 **Equality and Diversity Action Plan**

# Theatr Iolo’s vision is for a society in which all children can feel empowered and inspired. We stive to do this by enriching the lives of children through memorable experiences that challenge the mind and stir the imagination*.*

## We work with the best artists, writers, and creatives, to create memorable and bold live theatre, workshops, and activities in both English and Welsh. Our work for babies, children, and teenagers is toured across Wales, the UK and internationally.

This Equality and Diversity Action Plan aims to demonstrate Theatr Iolo’s continuing commitment to integrate equality of opportunity as a guiding principle underpinning the organisation’s work. We are committed to making our organisation representative of the society we live in, provide opportunities for all to shape the programme and make them feel like they can belong to the company as an associate, artist, practitioner, performer, or an audience member.

We believe theatre is a positive and effective way to connect to children and young people. Theatre and the dramatic arts can provide a safe and nurturing environment to help young people open up, explore and learn about themselves and the world in which they live.

*Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate feely in cultural life and the arts. Member governments shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity. -* **Article 31, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**

As Article 31 in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states above, Theatr Iolo believes that all children should have access to stimulating, surprising and meaningful theatre experiences. Theatre is a unique art form, it is a dialogue that can only happen in the moment - we question, share and begin to understand ourselves and our place in the world. Theatr Iolo makes work that is a celebration and exploration of what it is to be human, and we fiercely believe that young people should have access and be part of this dialogue.

Theatr Iolo aims to be as accessible as possible, and we consider the opportunities of what that will bring at the outset of all productions and projects that we undertake. Access services and cultural diversity are at the forefront of our thinking.

Our approach to equality and diversity

Our approach to equality and diversity includes our staff and board recruitment, our creative work, the freelancers we work with and the methods we use to reach audiences. Although we recognise that there is more work to be done to achieve our aims of becoming a more diverse organisation in all of these areas, we move forward to become anti-racist and anti-ableist and conduct zero tolerance to any form of discrimination or inequality.

This Equality and Diversity Action Plan is updated annually and aims to demonstrate our continuing commitment to integrate equality of opportunity as a guiding principle underpinning our work. We recognise our responsibilities within the Equality Act 2010 and our plan aims to tackle the nine protected characteristics under the Act:

* Age
* Disability
* Gender reassignment
* Marriage and civil partnership
* Pregnancy and maternity
* Race
* Religion and belief
* Sex
* Sexual Orientation

In addition to these, we also add the following two characteristics;

* Protection of the Welsh language, Welsh-speakers and learners.
* Those who suffer from economic poverty, rural poverty or poverty of ambition.

We have organised this plan to ensure a better reflection of the diversity of Wales in 4 key areas:

1)  Recruitment of our staff;

2)  Our board and governance;

3)  The theatre that we create and programme, and the freelancers that we employ;

4)  The audiences that we reach.

Staff Recruitment

In 2023-2024, Theatr Iolo had four contracted staff, and a 10-month part time apprenticeship post. These 5 people are made up of 40% male and 60% female, with an age range of 24-53 and 80% from low socio-economic backgrounds. 40% of the staff team are gay with 60% being straight. One staff member is fluent in the Welsh language, whilst two staff members have limited skills, and two are beginners. 80% are from a White ethnic group and 20% are Arab, 80% do not follow any religion and 20% are Muslim. 60% identify as Welsh with 20% English and 20% as British. None of the staff team have any disabilities.

We recognise that there is work to do, to improve our recruitment procedures to encourage a more diverse set of applicants and therefore a more diverse team. However, our recruitment procedures have become more robust and include more inclusive processes over the last five years. We are committed to public advertising for all contracted staff in an open recruitment and selection process. We continue to collect best practice data from all applicants and appointments and use this data to analyse, monitor and set achievable targets each year.

We have also developed our induction process for all new staff, and we continue to create an inclusive workplace culture and promote equal progression. We pay for training for all our staff and board on Anti-Racism, Unconscious Bias and Disability Equality Action. This training plan is to make sure our leadership is anti-racist and anti-ableist and conducts zero tolerance to any form of discrimination or inequality. Our staff team also continue to advocate for wider change and attend events and activities designed to advocate, inform, and drive positive change in the arts. We will remain humble, admit when we don’t know, be open, keen to learn and accountable.

