



Irish Modern Dance Theatre [IMDT] Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice [EDIJ] Policy

I. Introduction | About IMDT

Founded in 1991 by dancer and choreographer John Scott, Irish Modern Dance Theatre [IMDT] is one of the most original and responsive dance companies working in Ireland today. A Dublin-based ensemble, Scott and international guest choreographers create distinctive dance works with diverse casts, mixing virtuosic Irish and international dancers with African and Middle Eastern refugees and torture survivors.

Our works include 'Migration Sonata', 'Lear', 'Actions' and 'Fall and Recover' - all recognised for their intelligence, honesty and humanity. Our work crosses disciplines, subverts expectations of dance and dancers and finds new ways to explore contemporary issues. Irish Modern Dance Theatre is Strategically funded by the Arts Council.

As set out in IMDT's current Strategic Plan¹, whilst acknowledging and celebrating our long-established focus on diversity and equality, they are also cornerstones of IMDT's strategy over the coming years and are clearly articulated in our purpose, vision, ambition and mission:

Our Purpose:

To transform lives and inspire new understanding through dance

Our Vision:

We believe in a just world where everyone is valued equally and is inspired and empowered by dance

Our Ambition:

IMDT will be nationally and internationally regarded for the quality, originality and humanity of its work changing perceptions and transforming lives

Our Mission:

We create transformative experiences for dancers, audiences and participants, which shift perceptions of dance and of how we see each other

¹ Pioneering Transformative Dance | Strategic Plan 2021-2024

https://www.irishmoderndancetheatre.com/_files/ugd/14d4c8_970939c808a54061bbfb5960f90af4ff.pdf

II. Background | IMDT's Work on EDIJ

Since its foundation, IMDT has placed diversity and inclusion at the heart of its work. We are an open, collaborative and responsive dance company whose emphasis is always on the potential of the individual dancer or artist. IMDT is acutely aware of the barriers that both nascent and established artists and dancers may face based on their identity, including the nine protected characteristics² established in both Equal Status and Employment Equality Acts, and the Public Sector Duty³.

In line with the Arts Council's Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Policy⁴, IMDT recognises socioeconomic status as a tenth protected characteristic. *IMDT appreciates and understands the intersectional nature of discrimination and inequality.*

While we are proud of our long-established track record in the field of equality and diversity, we also know that this is a strength we can build upon into the future, constantly innovating from the knowledge we have developed in partnership with our collaborators and the wider dance sector.

In developing this EDIJ Policy, IMDT has engaged with a number of its collaborators, including associate artists (past and present) as well as other key stakeholders, in order to understand its strengths and areas of development from an equality, diversity, inclusion and justice perspective. The insights garnered from this process have been integrated into the formulation of the policy both in terms of its overall approach and stated aims.

IMDT understands that from both a societal and arts perspective, equality, diversity, inclusion and justice (EDIJ) is an ever-evolving area, and with this in mind, we will seek to ensure that our EDIJ Policy remains a "living" document, responsive to change and new approaches.

² Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission | Equality Legislation
<https://www.ihrec.ie/your-rights/equality-laws-ireland/>

³ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission | Public Sector Duty
<https://www.ihrec.ie/our-work/public-sector-duty/>

⁴ Arts Council Ireland | Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Policy
<https://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/EHRD%20Policy%20English%20version%20Final.pdf>

III. Future Focus | IMDT's EDIJ Policy Action Plan

Aligning with our current Strategic Plan¹, IMDT's EDIJ Policy Action Plan will focus on the three strategic priorities articulated within the plan. This will ensure our goals and activities in regards to equality, diversity, inclusion and justice complement existing commitments and objectives over the coming years, and in so doing, continue to mainstream EDIJ throughout our work.

Our Strategic Priorities (2021-2024) are:

Pioneering Dance: To create virtuosic work and lead connection with international dance practice

Transformative Participation: To encourage and enable more people to access, enjoy and be transformed through dance

Organising for Impact: To ensure we have the capacity and resources to deliver on our ambitions for dance in Ireland

In the section that follows, we delineate the key strategic goals associated with each strategic priority that most connect with IMDT's EDIJ Policy, alongside actions we will take to realise those goals.

