



# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

## **Loop Dance Company**

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## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

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### **STATEMENT**

Loop Dance Company demonstrates its commitment to equal opportunities in every area of its business. The company belief is that all individuals, irrespective of origin, age, gender or ability, have the right to experience the power of self-expression through dance and movement.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The law defines Equal Opportunities in The Equal Pay Act 1970, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Recommendations from these acts have been applied when writing this policy.

When referring to Loop Dance Company staff this includes: trustees, administrative staff, company dancers/teachers, contracted freelance teachers and volunteers.

### **PROCEDURE**

Loop Dance Company aims to ensure equality of opportunity in the recruitment and terms of engagement of trustees, staff, artistic personnel, freelancers, volunteers and participants, to include:

- Job descriptions, advertising, selection and induction.
- Appraisal, grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- Training and professional development.

### **PRINCIPLES**

Loop Dance Company believes that everyone has the right to work, do business and participate in social activities in an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Loop will endeavour to use venues for performances that have access and facilities for disabled patrons and where possible, workshops should be held in venues that are easily accessible. Loop Dance Company maintains a fair pricing policy. The company's current education policy is that dance should be accessible to all, regardless of age or ability. Workshops and Schools Residencies are designed to meet the needs of all people including those with physical and/or learning difficulties and varying ranges of dance ability.

The company adopts research into models of good practice, keeps pace with equal opportunity, health & safety, child protection, diversity, disability and access legislation and debate, and reviews its written policies on a continuing basis. All employment opportunities are advertised in local and trade press, arts marketing websites and listings.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

Steps will be taken to make sure all company business practices ensure equal opportunities. Governance, recruitment, training and promotion opportunities will be made as widely available as possible. Selection criteria (job description and employee specification) for trustees, employment, training and promotion opportunities will be entirely related to the requirements of the role. No job applicant, student or prospective student or employee will receive less favourable treatment on grounds of race, nationality,

gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, physical characteristics, health, religion, belief, socio-economic background, parental status or age (subject to student age groupings and retirement conventions).

Selection criteria will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.

Wherever possible, more than one person must be involved in the selection interview and recruitment process, and all should have received training in equal opportunities. Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies must be recorded.

### **Trustees will be selected**

### **Staff will be selected**

**External choreographers** will be selected for their artistry and creative processes to create works that are accessible and marketable. Choreographers are recruited using Arts Council England recommendations. Loop's Artistic Director regularly attends performances using 'go and see' funding to view potential guest choreographers' work.

**Company members (dancers)** are selected by audition and interview. Dance artists are requested to send the company an up to date CV with a passport photo or headshot. Please note the photograph is required only to be able to identify applicants during group auditions, but is not used for selection. Applicants will be invited to audition according to their ability to answer why they have applied for the post, previous experience and training. During the audition dancers are taught a technique class and a selection of the company's repertoire and given a creative task. Each dance artist is selected for their specialist skill and knowledge.

**Freelance teachers** are selected by attending an invited teaching audition and interview. Teaching artists are requested to send the company an up to date CV with a covering letter detailing their reasons for applying and suitability, applicants will be invited according to this and previous experience and training. Applicants will be asked to teach a pre selected group of young people by leading a creative task.

**Additional artists** are sought on a project basis, e.g. costumes, lighting designers, music and film-making. Costume designers and music composer/producers will at first be the responsibility of the choreographer, if they usually use specific collaborators. If no such relationships exist or are appropriate, the company will, in consultation with the choreographers, advertise through the processes detailed above. Additionally, recruitment may also involve advertising each position in areas relevant to each discipline i.e. art/design colleges, specialist press, etc.

### **PARTICIPATION**

Loop Dance Company want to continue to develop an education strand (LoopEd) that is truly inclusive; that understands, appreciates and values the diversity of each individual and incorporates measures that make people feel valued and able to participate and achieve their full potential. LoopEd participation encompasses one-off workshops,

intensives, weekly classes, residencies any other form of participation or learning (herein referred to as workshops). LoopEd workshop leaders will endeavour to communicate clearly and actively create a positive, inclusive atmosphere, based on respect for people's differences and show commitment to challenging and preventing discrimination.

Loop Dance Company aims to ensure that workshop design and delivery are informed by best practice, that a developed and co-ordinated provision for quality learning in terms of location and workshop times maximises the possibilities for participation. This best practice will increase the company's profile in the region and nationally, in turn allowing Loop Dance Company to reach a wider number of participants.

## **POLICY STATEMENTS**

### **Equal opportunities**

Loop Dance Company will ensure equal opportunities for all trustees, employees, job applicants, students, clients and customers irrespective of race, nationality, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, physical characteristics, health, religion, belief, socio-economic background, parental status or age (subject to student age groupings and retirement conventions).

### **Racial equality**

Loop Dance Company will ensure equal opportunities for all employees, job applicants, students, clients and customers irrespective of race, colour, nationality, or ethnic origin. Loop Dance Company values a diverse customer base and the individuality and creativity that every employee potentially brings to the workforce.

### **Harassment**

Loop Dance Company is committed to promoting a good and harmonious working environment where every employee is treated with respect and dignity. No one should feel threatened intimidated or degraded on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, physical characteristics, health, religion, belief, socio-economic background, parental status or age. This policy also covers harassment that falls outside the above categories and that can be classed as bullying.

## **ACCESS TO POLICY**

This policy will be made available to all trustees, company dancers, employees and job applicants through being included in induction material and application packs. Current and prospective students and funders will also be informed and sent copies if requested. The policy will be available on our website.

## **ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF POLICY**

Loop Dance Company will review and update the policy yearly to ensure it is in line with UK legislation. The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed and in consultation with its board of trustees amended where appropriate.

## **ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING MEMBERS OF STAFF**

Any proven allegation of misconduct may result in the dismissal of the member of staff or appropriate alternative disciplinary action.

## **ALLEGATIONS REPORTED BY MEMBERS OF STAFF**

All allegations made by staff will be treated with the highest level of digression and where appropriate an impartial third party will be invited to assess allegations. Company procedure of one verbal warning and two written warnings before dismissal (unless in the case of gross misconduct) will be followed to ensure allegations are dealt with fairly, the final decision resting with two members of the board of trustees one of whom will be the chair.

### **TRAINING**

All staff will be trained through Loop Dance Company's ongoing professional development programme. Issues covered will include; company policy and procedure, allegations, reporting lines and legislation.