Board and Governance

In 2023-2024, our board had representation from the legal, HR, finance, business, arts and strategic marketing fields, but we recognised the need to improve our representation within protected characteristics. As and when Board members leave, our recruitment drive is targeted to improve this representation.

The board was made up of 20% male, 80% female, with 60% over 50 years of age and 10% under 30. 100% defined themselves as straight. 60% state that they don’t follow any religion, whilst 30% are Christian and 10% Jewish. 90% are white ethnicity and 10% are from mixed ethnic origin. 10% of the board are disabled and 20% are fluent in Welsh language with 30% having basic Welsh language skills.

We will continue to appoint a quality board, that not only has board members who appear diverse, but by selecting board members who are capable of thinking and communicating diverse thoughts and opinions. We try to create and maintain an environment where board directors trust one another enough to bring forth opposing opinions about challenging issues. For new and in- experienced board members we match them with a more experienced ‘Board Buddy’ to help them navigate the whole board experience and look for opportunities for our board members to talk to other boards about shared experiences and perspectives.

Freelancers

Theatr Iolo wants to work with the best theatre makers, writers and practitioners and use our skills to develop and support new talent. We want to create ground-breaking work with exciting and brave partners who constantly challenge and stretch us. We commit to use our experience and position to help grow our network of writers, creatives, artists, and practitioners and help to showcase the best in Wales to the rest of Wales, the UK and beyond.

We love to collaborate with different partners and are curious to learn from them, thrive on their enthusiasm and are energised by their fresh approaches. We want to partner with a diverse mix of collaborators to reflect what we create.

Trust is fundamental in our partnerships, and we expect working relationships to be confident and assured. We are open and honest with our partners. We communicate our aims clearly with enthusiasm and learn from partners who share the same values. We are reflective and work together to review, learn and improve.

Our programme of activity is as varied as it is brave and aims to consolidate the existing audience base, we have cultivated across schools, venues and family audiences over the last number of years. It also has the scope to go beyond market penetration and develop new audiences and diversify our income streams within the family, young adult, and school audience sectors.

We recognise that to truly engage a diverse audience, a variety of life experiences, perspectives and backgrounds must be reflected in the work we create and present. As a producer and presenter, it starts with the stories that we are looking to tell. We are always looking to increase the number of playwrights who are from marginalized communities and are writing stories of these communities and lived experiences. We commit to carrying out as many open call outs as we can for freelance positions for on- and off-stage roles.

In 2023-2024, the freelancers that we employed were 67% female and 33% male. 90% were straight, 1% were gay, 1% bisexual, 1% other and 5% preferred not to say. 80% had no religion and 20% Christian. 78% identified as Welsh and 22% British. 19% were disabled. 78% had white ethnicity, 13% had black ethnicity, 5% had mixed ethnicity and 1% Black African. 38% were fluent Welsh speakers, 22% spoke some Welsh and 29% had no Welsh language abilities.

We commit to the continued capturing of data and monitoring of all casts and creative teams that we employ. We commit to inclusive casting and creative team public call outs wherever possible to increase the visibility of opportunities.

Audience Development

When a child and their adult/s come to a Theatr Iolo production we want their experience to be of the highest quality and as inclusive as it can be, so that we can gain their trust for the future. We want audiences to trust us to make them feel included, inspired, and entertained by relevant, accessible productions and projects.

We want to ignite creativity and imagination in all the children that we reach and work with, in both Welsh and English. We want to reach as many young people as possible, particularly those that have not had access to live theatre before. We want to create work that is relevant to the time and to the audience, whilst acknowledging and striving to understand the diverse nature of their stories and lived experiences.

We remain committed to removing barriers to attendance and strive to offer genuine and inclusive opportunities. To achieve this, we identify a range of barriers to attendance for families and schools. We consider these factors both strategically and during the early planning stages of every production or project. We also make them an integral part of our audience development strategies once a production or project is underway.

