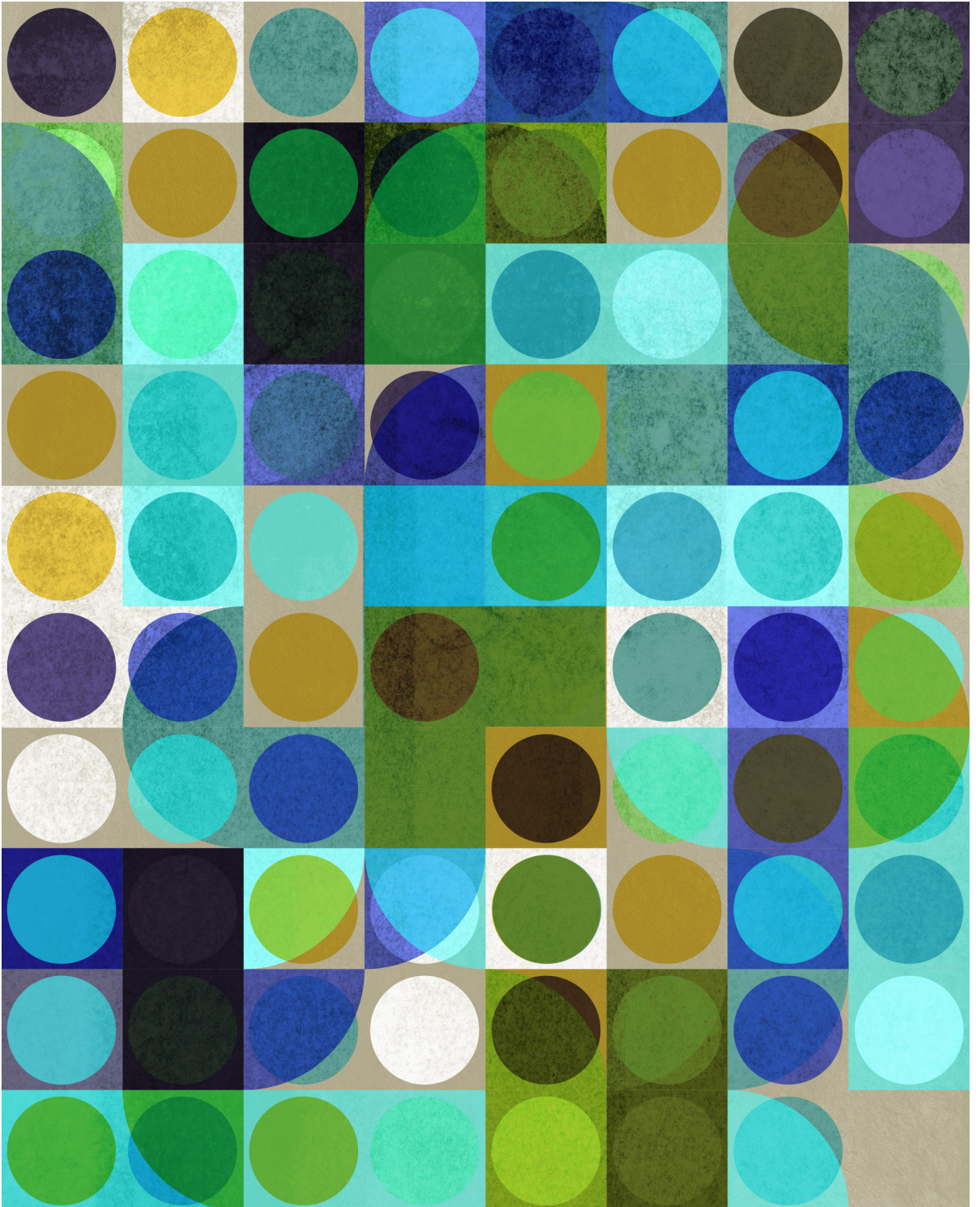
As the agency tasked with the development of the arts in Ireland, it is crucial that the Arts Council takes a proactive and focused approach to guaranteeing a basic human right¹: ensuring that everyone who lives in Ireland has the opportunity to engage with, and participate in the arts.

