

## Improvised Music Company Equity Diversity & Inclusion Policy & Action Plan

### 1. Introduction

Improvised Music Company (IMC) is a resource organisation for Irish and Irish-based jazz musicians, and a specialist promoter of jazz, improvised, and ethnic music in Ireland. Established in 1991, IMC actively supports and promotes the Irish jazz scene through festival programming, concert promotion, touring, education, and audience development.

IMC is committed to the principles of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in all aspects of our work, aligning with the Arts Council's Equality, Human Rights and Diversity (EHRD) Policy. IMC recognises the value of diverse voices and experiences in the arts and strives to create an inclusive environment where all individuals, regardless of background or identity, have the opportunity to participate, contribute, and thrive.

### 2. Purpose

EDI is central to IMC's mission. We recognise that jazz and improvisation thrive when diverse voices are included and barriers removed.

We are dedicated to ensuring equality of opportunity, fostering a culture of inclusivity, and promoting diverse voices in our staffing, programming, volunteerism, and audience engagement. IMC embraces a culture of respect, valuing all individuals and actively working to remove discrimination or barriers to participation in the arts.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all IMC staff, volunteers, board members, artists, performers, contractors, and participants, as well as our audience. It includes all aspects of delivery, including artist selection, staffing, programming, outreach activities, and engagement with communities.

### 4. Equal Opportunities

IMC is dedicated to providing equal opportunities to all artists, staff, and audiences. We ensure that no individual or group is discriminated against on the grounds of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, or any other protected characteristic. We actively promote inclusion and diversity through our recruitment processes, outreach activities, and artist selections, making particular efforts to support underrepresented and marginalised groups within the improvised music field.

### 5. Diversity in Programming

IMC will continue to provide programming that reflects a broad range of voices, styles, and traditions. We seek to celebrate diverse cultural contributions to improvised music, with a focus on supporting women, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and artists from ethnic and

cultural minorities. We actively look for opportunities to present works by underrepresented artists, and ensure that diverse perspectives are central to our programming.

## **6. Inclusivity and Accessibility**

IMC is committed to creating a concert/event environment that is welcoming and accessible to all. This includes ensuring physical, financial, and cultural accessibility through affordable ticketing, accessible venues where possible, and tailored outreach. We will continue to engage with local community organisations, schools, and groups from underrepresented backgrounds, offering activities that make improvised music accessible to wider audiences. Our commitment to inclusivity extends to offering tickets at affordable rates, particularly for children, students, and underprivileged communities.

## **7. Artist Representation**

IMC actively ensures that our artists reflect the diversity of the wider society. This includes making concerted efforts to ensure gender balance, a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds, and equal representation of LGBTQ+ artists in our programming. We will continue to nurture an open and transparent selection process that supports the recruitment of underrepresented artists and staff, including through outreach initiatives. We will also provide ongoing professional development for emerging artists, supporting their growth and opportunities in the field of improvised music.

## **8. Audience Engagement and Outreach**

IMC is committed to engaging a diverse and growing audience for our programming. Our outreach initiatives will continue to focus on underrepresented and underserved communities, particularly through targeted programming and engagement strategies for young people, families, migrants, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. By working with local schools, community centres, and organisations, we aim to introduce new audiences to improvised music and broaden access to the arts.

## **9. Monitoring, Review, and Accountability**

In line with the Arts Council's guidelines, IMC will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy. We will collect feedback from artists, audiences, and staff to assess our progress on EDI objectives, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that our actions remain aligned with the values of equality, diversity, and inclusion. All feedback will be used to inform future festival planning and policy development. The Board of IMC is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and upheld, with progress reported regularly.

## **10. Training and Development**

IMC is committed to ongoing staff and volunteer training in EDI issues. We will ensure that all those involved in festival delivery understand their responsibilities in creating an inclusive environment, and that they are equipped to identify and challenge discrimination or bias. All staff have completed Safe to Create training and members of the Board of Trustees are encouraged to avail of this training.

## **11. Commitment to Continuous Improvement**

IMC acknowledges that EDI is an ongoing process, and we are committed to continuously reviewing and improving our policies, practices, and procedures. By staying informed of best practices and engaging with experts in the field, we will ensure that our work remains a model of inclusion and diversity, contributing to a more equitable arts sector in Ireland. IMCs EDI Policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through Board Meetings.