To overcome the barriers, we offer a diverse and accessible range of live theatre experiences. Our programme is designed to develop and sustain our audiences within our resources and within our all-Wales touring strategy, whilst also maximising our involvement in the Arts Council of Wales Creative Learning through the Arts Go and See initiative as well as touring to Night Out venues.

The pandemic and subsequent theatre venues closure and audience restrictions in 2020 and 2021, presented many challenges and opportunities for Theatr Iolo. We created free digital content and launched a podcast channel, online playwriting resources and produced audio plays written by young playwrights. We also created a new outdoor show, called ***Baby, Bird & Bee*** with Sarah Argent and Kevin Lewis for babies, many of which had been born in lockdown and were families we had not previously engaged with. We also purchased an exhibition trailer that we converted into a ‘Travelling Theatre’ with money from ACW’s Cultural Recovery Grant. We created ***HOOF!*** with Kitsch n Sync for the travelling theatre and took the show direct to outside closed arts venues, community settings and school playgrounds. We were able to give away a large proportion of the tickets to families who faced the highest deprivation, many of which had never been to a theatre production before.

All these activities, digital and live events in the last couple of years have increased the awareness and visibility of the company. They have also strengthened our local links in Cardiff and Newport and with families and communities in Riverside, Ely, Butetown, Grangetown and Llanrumney.

Our programme of activity is as varied as it is brave, and is planned to further consolidate the strides, we have taken during the last three years. Whilst the industry recovers, further adaptability, responsiveness, and flexibility are going to be key in our programme planning going forward. We need to use all the skills and expertise we have gained from our digital activities and outdoor productions over the last three years to continue to innovate, increase accessibility and reach more families across Wales.

**Connecting with families**As a children’s theatre company, one of our challenges is not being able to communicate directly with all our audience and in particular, the children and young people themselves, as adults tend to be their gatekeepers. As we are a touring company, we also often have to go through the venues we tour to, in order to speak directly to our audiences.

The introduction of the Theatr Iolo Audience Host in 2022 to tour with all our under 11 shows, gives us a unique opportunity to engage directly with our audiences and hear the voices of our young audiences. This enables us to improve their experience of coming to the theatre, as well giving their adults confidence in the Theatr Iolo brand.

**Connecting with schools**

We regularly consult with local Cardiff schools and involve them in the Theatr Iolo live production creative process wherever possible. We also continue to build our connections and relationships with key additional schools further afield from across the breadth of Wales. We achieve this by ensuring we have a range of opportunities and provisions that meet their specific needs. Such as a regularity of follow-up activity opportunities on school grounds or at venues, including the Playhouse project, that partners with The Riverfront in Newport.

Within our supporting materials and educational workshops that wrap around the live productions, we highlight the curriculum links and create school prices. We also provide be-spoke creative learning and expressive arts workshops for schools throughout the school year to help them meet a particular need, delivered through a thematic approach. All of this helps us to build stronger connections with schools and teachers.

**Audiences from disadvantaged backgrounds / the child poverty agenda**

Our Travelling Theatre gives us the ability to take our shows and activities direct to families in their own local communities, removing some of the barriers to attendance. During the last three years we have been engaging with the Grangetown, Canton and Llanrumney communities in Cardiff and targeting children living in poverty by offering them free tickets to shows, workshops and free Creative Play Packs.

As well as addressing our locality and working with local community groups, families, and schools etc. we will continue to tour to venues in and around Wales. Our touring strategy will try to offer something in the cold spots throughout Wales and we aim to offer several productions in both English, Welsh, and non-verbal for different age groups, with different access needs. We particularly target specific postcodes in areas of high deprivation offering free tickets, workshops, and activities. Work created for Welsh speaking families will also be made accessible to families with a mixture of Welsh language skills in the home by providing wrap around support for learners.

**Partnership building**

At the heart of our planned programme of work to develop audiences lies our commitment to nurture and seek new relationships and partnerships that hold the key to increase the reach of our artistic output. To reach children from all social classes, we are looking to partner with third sector agencies and community groups in the local areas.

