

**SKIMSTONE
PERFORMANCE COMPANY Ltd.**

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Skimstone Performance Company Ltd.
67/69 Westgate Road
Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE

Tel:

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Introduction

Skimstone considers it a fundamental responsibility to exercise equality of opportunity in all areas of its activities including:

- employment practice
- company structure, organization and development
- artistic processes and programming
- marketing and publicity
- training and professional development

The need for a policy

There is certain injustice and inequality in society which can prevent certain groups and individuals from exercising their full rights and entitlements. In order to redress this imbalance of opportunity and to make a progress towards a more inclusive, just and socially aware society that celebrates the skills and achievements of all, Skimstone needs a statement of opportunity, and a policy for guidance.

Skimstone has a fundamental aim of the empowerment of all people who work with and become involved in the company and this has a direct influence on the direction and management of arts activities. This aim must be guided by adherence to equality of opportunity.

As an experimental performance company with a proven track record of working with a diverse range of people in an equally diverse range of settings, Skimstone is well placed to promote good practice and has a responsibility to ensure that its activities follow principles of equality of opportunity. A policy is needed for the encouragement of company members and others involved in Skimstone's activities.

As a company with charitable aims, Skimstone has a responsibility to operate in a principled way and in accordance with the requirements of funding bodies. There is also a framework of legislation which must be adhered to: Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts 1944 and 1958, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. (In this respect Skimstone recognises that the relevant Acts provide only a minimal level of protection)

Equal Opportunities policy and practice are a means of making the most effective use of human resources.

What it means

Skimstone will provide the necessary encouragement and guidance to all members of the company and everyone that becomes involved in its activities so that they are able to:

- take practical steps to translate the policy into practice
- monitor and review the policy and its implementation on an annual basis and wherever relevant enforce the policy through disciplinary and grievance procedures where necessary.

The Policy

Skimstone is opposed to discrimination on any grounds and recognises the need to take positive action to eliminate discrimination and disadvantage.

Employment Practice

No company member, potential company member or any other person who becomes involved in Skimstone's activities shall receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of: gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age, care of dependants, political or religious belief, class or education. Where relevant, selection criteria and procedures will be kept under review to ensure that individuals are selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Skimstone is for everybody.

Process of employment :

- where relevant, job descriptions, person specifications and clear guidelines about the company's requirements and expectations of company members will be drawn up and distributed upon request.
- any potential company member will undergo the same appointments procedure where relevant wherever relevant and possible, interview panels will be composed with a balance of representation.
- interview panels will be made aware of Skimstone's Equal Opportunities Policy and briefing will include the inadmissibility of discriminatory questions.

Monitoring :

In order to evaluate the progress of the policy, Skimstone will monitor job

applications, individual and group requests to become involved with company activities with regard to the following areas of potential discrimination: ethnic origins, disability and gender.

Terms and Conditions of Employment :

Skimstone will attempt to meet the special needs of company members and those involved in company activities as far as possible within the terms and conditions of their employment or experiences with the company.

Organisational Structure :

Equality of opportunity relates to all aspects and areas of Skimstone's activities and as such it has to be reflected in the structure of the organisation. Representation and participation by all sections of the community will be addressed wherever possible in the membership of the Board of Directors and in any other body of people involved with the company and its activities.

These priorities will be addressed in the following ways:

- developing a dialogue with the arts community and other social, business, cultural and educational organisations
- consulting specialist organisations representing people currently unable to participate in or access opportunities in the arts.
- monitoring this aspect of the Equal Opportunities policy will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors, Artistic Director and other company members.

Artistic programming and planning

In planning a programme of artistic activity or specific arts project, criteria will be informed by equal opportunities considerations. This means that particular reference may be made to the form and content of an arts project and to the make up of the participating group or company.

Monitoring this aspect of the policy will be carried out through an analysis of Skimstone's activities and project evaluations.

Marketing and Publicity

Equal opportunities considerations inform Skimstone's marketing and publicity

profile.

In practice this means:

- ensuring that text and images on all promotional material reflects the commitment to equal opportunities, and does not contain negative or discriminatory images;
- allocating and adapting additional resources to ensure that alternative communication styles can be catered for where a need is identified;
- working and forming partnerships with other organisations concerned with the promotion of the arts to groups and individuals with specific access or participation needs.

Training

An equal opportunities policy will not operate itself; it requires commitment, understanding and training where necessary for all people responsible for its implementation.