1 UN Declaration of Human Rights – Article 27.

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

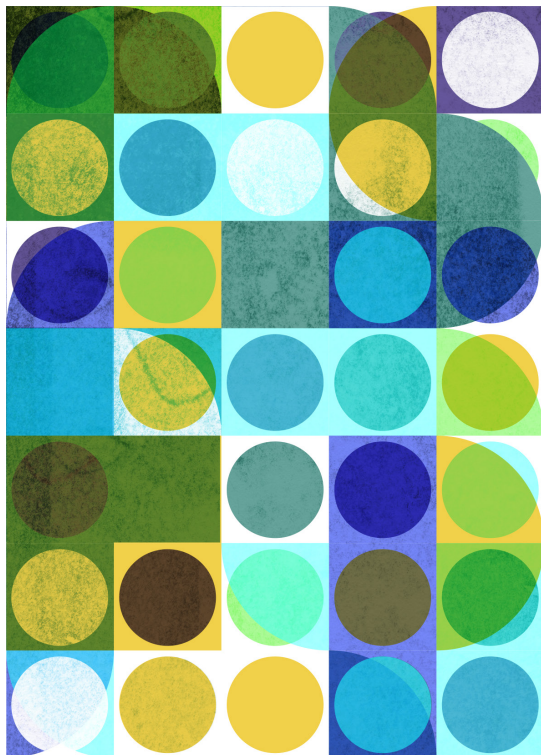




Statement of Policy

In publishing this policy we are committing to taking actions over the course of the coming years to actively deepen our understanding of inequalities in the arts and develop substantive ways to address them. We recognise that our policy must be embedded from the outset in our own institutional structure and practice and we will work towards ensuring that our board, staff, advisers and panellists, best reflect and represent the diversity of contemporary Ireland.

