



Improving Diversity and Inclusion within UK theatres

SOLT and UK Theatre Initiatives

November 2021

Introduction

Over the last few years, SOLT and UK Theatre have been working to improve representation within the performing arts sector, by focussing on diversifying the workforce. With the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 as a starting point, this work has targeted many currently under-represented demographics, including people from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse communities, d/Deaf and disabled communities, and people from low socio-economic backgrounds.

As an organisation and as a sector we are going on a journey of change, and we see these projects as part of an ongoing process. This work involves a constant review of progress, a need to learn from successes and mistakes, a desire to share learnings, and the setting of new goals to continuously improve.

All the work outlined in this document has been initiated, implemented, commissioned and funded by SOLT and UK Theatre, unless otherwise stated.

Our work falls into five areas:

- Governance and Strategy
- SOLT and UK Theatre's internal policies and procedures
- Organisational culture initiatives for the sector
- Training and events for the sector
- Workforce development initiatives for the sector

For detailed information about UK Theatre's plans for the next eighteen months, please see our interim [Business Plan](#).

Overview

N.B. Some boxes contain a hyperlink. Please click on it to be taken to the relevant website or document.

Governance and Strategy	Internal Policies and Procedures	Organisational Culture	Training and Events	Workforce Development
Establish KPIs for the sector	Update Cultural Statement	Safeguarding consultation	Review Dignity at Work training courses	Mentoring
Safeguarding working group	Anti-Racism work for SOLT and UK Theatre	Best practice and policy library	Creating Your Racism Defence Strategy (webinar)	Inclusive Recruitment Guide
Demographic monitoring	Guardians Scheme	10 principles	Future Theatre webinar with Ramps on the Moon	Theatre Casting Toolkit
Working Group to identify future Board Members	Unconscious Bias training	Remote Working Toolkit (with PIPA)	Removing Barriers disability equality webinars	Get into Theatre
Business Plan	Access audit	Anti-Racism Touring Rider consultation	Speak Listen Reset Heal conference	Stage One's Bridge the Gap programme
Inclusion and Anti-Racism working group		D&I resource library		
Revision of SOLT UKT Board Articles		Commitment to Seven Inclusive Principles		
		Excellence in Inclusivity UK Theatre Award		

Key

- Planned
- Current
- Completed

Governance and Strategy

Initiative	Description	Link	Key dates
Establish KPIs for the sector	We will establish KPIs for measuring, monitoring and reporting on changes in behaviour in the sector.		Target date December 2021
Safeguarding Working Group	This steering group is made up of representatives from across the industry who advise and guide SOLT and UK Theatre on work in this area.	Read the working group's Terms of Reference	Formed July 2021, meets quarterly
Working Group to identify future Board Members	We have created a working group to address the lack of representation on the UK Theatre Board. The working group will recruit new Board Members, using Board member skills and demographic data to identify gaps.		Formed April 2021
Demographic Monitoring	We are implementing annual demographic audits of the SOLT and UK Theatre Boards, memberships and working groups. We will publish the results on our websites.	See the 2021 audit results	UK Theatre data published August 2021, updated annually
Revision of SOLT and UK Theatre Articles of Association	Revisions to UK Theatre and SOLT's legal Articles of Association have been made to make the structure of the Boards and election processes more inclusive, giving us the flexibility to improve diverse representation at the 2021 elections.		Revisions approved June and July 2021
UK Theatre's Business Plan	Our business plan covers the next 12-18 months, encompassing the period up to the sector re-opening and beyond. It includes a dedicated diversity and inclusion section, and diversity and inclusion considerations are integrated throughout.	Read the business plan	Published May 2021
Transparency of UK Theatre Board elections process	Although only members can vote in the UK Theatre Board elections, to encourage a wider range of applicants to become members and to put themselves forward for the Board we will communicate our election processes to the sector more transparently. We have created an information sheet for elections to assist with this.	Read the information sheet	Published September 2020, updated annually prior to each election.
Inclusion and Anti-Racism Working Group	This steering group is made up of representatives from across the industry who advise and guide SOLT and UK Theatre on work in this area.	Read the working group's Terms of Reference	Formed July 2020, meets quarterly