Just some of the third sector organisations and other key partners we have started to connect with for past and future projects, include Age Cymru, Oasis Centre, Welsh Refugee Council, Barnados Cymru, Cardiff Women’s Aid, Flying Start, Wales Deaf Hub, Sightlife, foodbanks, sports development teams and Youth Councils across Wales.

Partnerships will also include further co-productions and commissions, undertaken with highly respected and high-profile organisations, and venues. We will also be looking to develop our networks with digital, film and streaming companies, to improve our digital content output.

Targets

At the end of each financial year (April to March) we monitor all the equal opportunity forms that we receive back from all staff, board and freelancers that we work with. This outlines our current position and helps us to determine where we would like to be. From this data we outline several targets, but we also recognise and are aware of inter-sectionality and will not be assuming that any categories are mutually exclusive. We have compared the last three years as a minimum to see how we are progressing with these targets;

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| ETHNICITY TARGETS | BOARD | | STAFF | | ASSOCIATE ARTISTS | | FREELANCERS | |  |
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| **Year (April-March)** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **AVERAGES** |
| 2021-2022 | 20% | 13% | 20% | 0% | 17% | 17% | 25% | 8% | 10% |
| 2022-2023 | 20% | 13% | 20% | 0% | 17% | 17% | 25% | 18% | 12% |
| 2023-2024 | 20% | 10% | 20% | 20% | 17% | 17% | 25% | 22% | 17% |
| AVERAGE OVER THREE YEARS | | 12% |  | 7% |  | 17% |  | 16% | 13% |
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| DISABILITY TARGETS | BOARD | | STAFF | | ASSOCIATE ARTISTS | | FREELANCERS | |  |
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| **Year (April-March)** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **AVERAGES** |
| 2021-2022 | 20% | 13% | 15% | 0% | 17% | 17% | 20% | 9% | 10% |
| 2022-2023 | 20% | 13% | 15% | 0% | 17% | 17% | 20% | 2% | 8% |
| 2023-2024 | 20% | 10% | 15% | 0% | 17% | 17% | 20% | 19% | 12% |
| AVERAGE OVER THREE YEARS | | 12% |  | 0% |  | 17% |  | 10% | 10% |
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| WELSH SPEAKER TARGETS | BOARD | | STAFF | | ASSOCIATE ARTISTS | | FREELANCERS | |  |
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| **Year (April-March)** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **TARGET** | **ACTUAL** | **AVERAGES** |
| 2021-2022 | 20% | 25% | 20% | 25% | 17% | 17% | 30% | 25% | 23% |
| 2022-2023 | 20% | 25% | 20% | 25% | 17% | 17% | 30% | 16% | 21% |
| 2023-2024 | 20% | 20% | 20% | 20% | 17% | 17% | 30% | 38% | 24% |
| AVERAGE OVER THREE YEARS | | 23% |  | 23% |  | 17% |  | 26% | 23% |