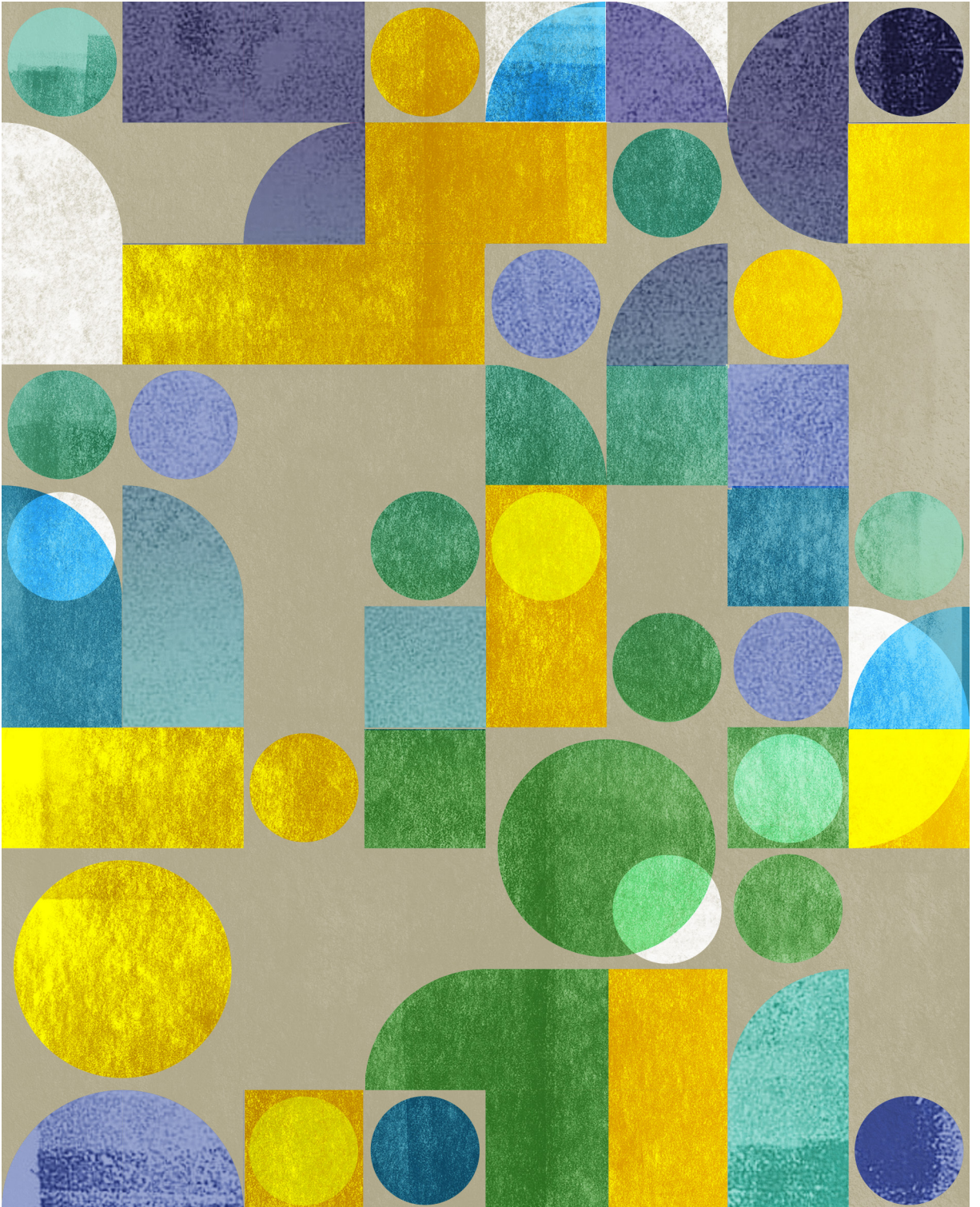
Diversity is a core organisational value in the Arts Council's 10-year strategy to 2025, *Making Great Art Work*, centred on respecting diversity of artistic practice, of public engagement, and of social and cultural traditions. This core value attests to the organisation's commitment to and appreciation of the value of diversity.



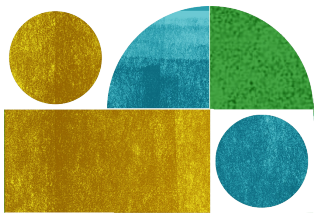
The Arts Council acknowledges and firmly believes that **every person living in Ireland has the right to create, engage with, enjoy and participate in the arts.**

Through this EHRD Policy, and in the context of its civic and statutory role, the Arts Council:

- States its absolute commitment to the Public Sector Duty (and equality legislation), which outlaws discrimination and requires all publicly-funded organisations to take positive policy measures to promote equality of opportunity, access and outcomes for all those living in Ireland regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community. Furthermore, the Arts Council notes the ground of socio-economic background as a further basis for which equality of opportunity, access and outcomes must be guaranteed.
- Asserts its belief that a diverse organisation is a more dynamic and effective organisation and undertakes as a State Agency to become more representative of the population in Ireland today.
- Is invested in the creative case for diversity, recognising that increased diversity and equality in the arts supports richer creativity in Ireland and impacts positively on arts development, as well as wider social, cultural and economic development.
- Sets out its understanding of the need for the arts sector to be reflective of Ireland in all its diversity, ensuring equality of opportunity; equality of access, participation and outcomes; and equality of representation.
- Undertakes to review and adjust its awards and funding programmes, towards ensuring their recipients and beneficiaries better reflect the population profile of contemporary Ireland, inclusive of the most disadvantaged groups.



