



# Crash Ensemble - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy & Action Plan

May 2023

**Introduction:**

Crash Ensemble is Ireland's leading new music ensemble; a group of world-class musicians who play the most adventurous, ground-breaking music of today. Led by cellist and Artistic Director, Kate Ellis and Principal Conductor, Ryan McAdams, the ensemble commissions, collaborates, explores, investigates and experiments with a broad spectrum of music creators and artistic collaborators. We love to innovate, with quality always at the heart of everything we do. We are passionate about the music we play. We create experiences; exploring new ways of presenting music and bringing our audiences on new adventures. Community for us is key – our community inspires us to create and experiment more. We value our audiences and our connection with them.

Crash perform both in Ireland and internationally. Our music is available on our label, Crash Records as well as on Nonesuch, Cantaloupe, NMC, Ergodos and Bedroom Community labels.

**Context:**

We recognise that a more strategic approach is needed to ensure that the principles of EDI are embedded in our work. EDI for us encompasses age, civil status, disability, family status, gender (including gender identity), the travelling community, race, religion, sexual orientation and socio economic status. We are committed to the key principles of EDI specifically in relation to promoting accessibility across our work.

We are mindful of existing equality legislation, including the Employment Equality Acts (1998-2015), the Equal Status Acts (2000-2018) and Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014, otherwise known as the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. We are also mindful of the Arts Council's own Equality, Human Rights and Diversity (EHRD) Policy.

A key challenge for the contemporary music sector in Ireland and beyond is access to music education - a challenge also recognised in the classical music sector. We additionally recognise the challenge in contributing to address this access issue within the resources available to our organisation with no education department/staff position. Despite these challenges and barriers, we have set out areas for growth to embed equality, diversity and inclusion within our work programme and across our organisation as we fundamentally believe that this will contribute to longer term development vitality and energy of the sector.

## **Aligning our EDI policy to our strategic plan (2021-2025):**

### **Our Goal**

To embed the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into all aspects of Crash Ensemble's work.

Our EDI Strategy will guide us in achieving key strategic objectives including:

- Deepening engagement with young people and the wider community through delivering inclusive and innovative projects
- Diversifying audiences, broadening our audience profile, including people who have had no previous contact with contemporary music

as well as our:

### **Vision**

Our vision is to create experiences around music and present them in a different way, to explore new ideas, new sounds and new music.

### **Mission**

We will be the best in everything we do creating memorable and emotional experiences to which our audiences connect.

### **Values**

Innovation and Experimentation - continuously challenging the status quo we will initiate cutting-edge projects that inspire and engage audience and gain international recognition. We will be leaders in our field, offering new perspectives and original thinking in our practice.

Collaboration - we foster relationships with musicians, artists, partners, presenters, stakeholders, audiences and the broader music and arts communities in a spirit of openness and respect, recognising all as essential the environment in which we exist.

Quality - outstanding performances from exemplary musicians. Excellence across the organisation in all that we do.

Community - broadening audiences to everyone who loves music and the arts. Promoting inclusivity, equality and diversity across our organisation.

We have identified three specific areas of focus for our EDI policy aligning with our organisational values:

- Integrate equality, inclusion and diversity into our programming, board development and staffing opportunities.
- Incorporate EDI as part of our ongoing experience design and audience engagement planning across activities.
- Ensure clear and inclusive communications about our work.

**Review and Monitoring:**

We are aware that this is an ever changing landscape and that our own EDI policy will evolve regularly. Findings from the action plan will continue to inform the evolution of the work.

Crash Ensemble's policy and related action plan will be monitored and reported on regularly at board meetings. The CEO and the Artistic Director will provide these updates at board meetings.

Additionally, our EDI Sub Committee will monitor and report on progress every six months.

# Crash Ensemble Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

<b>Opportunities with Crash</b>  <b>Integrate equality, inclusion and diversity into our programming, board development and staffing opportunities.</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Agree on a wording to be used in all recruitment and advertised opportunities to demonstrate that we welcome and encourage applications representative of the ten characteristics identified in our policy.	Broader range of applicants applying for and being considered for opportunities.
Devise a way of working with programming partners to incorporate EDI into commissioning, programming and planning.	Equality, diversity and inclusion are part of the ongoing engagement with partners (existing and new).
Develop a framework for our Crash Works programme considering all protected characteristics.	Diverse representation in Crash Works commissions programme.
Consider EDI when reviewing board skills audit for board succession planning.	Diversity is a key consideration for board succession planning.
Board recruitment Advertise board positions publicly using agreed wording for recruitment opportunities	Reach widest possible pool of potential board members.
Create an open call opportunity for musicians to be considered for Crash's database that is widely advertised.	Reach widest possible pool of musicians to identify new talent.
Develop a mentoring programme specifically targeted at diverse communities offering a paid internship opportunity annually in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Female identifying and non-binary individuals in technical/production roles</li> </ul>	Broader range of artists and arts workers with a diverse range of lived experiences.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administration opportunity</li> <li>- Musician mentorship</li> </ul> <p>Advertised opportunity.</p>	
<p>Grow our staff and board training programme over a 3-year period. Keep abreast of new training opportunities that come on stream and incorporate.</p>	<p>Continuing to develop capacity, understanding and awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion within the organisation.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and growing our community</b></p> <p><b>Incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion as part of our ongoing experience design and audience engagement planning across activities.</b></p>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>
<p>Engage with music colleges specifically about new music and explore collaborative possibilities supporting opportunities for the next generation of Irish musicians/composers.</p>	<p>A community of people new to contemporary music developing an interest in new music - potential musicians, composers and audience members of the future.</p> <p>Wider accessibility and expand our communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus our national tour on diverse participants and audiences. Current model combines a workshop where the participants create a piece of music alongside Crash musicians. This piece is then performed as part of the Crash concert.</li> <li>- Reassess the impact and make plans for future years taking review into consideration.</li> </ul>	
<p>Make sensory sensitive packages available for audiences members who might want them as our shows are heavily amplified and have a lot of sensory activity with our stage identity (screens and light boxes).</p>	

Establish listening groups for Crash concerts specifically targeted at people who don't ordinarily attend new music concerts.	A more welcoming environment that is cognisant of the various barriers that can exist to experience our work.  Obstacles to engaging with new music are challenged through proactive initiatives.
Establish open rehearsal opportunities building partnerships with the education department of the National Concert Hall and Dublin City Culture Company.	
Explore possibilities for new accessibility projects for 2024 onward. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Pavee Point collaboration</li><li>- Ed Devane (sound artist/instrument maker/educator)</li><li>- Mother Tongues Festival collaboration</li></ul>	
Signing for concert introductions where needed	
Language and Communications	
Ensure clear and inclusive communications about our work.	
Action	Outcome
Introduce pronoun identification for our staff, musicians and board.	People from diverse backgrounds will feel free to self identify in their dealings with us as an organisation.
Engage with key resource organisations such as Arts & Disability Ireland (ADI), Gay Community News (GCN), AsIAm (autism awareness) using resources to build awareness within our organisation.	People from diverse backgrounds don't feel that the onus is on them to educate our organisation.
Use more visual/video content	Increase accessibility to our work for all audiences.
Include written descriptions on social media posts	
Use alt text in our newsletter comms	

Ensure Crash website is accessible, easy to navigate and user friendly through UX testing.	
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