Internal Policies and Procedures

Initiative	Description	Link	Key dates
Cultural Statement	A document that sets out SOLT and UK Theatre's values and aspiration to create a respectful and inclusive workplace. It will be updated during 2021.	Download the cultural statement	Target update date January 2022 Published September 2018
Anti-Racism work for SOLT and UK Theatre	Following Unconscious Bias training (see below) for the organisations, we will be commissioning a consultant to work with us on developing anti-racist practices.		Target date November 2021
Unconscious Bias Training for Staff and Boards	All members of SOLT and UK Theatre's staff and both SOLT and UK Theatre Boards received unconscious bias training facilitated by Tonic Theatre . We will be revisiting the outcomes of that training to inform the creation of an internal anti-racism action plan.		Training took place October 2020
Guardians Scheme	SOLT and UK Theatre's Guardians offer confidential advice and signposting for staff members. They actively listen and support and act with discretion and empathy. The programme follows the Old Vic's lead and guidance.	Visit the Old Vic's Guardians webpage	Launched January 2019
Access Audit	The SOLT and UK Theatre offices underwent an access audit in December 2018. Since that time we have been working through the list of recommendations to make our building accessible and welcoming to everyone.		Audit took place December 2018, implementation of recommendations ongoing.

Organisational Culture

Initiative	Description	Link	Key dates
Inclusion and anti-racism best practice and policy library	We will gather example policies, procedures and initiatives from our membership relating to inclusion and anti-racism to create a resource library.		Target launch date November 2021
Safeguarding consultation	We will consult with members on their priorities for sector support in relation to bullying, harassment and discrimination, and current levels of understanding of the Equality Act 2010 to assess what type of support might be required to improve best practice.		Target date November 2021
10 principles to address bullying, harassment and discrimination	A shared vision for the sector to promote workplace environments that are positive and supportive, and that everyone – employers, employees, workers, freelancers, volunteers, directors and trustees – should adhere to. The 10 principles have been updated from those originally produced as part of the Safer and More Supportive Working Practices Handbook .	View and download the 10 Principles	Launched November 2021
Anti-Racism Touring Rider member consultation	The Anti-Racism Touring Rider and accompanying checklist is a useful contribution to the discussions around making our venues safer, more inclusive and more welcoming. We have formed a working group to help us consult with our membership on future developments of the Rider and checklist as a practical anti-racist resource for venues, touring companies and producers, and work with the Touring Rider committee on this.	Read the working group's Terms of Reference	September 2021 – January 2022
Remote Working Toolkit (with PiPA)	We commissioned People and Carers In Performing Arts (PiPA) to research and write a suite of practical resources for theatre employers on remote and mixed model working, to build more inclusive workplace environments.	Visit the Remote Working Toolkit	Published July 2021
Commitment to the Seven Inclusive Principles	We continue to endorse the Seven Principles for an Inclusive Recovery in Arts and Culture and encourage our members to commit.	Read the Seven Inclusive Principles	Re-endorsed May 2021, launched September 2020
Diversity and inclusion resource library	A directory of resources and performing arts organisations focussed on improving representation within the theatre sector.	Visit the resource	Launched June 2020, updated regularly
UK Theatre Award for Excellence in Inclusivity	This Award recognises the promotion of inclusivity within programming, workforce or audience and community engagement.	Visit the UK Theatre Awards webpage	Introduced for the 2019 Awards

