



## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

### ABOUT US

Fermynwoods Contemporary Art Limited (“Fermynwoods”) is an educational charity that commissions innovative and meaningful ways for visual artists to engage with audiences, in public spaces across the Rockingham Forest area of Northamptonshire and online.

We currently operate from a small office in Thrapston, a converted hunters lodge situated within a meadow and Site of Special Scientific Interest within Fermyn Woods, and The Arches in Fineshade Wood.

### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Fermynwoods is committed to promoting equal opportunities in all areas of our organisation and activities. Beyond a commitment to not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, or sexual orientation (“Protected Characteristics”), Fermynwoods is actively committed to including and promoting a variety of voices in our work.

### SCOPE

This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers and Trustees as well as our audience.

### RESPONSIBILITY

Our Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. Day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy has been delegated to our Director.

All individuals involved in Fermynwoods, no matter what their role is, should lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives.

Listening and learning is paramount. We commit to providing an environment where our team members, commissioned artists, participants, and audiences can inform us of our shortcomings without retaliation. We commit to holding a discussion between the Fermynwoods Team and Board to discuss any problems or shortcomings brought to our attention.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Board and all individuals are invited to comment to the Board on this policy and suggest ways it might be approved. The Board and Team of Fermynwoods Contemporary Art commit to meeting a minimum of once a year to discuss how our policies are being integrated into our daily life as an organisation.

## MOTIVATIONS

- Seek to diversify the Fermynwoods board, commissioned artists, participants and audience.
- Aim for Fermynwoods events, activities and commissions to proactively include and support artists and participants who are less privileged.
- Commit to building our programming around the promotion and inclusion of diverse voices.

## DISCRIMINATION

You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former staff, Trustees, applicants, clients, audience members, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with audience members, suppliers or other work-related contacts, and on Fermynwoods-related trips or events including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- (a) **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic.
- (b) **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified.
- (c) **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- (d) **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- (e) **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

## COMMITMENTS TO OUR STAFF AND TRUSTEES

### *Recruitment and selection*

Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises in respect of employees, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers (collectively known as “Staff”) and Trustees will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person where possible. Our recruitment procedures should be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the appropriate grouping of individuals. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

We take steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse audience and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our organisation.

Applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic.

Applicants should not be asked about health or disability before an offer or invitation to join the organisation is made apart from in limited circumstances where appropriate and justifiable. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our organisation, we monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment or involvement with the organisation. The information is removed from applications before shortlisting, and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

#### *Training, promotion and conditions of service*

Access to appropriate training to enable individuals to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

Staff composition and promotions will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

#### *Termination of employment/engagement*

We will ensure that redundancy criteria, procedures and termination of contractual arrangements are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

#### *Disabilities*

If an individual engaged by the organisation is disabled or becomes disabled, we encourage them to tell us about their condition so that we can support them as appropriate.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

## **COMMITMENTS TO OUR ARTISTS**

- Paying artists little to no money for their work excludes all but the most privileged from the art

world. Fermynwoods commits to paying all commissioned artists a fair wage (based on suggested research from arts organisations i.e. a-n).

- Our artists should look like our nation. Fermynwoods seeks to commission at least 13% BAME artists, in line with current UK population statistics, aiming for 30% in the next three years. (As our commissions range in duration, and therefore payment, we will be tracking two percentages; the percentage of BAME artists commissioned, and the percentage of events led by BAME artists.)
- Our definition of inclusion and diversity for artists means Fermynwoods will not insist a commissioned artist make work or creatively address the issues of Protected Characteristics which contribute to their status as less privileged. We commit to treating artists as artists, not as representations of communities.

## COMMITMENTS TO OUR AUDIENCE AND PARTNERS

- We will continue to encourage NEET young people and those from diverse and less privileged backgrounds to participate in the arts through programmes such as our Alternative Provision with the CE Academy.
- We will continue to build relationships with local organisations dedicated to diversity and inclusion in the arts.
- We will continue to develop ways to expand audiences in person and online, aiming to reach those facing physical and financial barriers to engagement with the arts.
- Our policies do not exist in isolation. Our adherence to our Environmental Policy is part of our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion, as careless environmental actions most negatively affect the less privileged.

## BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal of employees and termination of contract for contractors.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

There must be no victimisation or retaliation against any individual who complains about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Signed:



Rhona Rowland – Chair of Trustees

Date: 11 December 2018