



## **DRUID PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY - GENDER POLICY**

### **The Context**

Druid acknowledges that women are under-represented in Irish and global theatre. It endorses and supports the work of organisations such as Waking the Feminists (WTF) in Ireland, Tonic in Britain and others internationally in bringing the issue of gender equality centre-stage.

Druid's goal is gender equality. We are committed to addressing this important issue to achieve gender equality in a way that is sustainable for Druid and our work. In doing this, we commit to ensuring artistic freedom; and to supporting the excellence of our artistic practice which we believe will be strengthened in pursuance of our goal.

Druid recognises that there are areas of our activities that have breached gender equality. We are committed to taking action to address this. In doing so, we must further recognise that we have financial, programming, and capacity constraints which mean that change will not be immediate but will be time-bound and sustainable.

Gender inequality is deeply embedded in culture and society. In consciously addressing this imbalance, history and the manifold reasons for the status quo must be taken into account in developing and implementing an achievable gender policy.

In the context of Irish theatre and performance, the almost 500 year old canon of English language theatre is overwhelmingly written by men. There are plays by women in the canon that have been neglected and overlooked. Equally, there are plays by living female writers which demand closer attention.

A further feature to be considered is that certain roles have developed in a gender-specific way over many centuries. Druid believes that a gender analysis must be undertaken systematically in all its technical work and, where appropriate, action must be taken - including gender-specific interventions - to promote gender equality. This will require changes in behaviour, attitudes, working habits, cooperation and teamwork as well as the development of competence in conducting gender analysis.

## OUR POLICY

**The this the first iteration of Druid’s gender policy and will be revised annually. It can be summarized as accepting, and working to deliver, the full implementation of Gender Equality as defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO).<sup>1</sup>**

*“Gender equality refers to the enjoyment of equal rights, opportunities and treatment by men and women and by boys and girls in all spheres of life. It asserts that people’s rights, responsibilities, social status and access to resources do not depend on whether they are born male or female. It does not mean, however, that men and women are the same or must become the same, or that all labour market measures must arrive at the same results. Gender equality implies that all men and women are free to develop their personal abilities and make life choices without the limitations set by stereotypes or prejudices about gender roles or the characteristics of men and women.”<sup>2</sup>*

The one caveat Druid applies to this definition is that it is interpreted in an inclusive way so that it encompasses all people, irrespective of gender or sexuality.

In striving to achieve gender equality Druid will use three categories of tools: gender neutrality, gender mainstreaming and gender equity.

**Gender neutrality** means not being associated with either women or men and may refer to various factors such as concepts or style of language. What is perceived to be gender-neutral, however, including in areas of statistics or dissemination of data collected in reference to a population, is often gender-blind (a failure to recognise gender specificities).

**Gender mainstreaming** requires the assessment of the implications for women and for men of any planned action, including policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all our policies and programmes and associated activities so that women and men benefit equally and so inequality is not perpetuated. Following the ILO gender-mainstreaming strategy Druid will use a two-pronged approach:

- (a) explicitly and systematically address the specific and often different needs and concerns of both women and men in all policies, analyses, strategies, and every step of every initiative including through monitoring and evaluation;
- (b) targeted interventions when analysis shows that one gender – usually women – has been historically disadvantaged in theatre related activities.

**Gender equity** means fairness of treatment for women and men, by taking into account their different needs, cultural barriers and past and present discrimination against one gender grouping. Gender-equity may involve the use of temporary special measures of differential treatment to compensate for historical or systemic bias or even short-term discrimination against one gender in order to obtain equality of outcomes and end results. It may include an element of unequal treatment or treatment that is different but could be considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup>The ILO is the only tripartite UN agency and brings together governments, employers and workers representatives of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

<sup>2</sup> ILO, *ABC of Women Worker’s Rights and Gender Equality*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2007

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

To deliver the strategy a clear Action Plan must be developed – with clear measurables and timelines. Strengthened accountability mechanisms are essential for effective progress in the various tools and actions being adopted to achieve gender equality. This requires clarity on roles and responsibilities and adequate tracking and oversight.

While overall responsibility rests with the Board, the Executive will be charged with:

- preparing an annual Action Plan for consideration and adoption by the Board
- ensuring measurable and stretch commitments, classified under the tools identified are detailed in the Action Plan
- reporting on progress on a bi-annual basis

The Board will publish the annual Action Plan and bi-annual updates on its website. The first Action Plan for commitments to be completed by end 2018.