Fringe By The Sea
Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy
May 2026

We present a 10-day multi-arts programme in August each year, strongly established in our local town, in Scotland and with global dialogue. Equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) are core values underpinning Fringe By The Sea as we aim to create connections in a safe and respectful environment for all, ensuring fair representation in programming, staffing and welcoming a diverse audience to connect and embrace creative arts.

We aim to prioritise EDI through our cultural presentations, performances, our employment, and staff management. We recognise and acknowledge our obligations as both employer and service provider under the Equality Act 2010 to be welcoming and accessible to all who engage with us, including those with protected characteristics. Fringe by the Sea is committed to welcoming a diverse audience and to removing barriers that may prevent individuals from accessing and participating in live performing arts.

This policy aligns with:

- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)** (as a guiding framework)
- **Scottish Specific Duties**
- **UNCRC Incorporation (Scotland)**
- **Human Rights Act 1998**
- **Fair Work First principles**
- **Living Wage accreditation**

Although Fringe By The Sea is not a public body, we voluntarily align with these standards to ensure best practice.

Our approach to EDI is to embed it through all aspects of our delivery with due regard including our programming, creative development, staffing and volunteering programmes and management.

To ensure clarity and shared understanding:

- **Equality** – ensuring everyone has equal access, rights and opportunities.
- **Diversity** – recognising and valuing differences in people's backgrounds, identities and experiences.

- **Inclusion** – creating environments where everyone feels respected, supported and able to participate fully.
- **Protected characteristics** include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- **Direct and indirect discrimination**, **harassment**, and **victimisation** are unlawful under the Equality Act.

Based on the demographics and information of our local area of East Lothian we have identified specific groups on which to focus. These are:

- Children and young people, particularly those living in poverty (East Lothian's child poverty rate is increasing, according to figures from Joseph Rowntree Foundation). Situated in a semi-rural area, the provisions within North Berwick for young people are minimal. The festival is held within The Lodge Grounds which is traditionally a space where young people congregate. We aim to ensure that young people feel welcomed at the biggest annual arts festival in the area. Creating a family-friendly event with free access to the main hub allows access to all families, regardless of background.
- Fringe by the Sea is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of adults by ensuring equitable access to inclusive spaces, resources, and activities that promote relaxation and social connection. The creative arts are proven to deliver a number of benefits to this group.
- We, as a festival, recognise the significant elderly population within East Lothian and are committed to ensuring access and inclusive participation for older adults, particularly those living with dementia. Through the provision of supportive environments, accessible facilities, free carer tickets and appropriate wellbeing initiatives, we will enable more participation for this identified group.
- We are committed to building on our use of the social model of disability. We recognise that not all disabilities are visible and it is often societal stigma that impairs participation rather than ability. We aim to challenge this stigma and remove barriers around disability to ensure that all are welcome to participate in the festival.

<u>Our activity</u>

- From planning and programming to production and delivery, we proactively consider whether we are open to and accessible to as wide an audience as possible at every stage of development.

- Our programming ambitions are to reflect the growing diversity of our local population and to support the work of creative artists from as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible.

- We welcome submissions and applications from varied ethnicities and marginalised voices, and aim for a 50/50 gender balance across our programming and activities.

- We welcome individuals, organisations and communities from all backgrounds and we are committed to offering equal opportunities through our employment and volunteering programmes as well as through all procurement and engagement.

- We are a Living Wage employer and work to advised industry rates for all those working in the creative arts.

- Through our work with the local community in driving forward participatory projects, we aim to reflect the diversity of our community and engage potential participants who may not have the opportunity to experience creative arts. In particular we seek out participants who fall under the categories aligned to characteristics outlined above.

Accessibility

We commit to:

- Providing accessible venues, routes and facilities.
- Offering reasonable adjustments for staff, volunteers, artists and audiences.
- Ensuring accessible communication formats (e.g., captions, BSL where possible, large print, easy-read).
- Providing free carer/PA tickets.

Inclusive Employment & Volunteering

We ensure:

- Transparent and inclusive recruitment processes.
- Adjustments for disabled applicants.
- Flexible working where possible.
- Zero tolerance for discrimination or harassment.
- Training for staff and volunteers on EDI principles.
- Fair pay and adherence to Living Wage and industry standards.

Anti-Racism & Anti-Discrimination

Fringe By The Sea is committed to:

- Challenging racism, discrimination and prejudice in all forms.
- Creating a culture where discriminatory behaviour is addressed immediately.
- Ensuring staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities to uphold this policy.
- Promoting intersectional understanding across all protected characteristics.

Reporting Concerns

We encourage anyone involved with the festival to raise concerns about discrimination, exclusion or unfair treatment by contacting the following.

Concerns can be raised with:

- Festival Director
- General Manager
- EDI Lead (where applicable)

All concerns will be handled sensitively, fairly and without victimisation.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or organisational needs change. Updates will be communicated to all staff, volunteers and partners.

Roles & Contacts

General Manager – oversees day-to-day delivery and compliance:
Jackie Shuttleworth
Email: info@fringebythesea.com

Festival Director- ensures implementation across operations:
Rory Steel
Email: rory@fringebythesea.com

Signed by Festival Director Rory Steel



Date: 14/05/26