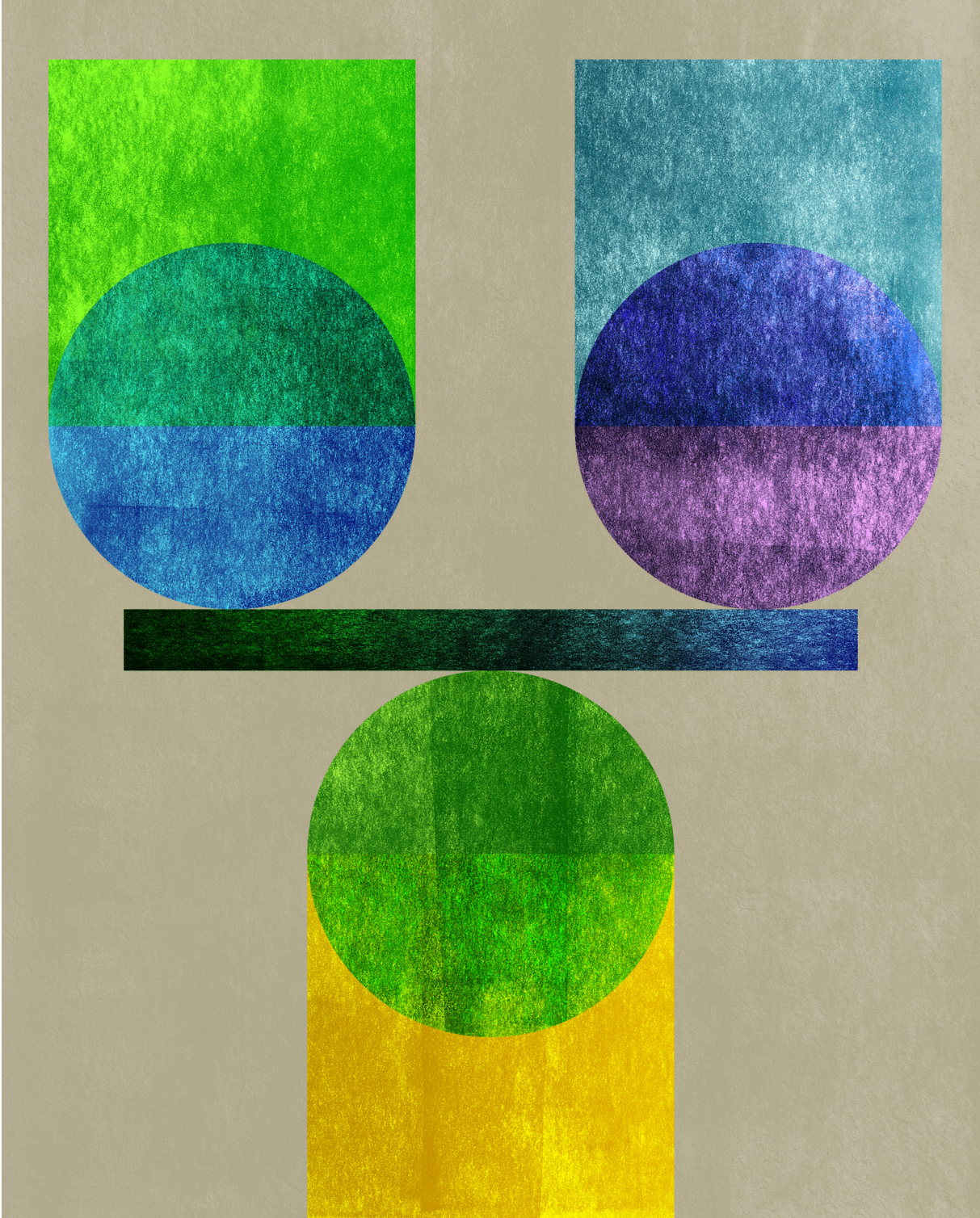
This EHRD Policy commits to placing equality, human rights and diversity at the heart of the Arts Council’s operational and strategic plans. This will require fundamental changes in our structures and operations, as well as for those we support in delivering the arts in Ireland.