Strategic Priority	Strategic Goals	EDIJ Actions
<i>Pioneering Dance</i>		
	To provide and contribute to sustained, high-quality professional development opportunities for existing and emerging dance artists in Ireland, connecting them with leading international dance practice	We will continue to work with existing collaborators from a range of diverse practices and lived experiences, whilst seeking out nascent dance artists and collaborators, maintaining our focus on equality and social justice
	To commission and present work that pushes the boundaries of dance from pioneering, experimental choreographers whose principles and practice align with and extend our own	Alongside existing commissioning approaches, we will actively consider ways in which the diversity of traditional heritage and culture can be interwoven into commissioning
	To ensure the well-being and fair remuneration of those who work with us in line with the Arts Council's Paying the Artist policy	In addition to our commitment to Paying the Artist, we will review and implement Safe to Create protocols, and establish an Anti-Racism statement
<i>Transformative Participation</i>		
	To deepen our engagement with existing audiences and attract new audiences through the development of 'Show Plus' – bespoke activities complementary to a performance	We will actively seek to promote access to the widest possible audience base, particularly those that may not traditionally engage with dance, or whose access to the artform may be limited

Strategic Priority	Strategic Goals	EDIJ Actions
	<p>To work with existing partners and forge new associations to enable work that specifically sets out to access and engage new audiences, place dance in different contexts or in unexpected places</p>	<p>Our partners play a key role in achieving our ambitions in terms of access and engagement, therefore we will ensure audience diversity and accessibility is central to our planning discussions</p>
	<p>To expand and amplify our 'Dance to Diversity' programme with Ireland's new communities to enhance social inclusion through dance</p>	<p>We will work with organisations and groups who represent and support minoritised and marginalised communities in order to promote social inclusion through dance</p>
Organising for Impact		
	<p>To invest in the development of leadership at board and executive level to enable the company achieve its full potential and deliver this strategy</p>	<p>We will continue to prioritise diversity in the expansion of our Board, and on retirement / rotation of Board members</p>
	<p>To put in place governance protocols and management policies and processes that are informed by best practice</p>	<p>We will ensure that we promote best practice from an anti-racism and inclusion perspective, by putting the relevant resources and protocols in place</p>
	<p>To live our values, fully embracing the principles of diversity and inclusion that underpin all that we do</p>	<p>Through our EDIJ Policy and Strategic Plan, we will continue to uphold and mainstream IMDT's values</p>



IV. Oversight | IMDT's EDIJ Policy Monitoring and Measurement

IMDT's EDIJ Policy aligns closely with our current Strategic Plan, and as such, its actions will be implemented by IMDT's Executive and monitored by IMDT's Board through quarterly reporting.

In addition, IMDT's EDIJ Board Champion, Immaculate Akello, will act as a regular contact point between the Executive and the Board in relation to the EDIJ Policy and associated discussions regarding equality, diversity, inclusion and justice.

IMDT's EDIJ Policy will be reviewed in 2025, alongside the organisation's Strategic Plan, in order to evaluate its impact and consider further action, including, but not limited to the redrafting of the policy.

Appendix: IMDT's Commitment to Anti-Racism

Within IMDT's EDIJ Policy, we set out our approach to equality, diversity, inclusion and justice. However, we also recognise the necessity to clearly articulate our commitment to anti-racism.

IMDT believes that diversity, inclusion, equality, equity and social justice are key to everything we do. We will not tolerate racism in any aspect of our work.

Accordingly, we will proactively take steps to tackle the impact of systemic and structural racism within our organisation - particularly in the course of developing, rehearsing and performing work. This will include the dissemination of this EDIJ Policy to everyone who works with the company, regardless of the basis of their engagement.

IMDT is a signatory of the Safe to Create Code of Behaviour, and will require that all those engaged by the company sign up to the Code, as well as reading the Safe to Create Trust Statement at appropriate junctures (particularly on commencement of a project).

Any behaviours that are considered inconsistent with this EDIJ Policy, and / or the Safe to Create Code of Behaviour, will be treated seriously and dealt with through IMDT's HR Policies.