

CORK INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA) Policy 2026 - 2028

INTRODUCTION

Cork International Film Festival (CIFF) is committed to supporting Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) in all aspects of its activity, employment and operations. The Board of CIFF publicly affirms its commitment to equity through a sustained focus on Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility as a core organisational responsibility and strategic priority.

This policy outlines our strategy for improving access, participation and inclusion across the Festival through programming initiatives, operational reforms and organisational development. It focuses on improving accessibility and inclusion across several areas including venues, production and operations, customer experience, workforce development and industry engagement.

As a local festival with a global focus, Cork International Film Festival has celebrated and promoted multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion for over 70 years. Our programme reflects the breadth and diversity of society and the world's stories, and continues to evolve alongside the communities we serve.

We aim to use our platform as a world class festival to showcase a broad range of lived experiences, voices and perspectives, ensuring that everyone we work with, support and welcome to the Festival can access and enjoy meaningful opportunities to participate.

We believe one of our greatest opportunities for impact is through the power of film to educate audiences, stimulate discussion and shine a light on social, cultural and climate issues through carefully curated programming and outreach activity.

We are committed to fostering an environment, internally and externally, that promotes and respects Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and to treating all employees, directors, volunteers, stakeholders, artists and members of the public equally, regardless of age, civil status, disability, family status, gender including gender identity, religious belief, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, membership of the Traveller community and/or socio-economic background.

The Festival is proud of the progress made to date, while recognising that significant work remains to deepen our understanding of EDI and enhance accessibility and inclusion across all activities.

We are committed to continuing our journey towards becoming a more equitable, diverse and inclusive organisation. Through our international profile and extensive

partnerships, we aim to contribute actively and meaningfully to a more equitable and accessible cultural sector and society.

This plan consolidates our current knowledge and initiatives in the areas of equality, disability, accessibility and inclusion, and outlines our commitments for the future. It aligns with our Strategic Plan 2026–2028, which articulates our ambition to become more deeply integrated with our communities and stakeholders.

In keeping with Article 27 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to participate freely in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. CIFF also commits to protecting the moral and material interests of individuals' creative output.

CIFF is committed to promoting equality, protecting human rights and fostering diversity and inclusion across all aspects of its work. We recognise culture as a fundamental human right and seek to ensure that all individuals can participate fully and equitably in the Festival.

CIFF Purpose

To impact our community by activating the power of film to tell important stories, nurturing the filmmakers and film lovers of the future, and spotlighting Cork as a global city of culture and sanctuary.

CIFF Mission

To present Ireland's most exciting and ambitious annual film festival, connecting audiences and artists to create transformational experiences. Rooted in Cork, we select the best films from around the world to tell diverse and relevant stories, accessible and inclusive to all.

Definitions

Equality & Equity

Equality refers to ensuring that processes, opportunities, supports and resources are applied fairly and consistently, giving all individuals equal access and opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.

Equity recognises that individuals have different needs and may face barriers due to marginalisation, exclusion or unequal access to resources. It involves taking targeted action and providing appropriate supports to help create fair and equitable outcomes.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the presence and recognition of differences among individuals within a group, organisation or community. This includes visible and non-visible characteristics such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic background and life experience.

Promoting diversity means valuing these differences and ensuring that a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds and identities are represented and respected.

Inclusion

Inclusion refers to the active practice of creating environments where all people feel valued, respected and able to fully participate, regardless of their background or identity. It centres on organisational culture and the promotion of belonging, participation and engagement.

EDI Principles

Inclusivity

To create and maintain a space that is safe, welcoming and accessible for all regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, family status, socio economic background or membership of the traveller community.

Representation

We believe in championing film as a powerful platform to tell stories, raise awareness of issues, promote active discussion and debate, and deliver positive impact by engaging with both audiences and stakeholders from all communities.

Equity

CIFF is committed to ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all employees, directors, volunteers, stakeholders, artists and audiences. We actively work to identify and remove systemic barriers and promote fairness and equal opportunity across the organisation and in our engagement with the wider community.

Accessibility

We are committed to reducing barriers to participation and improving accessibility across all Festival activities, communications, venues and services.

Continuous Learning

CIFF recognises that EDI practice is an ongoing process of learning, reflection and improvement. We are committed to listening to communities, responding to feedback and evolving our practices over time.

Intersectionality

CIFF recognises that individuals may experience multiple and intersecting forms of inequality, discrimination or exclusion. Our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion acknowledges intersectionality and seeks to address barriers in a holistic, responsive and person-centred way.