As a key tenet of *Making Great Art Work*, ‘respect for diversity’ will be implemented through a series of actions, ongoing activities and short, medium and long-term objectives – which are outlined in the following first **3-year Action Plan**

To ensure practical implementation of the policy, the key actions outlined have been aligned with the central pillars of *Making Great Art Work*, and the Arts Council’s values as articulated in that strategy, particularly *Respect for diversity: of artistic practice, of public engagement and of social and cultural traditions*.

Action Plan 2019 – 2021



Policy action	Desired outcomes	Deliverables/KPIs	Timeline
1. Corporate actions			
1.1 Review, update and actively implement the recommendations of the Arts Council Access Audit with priority given to making our building accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arts Council visibly demonstrates its commitment to addressing accessibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts Council building made more accessible by end 2021 • An updated and comprehensive plan for increasing accessibility in place by end of 2019. • New audit completed by 2020 	Q2 2019 – Q4 2021
1.2 Conduct Diversity and Equality audit of current HR practices, including recruitment, induction and advancement / promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arts Council proactively develops a new strategy to encourage diversity in its workforce. ❖ A change in the profile of Arts Council workforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit completed 2019 • New policy and plan developed in 2020 	Q2 2019 – Q2 2020
1.3 Liaise with Public Appointments Service towards ensuring greater diversity on board of Arts Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arts Council shows leadership to arts sector by becoming a more representative and diverse board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting held with Diversity and Inclusion lead at PAS and realistic targets identified 	Q2 – Q4 2019
1.4 Develop an effective means of ensuring wider and more diverse representation on Arts Council peer panels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arts Council shows leadership and inspires further confidence in the equity of its processes around funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanism in place to ensure inclusion of representatives from different groups in peer panels list. 	Q2 2019 – Q2 2020
1.5 Create a dedicated full-time Equality, Diversity and Inclusion position within the Arts Council to implement and further develop the EHRD policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A full-time dedicated member of staff is working internally and externally to deliver a living and embedded EHRD policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Project Lead appointed • Case made in workforce plan for dedicated full-time post within Arts Council staff within three years 	Q2 2019 – Q4 2021
1.6 Develop a paid work placement scheme at the Arts Council to increase engagement and work opportunities for underrepresented communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arts Council shows leadership in offering meaningful growth and development opportunities for Individuals that experience barriers to developing careers in arts administration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two new paid work schemes in place by 2021. • External support secured from relevant department 	Q4 2019 – Q4 2021

1. Corporate actions (continued)			
Policy action	Desired outcomes	Deliverables/KPIs	Timeline
1.7 Create a formal process for EHRD proofing of future policy and strategy development	❖ Arts Council EHRD policy is embedded effectively into all aspects of policy and strategy development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal system for proofing is approved and adopted by Council 	Q3 2019 – Q4 2020
1.8 Reconfigure Working Group to oversee implementation of the policy	❖ Effective corporate ownership and oversight of a living EHRD policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised terms of reference for internal Working Group Good senior and cross organisational representation on Working Group Bi-monthly meetings held 	Q2 2019 – Q4 2021
1.9 Organise further language accessible/ graphic versions of this policy and Implementation plan	❖ Arts Council's commitment to accessibility and equity is demonstrated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different iterations of Policy and Action plan produced and disseminated 	Q2 – Q4 2019
2. Artist actions			
2.1 Collect and analyse data to better understand the 10 protected characteristics as they pertain to artists that apply for Arts Council funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arts Council has a broader and more accurate dataset about the characteristics of artists currently applying for and receiving Arts Council support. ❖ The evidence provided gives a clear picture of gaps we are not addressing and informs new actions to address those gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New fields added to CRM system. Application forms modified to include voluntary questionnaire for applicant Reports provided to Policy & Strategy Committee of Arts Council on statistical data collected bi-annually. Report on statistics published on Arts Council website annually. 	Q2 2019 – Q4 2021