**ACTION PLAN**

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| **OBJECTIVE 1: Ensure our staff team better reflect the diversity of Wales** |
| **Where are we currently?**  In 2023-2024, Theatr Iolo had four contracted staff, and a 10-month part time apprenticeship post. These 5 people are made up of 40% male and 60% female, with an age range of 24-53 and 80% from low socio-economic backgrounds. 40% of the staff team are gay with 60% being straight. One staff member is fluent in the Welsh language, whilst two staff members have limited skills, and two are beginners. 80% are from a White ethnic group and 20% are Arab, 80% do not follow any religion and 20% are Muslim. 60% identify as Welsh with 20% English and 20% as British. None of the staff team have any disabilities.  Our staff handbook and Induction process is reviewed annually with up-to-date policies on parental, adoption leave and flexible working practices. A new recruitment and selection procedure for all contracted roles was introduced in 2020, which also reviewed our template Job Descriptions and Job Specs for outdated assumptions, jargon and hidden barriers, introduced a standard application form and anonymising the applications for the shortlisting.  We collect and monitor Equality Monitoring data on all staff, freelancers and volunteers and publish this data on our website.  We are members of the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) and are Ethical Managers so adhere to the minimum ITC rates of pay for all freelancers.  **What did we achieve in the last year?**  The staff team has had a low turnover of staff with the two leadership roles being in place since 2018 and the other two positions in place since 2019. The Apprentice started work in October 2023 and will be in place until July 2024.  We continued membership of the PiPA Charter and include family friendly and caring responsibilities in our employment practices for all staff. We continue to monitor and analyse all Equal Opportunities Forms and publicise this data on our website.  We arranged and paid for staff to attend Anti-Racist training, Unconscious Bias training, d/Deaf Awareness and general disability awareness training sessions. |
| **What do we want to achieve?**  We want to continue to have an inclusive approach to recruitment and welcome applications from a diverse range of candidates without prejudice and deploy recruitment methods that actively encourages and facilitates this. Ultimately, we want more diverse applications and a more diverse staff team. We want leadership and all roles representing the organisation to be anti-racist, anti-ableist and who has zero tolerance for any form of discrimination or inequality.  We want Diversity in the workplace that concentrates on staff recognising difference. Valuing different viewpoints and approaches, as well as the workforce being representative of the communities that we seek to serve and/or engage.  We want to make sure that our inclusion focuses on how we can ensure our workers can fulfil their potential, regardless of their background, identity, or situation. An inclusive workforce sees the benefit of a diverse range of people working together and makes individuals feel equally valued and able to contribute. |
| **What are we going to do?**   * Continue membership of the PiPA Charter and include family friendly and caring responsibilities in our employment practices. * Develop our Equal opps form in Spring 2024. Continue to monitor and analyse all Equal Opportunities Forms and publicise this data on our website. * Continue to pay for all staff to attend Anti-Racist training and Unconscious Bias training. * Continue to pay for all staff to attend up to date d/Deaf Awareness and general disability awareness training sessions. * Continue to have an inclusive approach to recruitment. * Continue to pay and support staff to attend suitable Welsh language training. * Pay for and support staff to attend suitable BSL training courses. * If there is any turnover in staff, then we will try to retain 20% of the staff team being ethnically diverse and 20% being fluent in Welsh and try to reach the target of 15% of the staff having a disability. |
| **Evidence Base:**   * Use our annual equalities monitoring data intelligently and effectively to help set targets and identify issues and barriers. * Attendance at training sessions. |
| **Programmes:**   * Recruitment & Selection Process and Policy * Staff Induction and Handbook * Staff training, probation and annual appraisal * Freelance Induction Pack |
| **OBJECTIVE 2: Ensure our board better reflects the diversity of Wales** |
| **Where are we currently?**  In 2023-2024, the board was made up of 20% male, 80% female, with 60% over 50 years of age and 10% under 30. 100% defined themselves as straight. 60% state that they don’t follow any religion, whilst 30% are Christian and 10% Jewish. 90% are white ethnicity and 10% are from mixed ethnic origin. 10% of the board are disabled and 20% are fluent in Welsh language with 30% having basic Welsh language skills.  **What did we achieve in the last year?**  We lost one board member this year and a second went on maternity leave for a year. We recruited three new board members, one of which is aged under 30, to gain a younger perspective. |
| **What do we want to achieve?**  We want to continue to have a quality board, that not only has members who appear diverse, but by selecting members, who are capable of thinking and communicating diverse thoughts and opinions. Our targets for the board are to have 20% ethnically diverse, 20% fluent Welsh speakers and 20% of disabled people.  We want to maintain an environment where board members trust one another enough to bring forth opposing opinions about challenging issues. In a nutshell, we want a board which better reflects the diversity of Wales, and which has a greater understanding of the diversity of Wales.  We have a succession plan in place and try to recruit new trustees regularly and offer as much training and development opportunities as we can. We make sure that our trustees have all the tools and training in place to make sure they are anti-racist, anti-ableist and who have zero tolerance for any form of discrimination or inequality.  We set up all new trustees with a ‘Board Buddy’ to help them navigate the commitment and boost confidence in the first year. Annual appraisals are carried out and training was offered to all board members on Anti-Racism and Unconscious Bias. |
| **What are we going to do?**   * Our chair will be retiring at the end of 2024 and we are set to lose a couple more trustees in 2025 as their 6 year tenure ends. We will be looking for Welsh speaking and/or more diverse and represent specialisms in Finance, Community or HR. * Continue to offer and pay for Board Governance Training for all new trustees. * Continue to offer and pay for Anti-Racist and Unconscious Bias Training for all new trustees. * Continue to offer and pay for Disability Awareness training for all trustees. |
| **Evidence Base:**   * Annual Board recruitment drive. * Equality data monitored for all recruitment and for existing trustees. * Attendance of Training sessions |
| **Programmes:**   * Board recruitment pack. * Board Induction and annual appraisal process. |

