

## EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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### 1. Purpose

**MMF aims to be ‘an inclusive cultural organisation – not just in what we say, but also in what we do.’**

Merton Music Foundation celebrates and values the diverse cultures, communities and environments that make up our society and the multitude of dimensions which characterise our diversity, including but not limited to race, additional needs, disability, sexuality, gender, age, socio-economic background, religion and other beliefs.

Merton Music Foundation’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy outlines the commitments and steps we have taken on the journey to becoming a more equitable and inclusive cultural organisation.

We acknowledge that best practice in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is constantly evolving. It is our intention for this document to be routinely updated and evolve to reflect current developments. The most recent update of this document took place on: **29 June 2022**

**A Glossary of terms is included in Section 8 for the reader’s reference**

### 2. Responsible Persons

The person with overall responsibility for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is: **Elisabeth Wigley**, Chief Executive

The person with day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is: **Hailey Willington**, Youth Engagement Diversity and Inclusion Leader

### 3. Reporting

Concerns or suggestions relating to MMF's Diversity & Inclusion practices should be reported in the first instance to the Youth Engagement, Diversity & Inclusion (YED&I) Leader.

E: [inclusion@mmf.org.uk](mailto:inclusion@mmf.org.uk)

Concerns about the YED&I Leader's approach to Diversity & Inclusion should be raised with the Chief Executive, Elisabeth Wigley.

E: [Elisabeth.wigley@mmf.org.uk](mailto:Elisabeth.wigley@mmf.org.uk)

### 4. Processes and Practices

Equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice are values that are fundamental to MMF. It is our ambition that these values are placed at the core of our organisational policies, processes, practices, and culture. Part of this process is achieved by engaging with external organisations to help guide us on our journey. MMF is proud to be a partner of and signatory of the Black Lives in Music Charter. We are also members of the London Borough of Merton Education Black Lives Matter and Equalities Forum. Our EDI goals are additionally achieved by examining, interrogating, and reflecting on our current practices.

Formal reflection, planning and monitoring progress are undertaken by the following groups at minimum intervals:

- Trustees Meetings– once a term
- Senior Leadership Team– twice a term
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group– once a term
- Youth Engagement Diversity and Inclusion Leader and Black Lives in Music meeting- twice a term

MMF publicly publishes its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and Self Evaluation and Inclusion plans on its website. These plans work alongside the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to outline the actions we are taking on our journey to becoming a more equitable and inclusive cultural organisation. We commit to setting targets for ourselves around our EDI work. The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan are updated termly, and the Diversity and Inclusion Policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

We believe that inclusive cultural organisations are populated by inclusive individuals. To achieve this, we commit to formal inclusive training and reflection with MMF's Core team a minimum of three times per year. It is the responsibility of all team members to behave in a way that advances the organisation's aim of being an inclusive organisation.

We commit to embedding EDI into our organisation's pedagogy and to an inclusive approach to teaching and learning. This is done through the publication and distribution of inclusive resources and training which are accessible to all team members. These include but are not limited to:

- MMF's Office Inclusion Library
- Music Mark's *Talk Into Action, Read Watch Follow List*
- MMF's publication, *The Inclusive Music Lesson: A Pocket Guide*

We build a reflection on inclusion into our quality assurance processes. From September 2022 every MMF tutor observation will include reflection on their next steps to more inclusive music-making.

We commit to listening to different voices and perspectives, especially regarding sensitive issues. We understand that intersectionality is key and commit to being an actively anti-racist and anti-discrimination organisation.

Young People are at the heart of what we do. As an organization, we recognise the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Young People's perspective is important to us and as an organization, we aim to integrate Young People into meaningful decision-making through our Youth Voice Programme. Young People are represented in MMF's organizational structure through the MMF Youth Council which meets once a month during term time.

We commit to a reflective practice acknowledging that EDI work is never finished. We recognise that Inclusion is a state of mind and requires regular reflection. We recognise that the steps we are currently taking are just one stage of our journey.

## **5. Programming**

We believe in music for all. We commit to delivering musical activity that covers a diverse range of genres and repertoire. In line with the Foundation's values, we are constantly looking for areas in which we can aim for better, improve our programming, challenge ourselves and bravely explore new areas of musical activity. We recognise that there are many ways to approach musical learning.

We believe that we must acknowledge the heritage and creative contributions to all genres of music by musicians from marginalised groups. We celebrate and promote this repertoire in our programming and commit to aiming for a decolonial approach to the music we teach and share. MMF monitors all ensemble repertoire and encourages the programming of music from non-western cultures, and marginalised groups not limited to Women and Non-binary composers, composers of the Global Majority, and Young People. A report on the diversity of ensemble programming is published at the end of the summer term each academic year.

We commit to dismantling barriers young people face when engaging with music education. A key aspect of achieving this is through collecting demographic data on our participants so we can ensure participants are reflective of all the local communities we serve. MMF reviews this data annually where it feeds into the Foundation's EDI Action Plan to target communities and groups that we are failing to reach.

We understand that travel to musical activity can be a barrier to engagement. To counter this, MMF is proud to offer music lessons in schools throughout the borough as well as four after-school Music Centers spread out across the borough.