2. Artist actions (continued)			
Policy action	Desired outcomes	Deliverables/KPIs	Timeline
<p>2.2 Publish aggregate information on award applicants and recipients with an immediate focus on gender and in the long-term further fields as appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arts Council stakeholders have accurate information on gender (and other characteristics) in the numbers of applicants to and recipients of the awards offered by the Arts Council. ❖ Artists encountering barriers to supports and opportunities gain confidence in the Arts Council to address issues identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports on gender statistics published on website from 2020 on • Positive feedback from stakeholders on transparency and the usefulness of information provided. 	<p>Q2 2019 – Q4 2021</p>
<p>2.3 Undertake a substantive consultative process with artists from diverse backgrounds to gain a more informed perspective on the issues they face in advancing their careers as artists.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Artists experiencing inequality or discrimination feel empowered to voice experiences and seek support in availing of the opportunities offered by the Arts Council and the organisations the Art Council supports. ❖ The Arts Council works with artists experiencing inequality or discrimination to develop appropriate developmental supports and opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of facilitated meetings held with artists from diverse backgrounds • Survey devised, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, for needs assessment in relation to professional development and career progression • Process documented and reported on • Appropriate new supports developed. 	<p>Q3 2019 – Q3 2020</p>
<p>2.4 Work with relevant agencies to develop appropriate means of recompensing artists who are part of the <i>application for international protection</i> process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Artists seeking asylum, or living in direct provision, who participate in any relevant Arts Council activity will be treated equitably, in line with standard payment practices for artists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol and mechanism for paying artists who do not have bank accounts in place. 	<p>Q2 2019 – Q4 2021</p>

2. Artist actions (continued)			
Policy action	Desired outcomes	Deliverables/KPIs	Timeline
2.5 Work with funded organisations to establish a valid means of collecting information about the artists and groups they work with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The Arts Council has more accurate and comprehensive data about the artists our funding is reaching. ❖ Organisational competency in the area of equality and diversity improves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New system in place by end 2020. 	Q3 2019 – Q4 2020
2.6 Based on findings from the above actions, and in consultation with relevant agencies, set realistic targets for the representational change the Arts Council wants to achieve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In five years' time the Arts Council sees progressive change in the profile of the artists it is supporting and in the make-up of its peer panels that assess awards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a set of medium and long-term targets by end of 2020. 	Q1 – Q4 2020
2.7 Ensure all awards for artists explicitly invite diversity and take positive actions to address identified imbalances in any areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A more diverse range of artists apply for and receive Arts Council awards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language on all award notifications changed to be proactively inclusive • New measures developed to further support marginalised artists in applying for funding. 	Q4 2019 – Q4 2020
3. Public Engagement actions			
3.1 Work with relevant funded organisations (prioritising Strategically Funded organisations) to establish baseline information about the different publics they engage with as audiences, participants and collaborators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The Arts Council and its organisations awarded Strategic Funding have a deeper knowledge and understanding of the publics we are reaching and those we are not reaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System for gathering reliable public engagement data, as it pertains to the ten outlined characteristics, devised and tested. 	Q4 2019 – Q4 2021
3.2 Establish an Advisory Forum for continued conversation with relevant representative groups and bodies for those at risk of discrimination and/or exclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ An effective mechanism for continuing dialogue is put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated Forum meetings held to clarify issues • Bi-lateral meeting between Forum and Arts Council held twice a year. 	Q3 2019 – Q4 2021