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| **OBJECTIVE 3: Increase the diversity of the freelancers we work with and the work that we produce** |
| **Where are we currently?**  In 2023-2024, the freelancers that we employed were 67% female and 33% male. 90% were straight, 1% were gay, 1% bisexual, 1% other and 5% preferred not to say. 80% had no religion and 20% Christian. 78% identified as Welsh and 22% British. 19% were disabled. 78% had white ethnicity, 13% had black ethnicity, 5% had mixed ethnicity and 1% Black African. 38% were fluent Welsh speakers, 22% spoke some Welsh and 29% had no Welsh language abilities.  We are members of the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) and are Ethical Managers so adhere to the minimum ITC rates of pay for all freelancers.  **What did we achieve in the last year?**   * Our target for employing disabled freelancers was 20%, last year we worked with 19% disabled people, (10% average over the last 3 years). * Our target for employing freelancers from diverse ethnicities was 25% and last year we achieved 22% (16% average over the last three years). * Our target for employing Welsh speakers was 30% and we achieved 38% last year. (26% average over the last 3 years) * 10% of our freelancers are from the LGBTQi+ community (12% average over the last 3 years) |
| **What do we want to achieve?**  We recognise that to truly engage a diverse audience, a variety of life experiences, perspectives and backgrounds must be reflected in the work we create and present.  We want to work with the best theatre makers, writers and practitioners and use our skills to develop and support new talent. We commit to use our experience and position to help grow our network of writers, creatives, artists and practitioners and help to showcase the best in Wales to the rest of Wales, the UK and beyond.  We want to collaborate with different partners and are curious to learn from them, thrive on their enthusiasm and energised by their fresh approaches. We want to partner with a diverse mix of collaborators to reflect what we create.  Our targets for freelancers are; 20% disabled people, 25% people who are black, Asian or of mixed ethnic origin and 30% Welsh speakers. |
| **What are we going to do?**   * Continue to capture equalities data and monitor and assess all casts and creative teams we work with and identify barriers and issues that this raises. * Continue with the Platfform project to encourage more artists, writers, creatives from culturally and ethnically diverse, Welsh speaking, D/deaf and disabled communities to work with us and/or bring us their own projects/ideas they want us to help support and/or commission. * Continue to carry out public call outs and inclusive casting for stage managers, creatives, writers, actors and creative practitioners for a number of projects. * Continue to issue an access rider to all artists we work with, in order to encourage everyone to outline their access needs as to how we can help support them during the productions. * Continue to issue a Freelancer Induction Pack when contracting to make sure everyone sees the Equity Safe Spaces statement and all useful information that they may need about the organisation and policies and procedures that are relevant to them. * Continue to facilitate, offer support and join where appropriate open space discussions, forums and taskforces to instigate meaningful change, share resource and knowledge and open doors including within running TYA Cymru. |
| **Evidence base:**   * Call out responses. * Completed data monitoring forms of all freelancers we work with and who apply to call outs. * Artistic Programme. * Platfform |
| **Programmes:**   * Inclusive Casting Policy. * Public call outs. |