CIFF 2026 - 2028 EDI Strategy & Action Plan

We have identified EDI objectives to be addressed with specific actions; some are continuous, others we have already started implementing or plan to. These objectives align with the ambitions set out in our 2026-2028 Strategic Plan and also ensure that EDI is integrated as a cross-cutting principle across the three strategic pillars of our plan:

- **Imagine:** We will present Ireland's most imaginative, compelling and exciting film festival by curating a rich and diverse programme that excites audiences of all ages, champions filmmakers, and showcases the evolution of the art form.
- **Engage:** We will amplify our profile as Ireland's premier film festival, engaging and growing our diverse communities, by creating opportunities to access and be activated by film.
- **Invest:** We will increase and broaden our sources of income, and build our capacity, to facilitate the sustainable growth and evolution of the Festival.

CIFF is committed to meeting its obligations under the Employment Equality Acts (1998–2015), the Equal Status Acts (2000–2018), and the Arts Council Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Policy.

Respectful Conduct & Safe Reporting

CIFF does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or exclusionary behaviour in any aspect of Festival activity.

All employees, volunteers, artists, audiences, contractors and stakeholders are expected to contribute to an environment that is respectful, inclusive and safe.

CIFF will ensure that clear reporting procedures are available for concerns relating to discrimination, harassment or exclusion, and that concerns are addressed appropriately, confidentially and in line with organisational policies and relevant legislation.

Inclusive Recruitment & Workforce Development

CIFF is committed to ensuring that recruitment, selection and workforce development processes are fair, transparent, inclusive and accessible.

We aim to attract, support and retain a diverse workforce and volunteer base that reflects the communities we serve and contributes to a culture of inclusion and belonging across the organisation.

CIFF will:

- Advertise opportunities through a broad range of accessible and inclusive channels where feasible.
- Encourage applications from individuals and communities currently underrepresented in the arts and cultural sector.
- Ensure recruitment materials are accessible and available in alternative formats where possible.
- Provide reasonable accommodations throughout recruitment, interview and onboarding processes where requested.
- Promote equitable recruitment practices and seek to reduce barriers and unconscious bias in selection processes.
- Seek to apply inclusive and equitable principles in the engagement of staff, volunteers, freelancers, contractors, artists, speakers, jurors and panellists.
- Select candidates based on relevant skills, experience, potential and organisational requirements.
- CIFF will provide periodic EDI and accessibility training for staff, volunteers and Board members where appropriate.

All recruitment and selection activity will be carried out in accordance with relevant equality legislation and organisational policies.

Monitoring, Accountability & Review

Implementation of this policy and action plan will be led by the Festival Director & CEO, with governance oversight provided by the Board of Directors.

Responsibility for delivery will be shared across all departments, with managers and team leads supporting the integration of EDI principles into day-to-day operations.

This policy is intended to be a living document and will be reviewed regularly to reflect ongoing learning, organisational developments and evolving best practice.

CIFF will:

- collect EDI data where appropriate,
- use voluntary and anonymous methods,

- use findings to improve policy and practice.

Governance Commitments:

- Annual EDI progress reviews will be presented to the Board.
- A mid-point implementation review will take place in 2027.
- A final review and evaluation will take place in 2028.
- Department leads will report on relevant EDI actions and outcomes annually.
- Feedback from staff, volunteers, audiences, artists and stakeholders will inform continuous improvement.

All data collected in relation to this policy will be managed in accordance with GDPR requirements, ensuring confidentiality, transparency, and the ethical use of information at all times.

Our EDIA Commitments in Action - Summary

To support the delivery of our Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Policy into practice, Cork International Film Festival has established a comprehensive Action Plan, reviewed annually. In summary, we are committed to:

- Presenting a diverse and inclusive programme that reflects a broad range of voices, experiences and perspectives from Ireland and around the world.
- Continue to Improve accessibility across Festival venues, events, communications and digital platforms to reduce barriers to participation.
- Expand accessible screenings and services, including captioned, audio-described and sensory-friendly experiences where possible.
- Create meaningful opportunities for underrepresented filmmakers, artists and audiences to engage with and participate in the Festival.
- Strengthen our connections with local communities, schools, young people and diverse stakeholder groups to ensure wider access to film and cultural participation.
- Embed inclusive practices across recruitment, volunteering, workforce development and organisational culture.
- Provide training and awareness initiatives to support staff, volunteers and Board members in delivering an inclusive and welcoming Festival experience.
- Listen to feedback from audiences, artists, staff, volunteers and partners to continuously improve accessibility and inclusion.
- Monitor our progress and strengthen accountability through regular review, evaluation and reporting on our EDIA commitments.
- Work collaboratively with partners, venues and industry stakeholders to contribute to a more equitable, accessible and inclusive screen and cultural sector.