3. Public Engagement actions (continued)			
Policy action	Desired outcomes	Deliverables/KPIs	Timeline
<p>3.3 Develop working partnerships with relevant representative organisations, in order to create increased opportunities and equitable supports for long-term engagement in the arts by individuals and groups experiencing disadvantage and marginalisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Self-identified excluded groups determine the actions required to address barriers to participation. ❖ Meaningful working relationships are established with representative organisations to work collaboratively in addressing inequity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New partnerships formed between the Arts Council and civil society bodies. 	<p>Q2 2019 – Q4 2021</p>
4. Investment actions			
<p>4.1 Develop and incorporate specific criteria regarding equality and diversity into the next annual investment plan and all subsequent investment strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arts Council offers clarity on the equality and diversity principles and criteria that will underpin future investment strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant criteria incorporated into the 2020 Annual Investment plan 	<p>Q2 – Q4 2019</p>
<p>4.2 Require Strategically Funded organisations to ensure their boards are gender balanced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Organisations awarded Strategic Funding demonstrate best practice in having balanced governance structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear guidelines around gender equality issues are incorporated into Arts Council governance guidelines. 	<p>Q2 2019 – Q4 2021</p>
5. Spatial & Demographic actions			
<p>5.1 Make equality and diversity a key focal point of the Arts Council's strategic partnership with Local Government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The Arts Council Local Government partnership generates exemplary models of practice in ensuring inclusion and diversity in the arts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places Matter conference 2019 themed on Cultural diversity and the arts. • Case studies of good practice produced 	<p>Q1 2019 – Q4 2021</p>

5. Spatial & Demographic actions (continued)			
Policy action	Desired outcomes	Deliverables/KPIs	Timeline
5.2 Drawing on Census 2016 data and other relevant sources, select and develop realistic targets for reflecting demographic realities to apply to future work programmes.	❖ That the Arts Council is informed and setting realistic targets in terms of forward planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future developmental programmes (e.g. Creative Places) have clear criteria around equality and diversity in place. 	Q2 2019 – Q4 2021
6. Developing Capacity actions			
6.1 Provide training on unconscious bias, anti-racism and diversity awareness for the staff and board of the Arts Council.	❖ Decision makers and all staff that interact with Arts Council stakeholders have clear knowledge and understanding of the biases they may carry and the further training they may require in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training course delivered 2019 • Further training needs identified 	Q3 2019 – Q4 2021
6.2 Develop relevant Equality, Intercultural and Diversity training for the Arts sector.	❖ Increased awareness and understanding in the arts sector about Equality, Human Rights and Diversity issues and inter-culturalism as a key way of working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training modules developed and delivered in three regions 	Q1 – Q3 2020
6.3 Develop a practical Diversity and Inclusion toolkit and training resource for the Arts sector.	❖ Arts Sector is better equipped to plan and develop actions to address equality and diversity issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical tool-kit is made available on AC Website in 2020 	Q1 – Q3 2020
6.4 Provide regular updates to all Arts Council stakeholders on our progress in respect of addressing access, human rights and equality issues.	❖ The Arts Council shows leadership in foregrounding our work in this area and the progress we are making on it on a continual basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates provided through website, social media, and e-newsletter. • Subscription to newsletter widened and diversified. 	Q3 2019 – Q4 2021
6.5 Review and development of new EHRD action plan	❖ A progressive new EHRD plan is put in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published review and new plan 	Q2 – Q4 2021



Review & Oversight

The EHRD Policy, and in particular, its first Action Plan will be monitored by an internal Working Group and progress reviewed at Arts Council board meetings on a quarterly basis.

Two Arts Council board members will act as champions for the policy, in order to ensure senior leadership and oversight.

An external Advisory panel comprising representatives of relevant civic organisations, representative bodies and advocacy groups will be established to offer insights and advice where pertinent to ensuring the progress of the policy and strategy implementation.

The Arts Council will regularly publish updates, using its various channels of communication, outlining how specific issues are being addressed.

The Arts Council will report on progress of this policy and strategy in its Annual Report as well as any other evaluations or reviews of corporate strategies.





the arts
council
as chomhairle
ealaíon