

Sound Roots

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement

Sound Roots recognises that in our society groups and individuals have been, and continue to be, discriminated against on the basis of race, colour, national origins, culture, gender, marital or parental status, disability, class, sexual orientation, age, political or religious beliefs. Sound Roots is committed to counteracting this by the promotion of equal opportunities in all aspects of its operation, including on our stages, at our events, in our staff team and on our board.

In 2021, Sound Roots began to formally benchmark and track the protected characteristics of the people we work with, employ and volunteer with us, including Trustees. We collate and publish this data on our website as part of an annual report.

We want the English folk, roots and acoustic music sector to properly reflect the demography of England as defined by the ONS. To this end, we will seek to ensure that each year our stages, programmes, audiences and our team mirror our society.

There may be occasions where we actively decide to go beyond these guidelines in order to provide leadership and change across the sector.

Through this policy, Sound Roots strives to:

1. Be a flagship for excellence and inclusion in folk, roots and acoustic music;
2. Ensure our beneficiaries, including volunteers, artists and audiences, our workforce and our Board of Trustees are more diverse and representative of the wider national community within which we operate;
3. Become more inclusive and welcoming in our activities, processes, communications and wider organisational culture.
4. Show by example that increasing the diversity of artists, industry and music fans enables us to deliver richer and more relevant programmes.

Sound Roots embraces the following principles and beliefs, which underpin the actions we will take to address inequality and lack of representation and create a culture of belonging:

- Sound Roots opposes all forms of discrimination and should continue to take a role in addressing bias and discrimination in the music sector;
- Sound Roots recognises individual differences and values the contributions of all;
- Anyone coming into contact with Sound Roots, including volunteers, audiences, artists, staff, music industry representatives and Trustees, will be treated fairly and with respect - no forms of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated;
- Being inclusive and championing excellence are compatible values which sit at the heart of all of Sound Roots' work

- Equality, diversity and inclusion are an integral part of fostering innovative and inspiring artistic and professional practice - creating more opportunities for excellence in every aspect of the organisation and wider sector;
- Sound Roots undertakes equal opportunity monitoring for all areas of recruitment to ensure we not only recruit appropriately but are also reaching diverse communities in the recruitment process;
- All Sound Roots programmes and activities should be accessible and appropriate to the needs of different groups, with inclusion and diversity embedded into all planning and communications;
- Selection for Sound Roots opportunities should be on the basis of skills and potential, and active review of our processes and decisions is needed to identify and mitigate the risk of bias
- It is Sound Roots' own responsibility to develop a better understanding of the challenges and barriers to participation and engagement in its programmes and to take proactive steps to remove systemic inequalities.
- We must be transparent about inequalities within Sound Roots and our actions to address them.

Equality, diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of all individuals working or volunteering for and on behalf of Sound Roots and is fully supported and embraced by the Board of Trustees.

Updated August 2023

Meaningfulness

The EDI data collected in 2021 will form a baseline for measuring progress against this policy. We will seek to improve on this baseline year on year until such a time as each dedicated programme area and our staff and Trustees reflect the demographic makeup of England. In some cases, we may choose to surpass these targets where appropriate and impactful.

As a guide in 2021, approximate demographic headlines in England include:

- 15% black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups
- 50% female
- 20% neurodivergent or disabled
- 5% LGBTQI+
- 25% 0-20 / 20-40 / 40-60 / 60+

Definitions

Equality is about fairness and fair access and we believe in equality for all people. However, because society is not equal, we consider equity in our approach, focussing on support for those who need it most.

Diversity is the range of human differences and the inclusion and representation of people with different characteristics and individual traits. For us this includes protected characteristics as defined by the UK Equality Act 2010 and other factors such as socio-economic and geographical backgrounds, different perspectives and life experiences.

Inclusion means we are committed to ensuring everyone coming into contact with Sound Roots feels welcome, no one feels uncomfortable and everyone is able to thrive and contribute equally regardless of background or circumstance.

The Equality Act 2010 designates nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. Our work on equality, diversity, and inclusivity is not limited to these areas; in particular we note the issue of socio-economic inequality.

Sound Roots EDI Action Plan

Reviewed July 2023

Next review July 2025

Author: Chief Executive

Area	Background / notes	Personnel / partners	Timescale	Action required	Status
<p>Policy & Planning</p> <p>1a Sound Roots has an equal opportunities policy, which is endorsed at the highest level of the organisation. The policy outlines Sound Roots' commitment to equality and also its expectations that all staff will apply the principles in their own work.</p> <p>1b The policy commitment should be briefed to all existing (and potential) employees, volunteers and trustees and employees understand the practical implications of Sound Roots' policy and work within one month of start date.</p> <p>1c Progress on the action plan should be reviewed regularly and adjustments made to constantly improve practices</p>	<p>Policy was reviewed at the board meeting in October 2021 and in July 2023</p> <p>Sound Roots is a small organisation and key staff and Board are aware of our equal opportunities policy.</p> <p>Reviewed October 2021 and July 2023. Staff and Board aware of policy and action plan updates.</p>	<p>EDI Trustee Champion</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>Review every 2 years</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>4 times a year</p>	<p>Next review July 2025</p> <p>Brief any new freelance staff and volunteers about policy.</p> <p>Ensure plan is a standing agenda item for all board meetings</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>

