Diversity and inclusion

Background

This resource was prepared by Diversity Arts Australia for the City of Sydney as part of the Creative Impact webinar series, July 2025. It provides artists, creative workers and organisations with a summary guide to good practice standards for the topic – a starting point on the creative leadership journey.

It supports all those working in cultural and creative fields, including festivals, events and knowledge exchange. It aims to address cultural and linguistic diversity and JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) considerations in their project proposals and business planning. Diversity Arts Australia is the national voice for ethno-cultural and migrant racial equity in the arts and creative industries. This summary guide draws on the following resources:

- Fair Play Equity Principles
- Equity and Inclusion Checklist
- Creative Equity Toolkit – Resources for cultural diversity in the arts
- Anti-Racism & The Arts Resource Hub

A note on language

We've used the terms 'culturally underrepresented groups' and 'culturally diverse groups' interchangeably. These refer to people from underrepresented culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and/or people from culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds. We also use the terms 'organisation', 'business' and 'company' interchangeably.

Organisational culture

- Does your organisation, business or company have Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) and antiracism policies and strategies in relation to cultural diversity (for example, cultural diversity action plan, anti-racism statement, goals)? If so, how does your organisation measure the effectiveness of these strategies and policies?
- Are your board, management, executive and team representative of the communities in the your local government area? What percentage identify as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) or culturally and racially marginalised (CARM)?
- Do you define and measure cultural diversity within your organisation?
- Has your organisation provided ongoing mandatory training on cultural diversity, anti-racism, or cultural safety for staff, leadership, and board members in the past 3 years?

Did you know that Diversity Arts provides a free training module on the antiracism.art website and has also developed a self-paced training program to support organisations like yours? You can learn more about our training programs.

Programming and commissioning

- Do you involve culturally diverse individuals in programming decisions? If you're a small or solo business, do you seek advice from people from culturally underrepresented groups?
- Do you review how cultural assumptions or barriers might influence programming or commissioning decisions? For example, do you use a self-reflection tool for assessors and programmers?
- Does your organisation have dedicated activities to support cultural diversity, such as:
  - professional development or mentoring for culturally diverse creatives?
  - a network or brokerage service for culturally diverse creatives?
  - programs in languages other than English?
- Do you collect and analyse data on the cultural diversity of program participants, collaborators and beneficiaries?
- Are culturally diverse individuals represented in both decision-making and content creation roles (for example, curators, judges, facilitators, directors)?

Recruitment and employment

- Do you have an inclusive recruitment policy and strategy that includes culturally diverse people?
- Do selection panels include individuals from culturally underrepresented groups?
- Do you advertise job opportunities to culturally underrepresented communities and channels? For example, ethnic media.
- Do culturally diverse staff have meaningful pathways to leadership and decision-making positions?
- Do you track and evaluate cultural diversity in recruitment outcomes and staff retention?

Audience development and marketing

- Do you engage culturally diverse groups through meetings, consultations or focus groups, including input from cultural advisers, and community partners and members?
- Do you develop marketing campaigns, analyse social media and use community language newspapers and radio programs to reach culturally diverse audiences?
- Do you produce marketing materials in community languages, Easy Read and other accessible formats?
- Do you collect feedback and measure participation rates of culturally diverse communities in your events, programs and services?
- Do you collaborate with communities to develop engagement strategies and build meaningful and long-term relationships?

Consultation and collaboration

- Do you have a strategy for partnerships with local organisations representing culturally diverse communities?
- Have you met with culturally underrepresented community leaders to assess their perception of your organisation/business?
- Have you identified individuals with lived experience to help communicate with diverse communities?
- Do you co-design partnership goals and deliverables with your collaborators?
- Are culturally diverse partners compensated fairly for their time and expertise?

Industry resources

- Creative Equity Toolkit – Resources for cultural diversity in the arts

Imagine case study

- The Imagine Project: 21 Trailblazing Case Studies For Racial Equity In The Arts · Diversity Arts Australia
- Question your cultural context
- Why cultural appropriation isn't cool
- Ditch consultation for collaboration

Further resources

Organisational culture

- Infographic: COUNTING CULTURE: What to ask to measure cultural diversity in your organisation (University of Sydney Business School, Diversity Council Australia)
- Report: COUNTING CULTURE: Towards a Standardised Approach to Measuring and Reporting on Workforce Cultural Diversity in Australia (University of Sydney Business School, Diversity Council Australia)
- Toolkit: Deeper Anti-Racist Organizational Change: More Tools & Resources (CommunityWise Resource Center)
- Toolkit: Managing Cultural Diversity Training Program (Australian Multicultural Foundation, Robert Bean Consulting)
- Article: Why do we recommend asking about 'Identity'? (CultureCounts)

Programming and commissioning

- Film/case study: WILAM BIIK Curator walkthrough (TarraWarra Museum of Art)
- Article: Excerpt from The Relationship is the Project (Jade Lillie)
- Case study: First Nations First — Best Practices for Creating with Community (Genevieve Grieves)
- Case study: How to develop diverse leadership – Culture Change Guide (Arts Council England)

- Toolkit: Aesthetic Perspectives: Attributes of Excellence in Arts for Change (Americans for the Arts)

Recruitment and employment

- Article: Mitigating bias in performance management (Nehal Nangia & Kathi Enderes)
- Checklist: Inclusive Recruitment Checklist (Renaisi)
- Report: Creative Majority (Natalie Wreyford, Dave O'Brien, Tamsyn Dent)
- Article: The danger of unconscious bias in HR decisions and how to overcome it (Rolf Howard)
- Infographic: Inclusive Recruitment At Work (Diversity Council Australia)

Audience development and marketing

- Article: Donna Walker-Khune Lecture Transcript (Donna Walker-Kune and Fotis Kapetopoulous)
- Case study: Melbourne Rebetiko Festival (Fotis Kapetopoulous)
- Toolkit: Who's Coming? Respectful Audience Surveying Toolkit (Of/By/For All)
- Research: Leading Change: Audience Diversification in the Arts (Deakin University)
- Article: What is community engaged practice? (Jade Lillie)

Consultation and collaboration

- Toolkit: Partner Power – A Technique for Building Authentic Community Partnerships (Of/By/For All)
- Case study: Counting and Cracking: the story behind Belvoir Street theatre's most ambitious play to date (Steve Dow)
- Case study: Co-creating an accessible arena for visually impaired creatives (Wennie Yang)
- Article: The arts can help us celebrate diversity but must avoid tokenism (Joselle Ntumba and Beulah Ezeugo)
- Article: Cultural Authority and Consultation (Wesley Shaw)

City of Sydney resources

- Understand and connect with our diverse communities