We acknowledge that cost can be a significant barrier to accessing music education. To provide equitable opportunities for participants, MMF offers flexible payment plans, a variety of lesson lengths and group lessons as well as means-tested financial assistance. During the 2021-2022 school year we engaged with 98 students as part of our scholarship and trust funds, subsidising 1:1 and small group activity to a value of £26,837. MMF also works closely with London Music Fund to provide access to musical learning for students for whom this would otherwise not be possible.

We believe in the social model of disability. Disability is not about an individual's body but is instead about the physical, attitudinal and societal barriers which affect their ability to participate in daily life and activities on an equal level with others. We work to break down those barriers and create opportunities for all people to engage with music no matter what their disability or additional needs.

We are proud to offer activities at our Music Centres in South Wimbledon, at Crown Lane and at Soundwave which have step-free access and facilities for those with additional or mobility requirements.

## 6. Recruitment and Workforce

We believe that representation matters and actively seek to diversify our workforce at all levels of the foundation. We have committed to increasing trustees from marginalised groups by 20% in 2022. We are taking this step to bring a significant presence of individuals from marginalised groups, at the board level, proportionally in line with the demographic of our community.

We recognise the business case for a diverse community of staff, who value one another and realise the contribution they can make to achieving MMF's vision. We commit to actively recruiting people who are representative of the communities we serve. We monitor our progress toward a workforce that is representative of our community through the annual Workforce Diversity Survey and publish findings in the annual Workforce Diversity Report.

We commit to developing inclusive recruitment. Redacted applications and Equal Opportunities Monitoring is used for all core and governance roles. We continue to adapt tutor recruitment and improve the inclusivity of our processes in 2022-2023.

We commit to supporting our workforce as an inclusive employer. We offer support and reasonable adjustments at every stage of the applicant and employee experience. We believe that everyone deserves to feel welcome and we continue to take active steps to ensure that our workforce and those we support through our work are included and respected, whatever their gender, ethnicity, race, religious and political beliefs, education, socioeconomic background, disability, sexual orientation and geographic location. This is measured at a core team level through termly team satisfaction, engagement and belonging surveys which are reflected on as a standing agenda item at team meetings. Satisfaction and support are measured in the tutor team as part of the Workforce Diversity Survey which happens annually.

We believe that everyone should feel welcome and comfortable when engaging with MMF. We aim for a culture in which everyone can thrive and contribute equally, regardless of personal and/or social background and lived experience. We will remain proactive in taking steps to ensure inclusion and engagement for all the people who work for and with us. We are proud signatories of the MU-ISM Antibullying policy.

## 7. Communications

We commit to amplifying voices that are under-represented in the sector through our social media, external communications, and partnerships.

We commit to using inclusive person-centred language and imagery in our comms and marketing. The imagery on the home page of our website is updated termly and a wide variety of ages, instruments, ethnicities, and genders are represented.

We commit to accessible communications (website, marketing materials etc.) Social media posts are included with emojis of a wide variety of skin tones and images include descriptive text. All promotional videos are shared with subtitles and voiceovers whenever possible. We are working toward making our website fully accessible by August 2024. All promotional material is printed in size 12 text or larger.

## 8. Glossary

**Ally**- A person of one social identity group who stands up in support of members of another social identity group and who is willing to act to help end discrimination, amplify unheard voices, and protect the rights of all.

**Anti-discrimination** – Opposition to the unjust and prejudicial treatment of marginalised people.

**Anti-racism** –Refusing to turn a blind eye when witnessing discrimination. Taking an active stance in daily life to create a fairer society for marginalised people.

**Cultural Organisation** – An organisation with a primary mission and purpose that is cultural in nature. This may include but is not limited to museums, orchestras, botanical centres, zoos or performing arts organisations.

**Diversity** – Recognising, respecting, and valuing the differences between people and groups of people which make them unique.

**Equality** – The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.

**Equity** – Creating fairness by providing people with individualised resources, treatment, and support to compensate for differences between individuals. Equity acknowledges the privilege afforded to certain individuals and attempts to level the playing field.

**Global Majority** – A collective term which refers to people who identify as Black, Brown, African, Caribbean, Asian, Arab or Dual Heritage, indigenous to the global south, racialised as ethnic minorities. These groups combined represent approximately 80% of the global population and are therefore the global majority.

**Inclusion** – The practice of removing barriers, taking steps to create equality, harness diversity and produce safe, welcoming communities and cultures that encourage innovative and fresh ways of thinking.

**Intersectionality** – Originated by feminist theorist Kimberle Crenshaw, the complex interaction between different stigmatized identities such as race, class and gender. This mindset acknowledges that these diversity dimensions often overlap and create unique dynamics.

**Marginalised Groups** – Those who are treated as insignificant or peripheral and excluded from mainstream social, economic, education and/or cultural life. Examples of marginalised populations include but are not limited to groups excluded due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or physical ability.

**Non-binary** – An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

**Pedagogy** –The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.

**Socio-economic** – Relating to or concerned with the interaction of social and economic factors.

**Social Justice** – The view that everyone deserves equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities.

**Social Model of Disability** – A way of viewing the world established in the 1970s and developed by people with disability. The social model of disability says that people are disabled by barriers in society, such as buildings not having a ramp or accessible toilets, or people’s attitudes, like assuming people with disability can’t do certain things, not by their bodies.

**Youth Voice** –The active, distinct, and concentrated ways young people represent themselves throughout society.