<p>1d Publicity and promotional materials should promote positive images of the diversity of Sound Roots' programmes.</p>	<p>20% artist images used in promo material represent protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Marketing Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Included in website, print and email marketing.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>1e All recruitment, open calls for programmes and other application-based projects should reflect the EDI policy statement</p>	<p>Drafting of open calls should always include links to collect relevant benchmarking data</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Include EDI Policy alongside all such programme call outs</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>1f Undertake a review of folk promoters to understand the scale of EDI artistic considerations</p>	<p>Sound Roots has an EDI policy. We will discover how prominent this is across the sector.</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>March 2026</p>	<p>Carry out survey and consider next steps</p>	<p>Incomplete</p>
<p>Staff, Trustee and Volunteer Recruitment, Training and Development</p>					
<p>2a Job applications (including volunteers) should be encouraged from a culturally diverse range of applicants, with the opportunity for those who are currently under-represented to apply for jobs and promotion.</p>	<p>Diversity statement was updated in 2021 and 2023 and jobs are advertised through appropriate partners – ie Black Lives in Music and Unlimited</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ensure practice is maintained and that roles are given enough time for recruitment</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>2b Those involved in the recruiting process should be familiar with the policies, procedures and practices of equal opportunities in recruitment and selection – for example, through training or briefing sessions.</p>	<p>Check that each person involved in recruiting process is aware of equal ops practices and procedures. New members to be trained if necessary.</p>	<p>General Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Chief Executive to brief all staff involved with recruitment at the start of each round.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>2c Training, coaching and other forms of development should be provided to improve and enhance employee</p>	<p>Training needs are assessed at yearly performance reviews.</p>	<p>People Trustee Champion</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Include in all staff appraisals</p>	<p>Complete</p>

skills, both job related and also broader personal development.	Coaching and training agreed and arranged.				
2d Working arrangements should be flexible to meet the needs of, for example, people with domestic responsibilities or people with particular religious or cultural needs.	Flexible working arrangements are available within the constraints of the main activities of the company. These are agreed on a case by case basis to meet the needs of the charity.	General Manager	Ongoing	Weekly team meeting is the only fixed core activity. Staff can work whatever other hours suit in consultation with line manager.	Complete
2e Equal opportunities monitoring information is sought from all candidates during the recruitment process	This will ensure we have data to properly monitor whether our applications are reaching diverse communities.	General Manager	Ongoing	Ensure this is monitored.	Complete
People we work with and for (artists, music industry representatives and audiences)					
3a Suppliers, contractors and service users should know that Sound Roots has an equal opportunities policy and that the organisation prefers to deal with suppliers who also promote equality of opportunity	Most partner organisations have their own EDI policies but some do not. Some partner organisations consulted.	General Manager	Ongoing	Ensure that partner organisations are aware of direct effect EDI policy may have on their services.	Complete
3b Sound Roots should build relationships with minority or under-represented groups to encourage their participation in activities as, for example artists, audiences or delegates. These relationships may be built, for instance, advertising	This is an ongoing part of Sound Roots' work and is being addressed through both programming, marketing and talent development in a variety of projects. Particular focus is needed for artists with disabilities.	Chief Executive	Ongoing	Actively state we are recruiting from these groups in all advertising. Continue and build on our partnerships with groups	Complete

with partner organisations and taking appropriate positive action.					
3c Sound Roots should develop positive action initiatives for under-represented groups by actively promoting training opportunities and work experience and by encouraging participation in its activities by groups not traditionally involved.	Build on our partnerships with relevant stakeholders and organisations. Continue to publish annual EDI data.	Chief Executive	Ongoing	Adopt an approach of 'If you can't see it, you can't be it.'	Complete
3d Sound Roots should be committed to equality of access to its information and services and actively work to ensure this is implemented practically across all areas of its work.	All digital content should meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. We will use closed captioning for online presentations. Live event spaces should adhere to Access if Everything Venue Access Info Guide	Chief Executive	January 2024	Work with web developers and partner venues to ensure access recommendations are met	Incomplete
3e All programmes we deliver should reflect the KPIs in the EDI policy statement	All staff should be aware of the statement and ensure it is considered in our programmes	General Manager	Ongoing	Review programmes at board meetings	Complete
3f We will phase out working with live venues that are not accessible	Develop venue access policy	Artistic Director	March 2026	Reviewed annually at the AGM	Incomplete