

Our Commitment to Anti-Racism

We believe that the support and actions of cultural organisations in the continued fight against racism is essential. It is our responsibility to provide advocacy and allyship to people who experience racism within our sector and our local, national and international communities.

Liverpool Biennial is principally anti-racist; however, we are clear that this is not enough. While we strive to work with a diverse range of partners, artists, and communities, we acknowledge that our core team remains majority white. Over the past four years, the organisation has been reflecting critically on its anti-racism stance and understands that more tangible action is required to dismantle structural inequalities.

In the summer of 2020 Liverpool Biennial formed an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Working Group, initially comprising representatives of every team across the organisation, 2 Trustees and subsequently the Director. Its intention was to review our culture and practices in light of our declared commitment to anti-racism following the murder of George Floyd. We committed to identifying areas of necessary and urgent change, to progress our commitment to being an organisation for everybody and to ensure that we made concrete steps towards making a difference. We are aware that there is much work still to be done, but the work of the group and the wider organisation has resulted in the following actions, as of March 2024:

- Continued commitment to a diverse selection of artists for the festival programme with minimum 50% representation of artists from the global majority.
- The initiation and continuation of the ED&I Working Group which meets every 6 weeks, reports to the Board of Trustees on a quarterly basis and is held accountable through an annual report of actions to the Board. This group escalates ongoing thinking around divestment from suppliers, fundraising, and organisational stances on global issues to the Board.
- Creation of an Action Plan which addresses our work with communities, the development of our workforce, and diversity across our programme. Clauses are reviewed and interrogated by the above working group to ensure actions are delegated and updated.
- Continued membership of the Racial Equality Action Group within the Liverpool City Region Culture CIC and work on the development and launch of the [Race Equality Manifesto](#).
- All members of the Board have undertaken at least one ED&I away day with a specific focus on current ED&I practices and their roles as Trustees. Recruitment of new Trustees was advertised and disseminated with an expanded range of organisations to support a wider range of applicants and ensure more representative leadership of Liverpool

Biennial. Successful recruitment has further increased diversity on the Board across protected characteristics and expanded the range of experience and expertise. As of March 2024, our Board of Trustees is made up of 33% from the global majority.

- Implementation of new recruitment procedures with a focus on actively sharing the advertising and dissemination of roles with a wide range of organisations throughout the region and nationally. The current database of organisations is not exhaustive, and staff and Trustees are encouraged to continually make recommendations to expand it.
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion are highlighted as core values within job applicant packs and at least one question at interview stage asks candidates to comment on these areas in respect to the vacant role. It should be noted that despite increasing the diversity of our team during the most recent festival year (LB2023), all staff members from global majority were on fixed term contracts and have since left the organisation indicating ongoing structural issues to be addressed.
- Collection of anonymised data for job applicants. Going forwards this will be reported to, and analysed by, the ED&I Working Group to inform recruitment practices. This will allow us to better understand if changed recruitment practices are encouraging more applications from global majority applicants, alongside reviewing the data of applicants against people shortlisted and appointed.
- The review of annual staff audits has been initiated to allow us examine data against which to measure change and set targets in relation to the diversity of both our recruitment and retainment of staff.
- Unconscious Bias training was undertaken by all staff in November 2022. However, we have taken on new staff since then and we are now prioritising training around antiracism work in every annual training plan.
- Every staff member has at least one target in their annual development plan which relates to ED&I specifically and is allocated time to support this work.
- The independent evaluations of LB2021 and LB2023 and internal data collection interrogated the inclusivity and relevance of our programme, finding that 18% of audiences at Liverpool Biennial 2021 described their ethnicity as Mixed Background, Asian/Asian British, Black/Black British, Arab, Latin American, or Other, and 24% of audiences at Liverpool Biennial 2023 described their ethnicity as Mixed Background, Asian/Asian British, Black/Black British, Arab, Latin American or Other. 51% of artists at LB2021 described their ethnicity as Mixed, Asian, Black, Arab, Latin American or Other, and 61% of artists at LB2023 described their ethnicity as Mixed, Asian, Black, Arab, Latin American or Other.

- Regular reviews of our policies including our Ethical Fundraising Policy to ensure our values and current best practice are reflected and adhered to.

It is our ambition to be a fully inclusive employer and cultural producer in all aspects of our activity. We wish to be representative of our communities in the diversity of our leadership, team and all the people and organisations with which we work. Located in Liverpool and connected to the world, we understand that it is part of our duty to actively work to foreground artwork that highlights the consequences of colonialism and experiences of racism that are pervasive in all areas of our society.

This statement was last updated in April 2024.