Training and Events

Initiative	Description	Link	Key dates
Review UK Theatre Awards judging process and criteria	We will review and clarify judging process and criteria for the 2023 UK Theatre Awards, referencing socio-cultural lens and global (decolonised) theatrical cannon.		Target completion date 2023 UK Theatre Awards
Review Dignity at Work training courses	We will review the suite of Dignity at Work training courses delivered in 2018 and assess them against members' needs in relation to updating their knowledge on employers' legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.	Read about the 2018 courses	Target review date November 2021
Creating Your Racism Defence Strategy (webinar)	Delivered by Inc Arts and Chanua Health, this webinar – part of our series of mental health and wellbeing webinars on www.theatremeansbusiness.info – explores the effects of racism and strategies to mitigate/support people who experience both direct and systemic racism.	Watch the webinar recording	Delivered May 2021, captioned recording available to view until November 2021
Speak Listen Reset Heal conference	An anti-racism conference for the UK's theatre and dance sectors, presented by Inc Arts UK in partnership with SOLT and UK Theatre. The conference took place in October and November 2020.	Read the conference evaluation report	Evaluation report published May 2021.
Future Theatre: New Ways of Storytelling with Ramps on the Moon webinar	Ramps on the Moon discusses with UK Theatre their vision of enriching stories by normalising the presence of d/Deaf and disabled people on and off stage. The conversation covers the reality of the challenges faced, the delights of making work with access features at its heart and how their learning can support the theatre industry.	Watch the webinar recording	Delivered July 2020, recording available to view
Removing Barriers: A Practical Introduction to Disability Equality webinars	Four bitesize webinars to equip you to ensure that disabled and d/Deaf people are a part of your organisation making exciting contributions to the work you programme and produce. The series consists of the following courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing Barriers for d/Deaf and Disabled People in Theatre • Removing Barriers: Your Building • Removing Barriers: Marketing and Communications • Removing Barriers: Employment 	Watch the webinar recordings	Delivered May/June 2020, recordings available to view

Workforce Development

Initiative	Description	Link	Key dates
Mentoring	Investigate the development of a pilot mentoring programme, focussing on under-represented groups.		Target date December 2021
Inclusive Recruitment Guide	A practical guide to the whole recruitment process, assisting theatre employers in embedding inclusivity and widening their talent pools.	Download the guide	Launched March 2021, updated regularly
Theatre Casting Toolkit	A practical resource for anyone involved in the casting process. Its aim is to assist casting professionals to put a broader range of actors on our stages and in our rehearsal rooms. The Theatre Casting Toolkit was commissioned by SOLT and UK Theatre and developed by Tonic Theatre .	Visit the website	Launched October 2019
Get into Theatre	A theatre careers website providing information and advice on training, funding, experiences and theatre job profiles. A key focus is on outreach targeting young people from under-represented communities. SOLT and UK Theatre are one of Get into Theatre's three strategic partners and provided funding during its inaugural year.	Visit the website	Launched May 2019
Stage Sight support	Stage Sight is a collaborative network working to create an off-stage workforce that is reflective of UK society. SOLT and UK Theatre provided strategic and administrative support to Stage Sight in the lead up to its launch and managed its day-to-day running during the inaugural year.	Visit the website	Launched March 2019, provided support for first year 2018-19
Stage One's Bridge the Gap programme	A comprehensive programme to support under-represented producers in the commercial theatre industry. The programme includes a year long producer programme, events and workshops, placements, and a bursary grant.	Visit the website	Launched August 2018, new cohort annually

Further Reading

The following blog posts were commissioned by UK Theatre and all are available to view at uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/.

- Bridge the Gap - giving aspiring producers from under-represented backgrounds opportunities in commercial theatre: Siobhan Walsh, Outreach Leader, Stage One: <https://uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/bridge-the-gap-increasing-the-representation-of-producers-in-commercial-theatre/>
- 'Lightning talk' at Theatre Touring Symposium 2019: Amanda Huxtable, Artistic Director of eclipse theatre: <https://uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/lightning-talk-amanda-huxtable-at-the-theatre-touring-symposium-2019/>
- Widening the Talent Pipeline Across the UK: Simon Dancy, CEO of Creative & Cultural Skills: <https://uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/widening-the-talent-pipeline-across-the-uk/>
- Diversifying theatre leadership in Yorkshire: Robin Hawkes, Executive Director and Joint CEO of Leeds Playhouse: <https://uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/diversifying-theatre-leadership-in-yorkshire/>
- 20 Stories High - Developing a More Diverse Generation of Theatre Makers: Julia Samuels, Co-Artistic Director of 20 Stories High: <https://uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/developing-a-more-diverse-generation-of-theatre-makers-20-stories-high/>
- UK Theatre Award Winner: Promotion of Diversity: Justine Themen, Associate Director, Belgrade Theatre: <https://uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/uk-theatre-award-winners-promotion-of-diversity/>
- Reasonable Adjustments: Andrew Miller, the Government's first Disability Champion for the Arts & Cultural Sector:
 - <https://uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/unreasonable-adjustments-part-one/>
 - <https://uktheatre.org/who-we-are-what-we-do/uk-theatre-blog/unreasonable-adjustments-part-two/>