



**Artlift**

# Diversity Statement

Artlift was set up as a project run by a Steering Group of arts and health professionals in 2007 and as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2013. Our mission is to use creativity to enable the widest possible diversity of people to find and sustain improved health and wellbeing and to inform best practice in the wider Creative Health sector.

The significance of events in 2020, and campaigns they have inspired, call for us to become more proactive in addressing all kinds of oppression.

We have begun, and will continue to, interrogate and improve our working practices. We will continue to remove barriers to access and promote inclusivity.

This work will be consultative and considered. It must be embedded throughout Artlift, in our processes and programme, for it to be impactful.

Addressing health inequality is central to our work, and to that of our stakeholders including NHS Gloucestershire. We will continue to prioritise new work and/or adapt existing programmes to bring down barriers to our services for marginalised communities.

What follows is a set of commitments:

## Programmes

- We have partnered with the University of Gloucestershire's Community Participatory Action Research Project and the resulting Diverse Ethnic Research Alliance to pilot (in summer 2024) and deliver (from January 2025) the 'Diverse Minds' course. This is a unique course with diversity at its core, and opportunity to engage with both creative health activities and circle-based talking approaches.
- We are delivering tasters and workshops for ethnically minoritised wellbeing groups, including the Inclusion Gloucestershire led Women's Wellbeing Group at the Friendship Café in Gloucester in 2024/25.
- Current and future business plans will include an ongoing commitment to targeted projects and initiatives where there's an identified gap in participation.
- We will amplify the voices of team members, volunteers and participants from minoritised communities (where appropriate and mutually agreed), and support relevant debate through a range of means including promotional activity and events.

## Fundraise and invest

- We have secured the support of the Barnwood Trust, enabling acceleration of our Diversity and Disability action plans. This includes:
  - investment in team training and sharing of practice around race, identity and bias, LGBTQIA+ awareness, and pushing forwards disability access best practice
  - implementation of a marketing campaign co-designed to engage Black, Asian and other marginalised communities in Gloucestershire.
- We are currently seeking funds for a partnership project with Restore Black CIC through which to bring down barriers in Black communities to therapeutic Creative Health and counselling services.
- We will continue to co-produce with Black and Asian Artists, Black/Asian-led organisations and participants and fundraise for targeted initiatives and projects.

## Workforce diversification

- Artlift ran a targeted recruitment campaign in 2021 to, with partner Art Shape, to diversify our Creative Health Practitioner workforce. This was done alongside Black and Asian-led partner organisations.
- We are a member of the Future Talent steering group, which carried out consultation and conversations in 2023 and '24 through which to understand needs and gaps in the sector.  
We're working towards a training and development framework through which to bring through the next generation of diverse Creative Health practitioners and managerial / administrative staff.
- We partnered with Black-led youth focused CIC Your Next Move in 2020 to support diversification of our workforce and artform offer. In 2024 and 25, we are providing whole organisation consultancy, training and mentoring to build the skills, confidence and resources of Your Next Move to develop a Creative Health programme through hip hop.
- We include a positive action statement in our advertised jobs and opportunities.
- We have diversified our Board, welcoming a Black and South Asian Trustee (the latter having now joined the paid team), and we continue targeted headhunting, positively encouraging applications from potential Trustees from minoritised communities.
- We are supported by an Asian advisor to the Board, who co-wrote a 2021 paper on Health Inequalities in Gloucestershire.
- We will regularly review our procedures around recruitment to identify and remove barriers that disproportionately affect applicants with protected characteristics. This process will be informed by the voices of those with protected characteristics.

### **Consultation and expanding internal awareness**

- In 2020, Artlift ran an online session for all staff led by a Black Diversity consultant to benchmark where we are as an organisation and to explore our response to BLM. This resulted in formation of a (phase 1) working party and devising of our Cultural Diversity Action Plan. We will continue to review and develop our Plan with Trustees, team members, volunteers and partners from minoritised communities.
- We worked with paid consultants from the All Nations Community Centre and Gloucester Hindu Cultural Association to co-produce and co-promote a 2021 Artist recruitment campaign in partnership with Art Shape.
- During autumn 2021 and spring 2022 we engaged in a Representation Programme with peer organisations in other parts of the UK, led by Mabadiliko CIC. This informed updates to our Diversity Action Plan including individual staff members' commitment to ongoing reading and learning.
- We have recently convened a Diversity Co-Production group including partners from the Diverse Ethnic Research Alliance, Restore Black, Gloucestershire Health and Care, the Wellbeing College, All Nations Community Centre, and Gloucester Hindu Cultural Association.  
This group will work to co-design and develop a programme of work called 'Strength in Diversity'.
- As mentioned under 'Fundraise and Invest', we have scheduled training and sharing of practice in 2025 to include sessions on race, identity and bias awareness.
- We will continue to consult on organisational language and imagery used to ensure we eradicate any barriers to access we may be sub-consciously creating.

### **Listen**

- We will contribute to, and learn from, emergent thinking across the Creative Health sector, and continue to work on diversifying the sector with our local and national partners.
- We are excited to think more about intersectionality. Artlift has a proud history of working with and for disabled people including those with mental ill health. It is important that we

listen and learn more about how the issues affecting these groups interface with issues of race and displacement.

This statement reflects our ongoing commitment to maintain the organisation's efforts around listening to, supporting and amplifying the creative voices of the most marginalised people in our community.

We will draw on anti-racism resources and reading materials to become better informed about privilege as an organisation at all levels. We will continue to keep a dialogue open.

We promise to hold ourselves accountable and to listen. We are open to discussion and will take action when we make mistakes.

Contact Executive Director Cath Wilkins if you'd like to talk – [cath@artlift.org](mailto:cath@artlift.org) / 01452 222 726