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| **OBJECTIVE 4: Increase the diversity of the audiences that we reach** |
| **Where are we currently?**  We are not able to collect information about the protected characteristics of our audience and participants for all productions. As a touring company, the majority of our contact with audiences takes place through a venue intermediary.  All our public-facing materials and promotions are produced bi-lingually, with each language being treated equally.  **What did we achieve in the last year?**   * In January 2023 to April 2024, we collaborated with a number of organisations, including Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru, Sherman Theatre, Polka, Krystal Lowe and Graeae to stretch our resources and increase the number of children and young people we could reach. * In February/March 2023 we took the rights that we had secured to co-produce ***Pijin/Pigeon*** with Theatr Gen to create a bi-lingual mid-scale theatre show for teenagers and adults that toured Wales. * In December 23-January 24, we co-produced the Sherman Theatre Christmas show ***Peter Pan*** on their main stage. We worked with the Sherman to offer the best affordable ticket deals to families and also gave away tickets to good causes for selected performances for good causes to increase access. * In order to improve cultural diversity on and off our stage, we also supported Krystal Lowe with her production of ***Remarkable Rhythm***. We also further developed ***Welsh Dragon***, written by Kyle Lima and created by black or black mixed race artists with a 3 week R&D process. * In 2023, we created our **Young Voices** advisory group, made up of 11 children from age 8 to 16. This group attended a sharing of a show in development and helped to shape its future direction. We also worked with 552 school children in themed workshops to explore the themes in the show. * We also produced and toured a remount of our show ***Owl at Home*** to Welsh venues and also showcased the show at two English venues. With this show we developed our access offering and improved the experience for children with additional needs. * Over the last two years, we have increased the amount of Audio Described performances for Blind and partially sighted children and their adults for every production we were involved with. We also developed our links with organisations across Wales to develop these audiences and spread awareness of the service. * We were also successful in obtaining a small grant from the Co-op foundation to be able to pay for and deliver another 250 Creative Play Packs to families in need within Taff Housing in Cardiff. |
| **What do we want to achieve?**  When a child and their adult/s come to a Theatr Iolo production we want to gain their trust, so that their experience will be of the highest quality and as inclusive as it can be. We want them to trust us to feel included, be inspired and entertained with relevant accessible productions and projects.  We want to ignite creativity and imagination in all the children that we reach and work with, in both Welsh and English languages. We want to offer them the most creative, stimulating and surprising opportunities that gets them thinking, challenging their expectations and inspiring them to see more. We want to help young people open up and learn about themselves and the world in which they live.  We want to reach as many young people as possible and particularly those that have not had access to live theatre before. We want to create work that is relevant to the time and to the audience and acknowledge that not all audience members are the same and so strive to understand the diverse nature of their stories. We aim to remove barriers to attendance and strive to offer genuine and inclusive opportunities. |
| **What are we going to do?**   * Continue to develop our touring strategies to include the cold spots throughout Wales that have little cultural activity/funding and look how we can develop the access to audiences from disadvantaged backgrounds, potentially by using our travelling theatre and also taking into account environmental considerations. * Continue to try to find funding to develop our Outreach programme to develop relationships with schools and communities by partnering with other third sector agencies and community groups to increase our reach. * Continue to develop relationships that help to promote and develop our access service in and around our productions. * Review the latest techniques and equipment/software and find the funding to help us purchase or hire, in order to deliver more audio description and/or captioned performances. * Provide wrap around Welsh language support for learners for our Welsh language shows, looking at ways to increase the experience of the audience. * Continue with the *Playhouse* project and work in partnership with The Riverfront in Newport, in areas of challenge and with a diverse local community. * Pay for and arrange BSL training for staff members. * Continue with our **Young Playwrights project** for young people aged 7-16 to submit new short plays and deliver free playwriting workshops in schools that we identified as being located in deprived areas or schools that had children from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. This is to improve aspiration and increase the diversity of entries we received. * Continue to advise and support our resident venues to develop best practice when programming, welcoming, access and marketing to families and schools and ultimately grow TYA audiences. * Continue to fund an Audience Host to go out with each under 11 tour to offer a consistent family friendly welcome at all venues across Wales. * Continue to push our Pricing Strategy advice for venues and work with our touring partners to keep ticket prices low and look to subsidise as many tickets as possible to their most deprived areas so that we can make our productions as accessible as possible to a wide range of audiences. |
| **Evidence base:**   * Audience data monitoring * Artistic Programme * Access services monitoring and review * Training Attendance |
| **Programmes:**   * Touring Strategy * Marketing & Communications Strategy * Access Touring Rider |

