

# **GENDER EQUALITY PRINCIPLES & PROPOSED ACTIONS AT THE EVERYMAN**

## **Context Note**

The context for this Gender Equality Policy is in part underpinned by the conversations ignited by #WakingTheFeminists in November 2015. Those conversations prompted me to examine the gender balance within our programming over the last few years. In 2015, they looked like this:

- 11% of theatre/comedy productions authored, co-authored or adapted by women (28 perfs, 9 productions)
- 34% of theatre/comedy productions directed by a woman: (87 perfs, 9 productions)
- 24% of Theatre/Comedy productions with equal number of roles (or more) for women (12 shows out of 50 total)

In November 2016 I joined a national working group, which is a collection of organisations of different types across the industry. Each of these working towards the goal of creating a robust policy to achieve change within their organisations by addressing unfairly biased systems and to futureproof organisations where equality and inclusivity are concerned. The group is acting as a support and information sharing network for one another. Ultimately, it is hoped that the suite of policies created by the group could be made available as templates to similar organisations with a desire to implement change.

With all of that in mind, the attached is intended as a list of objectives we're setting out to undertake over time in order to actively nurture a healthier, more equal and inclusive programme and organisation for the future. It's also worth noting that the Everyman is also doing many things well, for instance our progressive position as a parent-friendly employer – and it's important to acknowledge these successes.

For information, I've included a list of resources at the bottom of the document, in case anybody would like some further reading on the topic, including two key publications which I'm happy to lend to any interested parties.

## **What do we mean by Gender Equality?**

By Gender Equality, we mean a state that can be considered to exist when women, men and people identifying as non-binary have the same possibilities, rights and responsibilities or when women, men and people identifying as non-binary have equal status and influence.

## **What do we wish to achieve?**

The Everyman is committed to achieving organisation-wide gender equality by 2022, by ensuring that the same possibilities, rights and responsibilities are available to all people working at the Everyman, regardless of gender, and by ensuring that our systems don't confer more status/influence on one gender over another. We also wish to contribute to the advancement of gender equality principles across the Irish theatre industry.

## **What we propose to do**

We plan to address gender equality under four main pillars:

- GOVERNANCE
- STAFF AND RECRUITMENT
- PROGRAMME
- INDUSTRY

What follows is a list of actions that could be taken, or adopted as part of the company policy on gender.

## SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

### GOVERNANCE

- **Schedule a regular policy review.** This document was approved by the Everyman board in May 2018.
- **Update the mission statement** and other key documents at the Everyman to specifically reflect a goal of gender equality.
- **Commit to gender equality and balance at board level.**
- **Consider forming a committee tasked with driving standards.**
- **Report annually** on progress made by our gender equality initiatives. This recommendation will ensure that both the focus and progress on achieving gender equality will be documented and detailed within the company minutes thus ensuring that there is clear visibility on this journey.

### STAFF AND RECRUITMENT

- **Deliver a workshop programme for all employees**, examining issues of gender equality in the workplace and/or provide unconscious bias training.
- **Provide clear guidelines around combining work and parenthood** in our gender equality policy.
- **Ensure that all employees**, regardless of position or contract type, are made **aware of** the contents of the theatre's **gender equality policy**, as well as policies concerning dignity at work.
- **Ensure that systems are in place to protect employees:** ensure that all employees, regardless of position or contract type, have knowledge of that which defines bullying/harassment, that these are forbidden by law and that the employer has a responsibility to protect their employees from such behaviour.
- **Identify certain individuals** that can be approached by anyone who feels that they are the victim of such behaviour, and explain actions taken in the event of a person reporting bullying/harassment.
- Ensure **language used in recruitment and casting calls is clear** about the Everyman's position on gender equality and inclusivity.
- **Examine internal systems** (e.g. meetings, payroll, recruitment) to ensure they conform with gender equality policy.

### PROGRAMME

- **Deliver greater gender equality in all areas of the artistic programme** over the next five years by presenting more work led by female theatre practitioners: this includes our theatre programme (producing and receiving), our live music programme, our opera programme, our comedy programme, and our programme for young audiences. Gender equality will be measured in five-year periods starting from 2017. There will be ongoing flexibility within

programming for a given year but over the course of each five year period the artistic programme will aim to achieve gender balance.

- Devise a **rigorous information gathering** process for monitoring/research **of the numbers of male and female creatives we employ**, to see where progress most needs to be made, and to make better informed programming and hiring decisions. This means monitoring on an ongoing basis how many men we employ and how many women to fulfil certain roles, and on which stages and with what level of resourcing. The basic unit of measurement will be number of performances within the calendar year. Seek help on analysis where necessary.
- **Apply the same level of thought and rigour to the employment of freelancers as to salaried staff.** There are structures and processes in place around the employment of salaried staff, from recruitment through to care for well-being at (and away) from work, to regular evaluation and attention to career development. Can these be carried over into the way The Everyman manages its creative relationships?
- **Develop mechanisms to better obtain honest feedback from freelancers.** Advance programme learning suggests that “unless freelancers are given the opportunity to let organisations know anything about their working environment, communication style, working hours etc that has proven problematic or felt uncomfortable to them, those organisations are unlikely to discover where barriers are routinely arising for certain people”. How can we make sure that freelance artists who work with The Everyman can proactively initiate conversations with us about how they find working with us, and find time to seek this feedback.

## INDUSTRY

- **Work collectively to create a more effective pipeline for female talent.** All theatres, regardless of size, can play an active role in ensuring the careers of talented female artists don't stall at certain points. The Everyman will act as a champion for artists by communicating more proactively about which artists are ready to move up from smaller stages to bigger ones.
- **Working collectively to achieve change.** The Everyman actively seeks out opportunities to activate change-making work in connection and collaboration with others, or in relation to others' work, so that needless repetition is avoided and optimal impact is achieved. Artistic Director Julie Kelleher is participating in national conversation on gender equality through a post-WakingTheFeminists working group.

## RESOURCES USED IN DRAFTING THIS DOCUMENT

- <https://www.abbeytheatre.ie/abbey-theatre-announces-eight-guiding-principles-for-gender-equality/>
- <http://www.tonictheatre-advance.co.uk/advance-2014/learning/#key-learning>
- <http://www.tonictheatre-advance.co.uk/advance-2014/learning/#what-theatres-can-do>
- <http://www.fia-actors.com/uploads/gender%20equality%20checklist.pdf>
- [All Change Please by Lucy Kerbel](#)
- [What Works: Gender Equality by Design by Iris Bohnet](#)