

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy & Action Plan

<b>Date of Approval / Last Revision</b>	May 2026
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	May 2027
<b>Purpose</b>	Provide equality, fairness and respect for every one engaged in our activities or in our employment - whether temporary, part-time or full-time.
<b>Summary</b>	TRACS is committed actively to promoting and valuing equality, diversity and inclusion amongst its employees, volunteers, stakeholders, partners and audiences.
<b>Scope</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff grades and positions</li> <li>• All Board members</li> <li>• All temporary, freelance, volunteer, student, advisory and consultant workers engaged by or representing TRACS.</li> <li>• All events, projects and partnerships entered into by TRACS.</li> </ul>
<b>Related Policies</b>	TRACS Fair Work Policy and Action Plan; TRACS Anti-bullying and Anti-harassment Policy
<b>Key Contact(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">TRACS CEO</a> (line management queries)</li> <li>2. <a href="#">TRACS Operations Manager</a> (administrative queries)</li> </ol>

## TRACS (Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland)

Registered Office: Scottish Storytelling Centre, 43-45 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1SR  
 Scottish Charity No. SC043009      VAT Registration No. 269 2679 51



# Introduction

TRACS (Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland) holds Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) for all at the heart of its ethos and activities.

A key principle is traditional arts "in" Scotland, not just "of" Scotland, recognising that traditional artforms from across the world are often the means by which voices hidden from the mainstream of society are heard.

TRACS aims to engage civic society, national cultural agencies and local authorities in fostering a shared sense of responsibility and opportunity around traditional arts in Scotland as a vehicle for empowerment and inclusion.

We recognise the connection between active citizenship, culture and heritage, and that EDI underpins this. TRACS actively explores the traditional arts and ICH (Intangible Cultural Heritage) as a conduit to an inclusive national identity, community cohesion, and integration.

The following EDI Policy and Action Plan has been produced both to comply with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and to the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 (see 2 below), and to outline TRACS' approach to embedding EDI throughout its operation.

## **1.1. Agreement to follow this policy**

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is fully supported and approved by TRACS Board and Senior Management.

## **1.2. Monitoring and Review**

TRACS' Director is responsible for monitoring the application of this policy, but it is the duty of every Staff and Board member to ensure that the terms of this policy are adhered to and upheld.

Employment practices and procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure fairness, and they and this policy updated to reflect changes in good practice and the law.

Monitoring will also include assessing how this policy, and the associated EDI Action Plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

## **1.3. Related Policies and Procedures**

The EDI Policy and Action Plan interacts crucially, and should be read in conjunction, with the TRACS Fair Work Policy and Action Plan; the TRACS Anti-bullying and

Anti-harassment Policy; and the TRACS Disciplinary and Grievance procedures, as outlined in the Employment Handbook.

## **2. The Equality Act 2010 and General Duty**

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It sets out the personal characteristics that are protected by the law and the behaviour that is unlawful.

### **2.1. The ‘Protected Characteristics’**

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

### **2.2. Public Sector Equality Duty**

Associated with the Equality Act is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED, April 2011). This requires public organisations to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work: in shaping policy; procuring and delivering services; and in relation to their own employees.

The PSED is divided into two parts: General and Specific - the General applying to all public sector organisations; the specific to those on a defined list (including TRACS’ principal funder, Creative Scotland).

The General Duty requires organisations to:

- Put an end to unlawful behaviour that is banned by the Equality Act 2010, including discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equal opportunities between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

## **3. Categories of EDI**

TRACS is committed actively to promoting equality throughout its collective and creative networks, and to ensuring that no one is denied opportunities or discriminated against on the grounds of any or all of the following categories:

### **3.1. Protected Characteristics**

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

### **3.2. Lived Experience**

- Neurodivergence
- Poor physical health or mental health
- Socio-economic background
- Growing up in the care system
- Being Carers
- Living a nomadic life
- Speaking Gaelic, Scots or Traveller languages
- Not speaking English as a primary language
- Displacement, such as refugees and asylum seekers
- Where you live

### **3.3. Employment**

- Pay and benefits
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Grievances and disciplinary
- Dismissal
- Redundancy
- Parental leave (maternity and paternity)
- Working from home
- Requests for flexible working
- Selection for promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

N.B. These categories are not exhaustive; but serve as a 'checklist' to aid TRACS in continually improving its focus and transparency in relation to EDI.

## **4. TRACS - Led by Diversity**

With key members of TRACS' leadership team and boards holding several protected characteristics and lived experiences between them, we believe TRACS to be a diversity-led organisation.

### **4.1. Board**

In the recent study, "Diversity at the Top: Leadership in Scottish Media & Culture," published by Engender in August 2023, TRACS was one of only 6 organisations from 48 highlighted as having over 70% women on its board, and this is mirrored across our Forum boards (which were not individually surveyed). TRACS two constituent Forums (Scottish Storytelling Forum and Traditional Music Forum) are both currently chaired by women.

### **4.2. Staff**

Our staff is of diverse linguistic and cultural background, including members of the LGBTQ+ community and people with non-visible disabilities, the latter including the new Director. The current workforce is 60% female, 40% male. In addition, our staff and board have above average abilities in Gaelic, Scots and BSL, with over 40% of respondents being speakers of another language; in several cases English is not their first language.

### **4.3. Contractors and Volunteers**

Each year we conduct a survey of our artists and partners, staff and board members to monitor the protected characteristics of those we work with. Our most recent figures show that, amongst our performer base, 30% have a disability, 66% are female, and 12% are from the LGBTQ+ community. Our surveys generally achieve completion rates ranging between 85%-96%, so we are reassured that we have a good picture although we will work to improve these figures further.

## **5. TRACS' EDI Strategic Priorities**

TRACS has identified 4 EDI Strategic Priorities, cross-cutting all areas of its operation and programme and forming the basis of the EDI Action Plan below.

### **1) Ensure marginal voices are represented**

In addition to the nine legally protected characteristics, TRACS recognises other areas of marginalisation, such as socio-economic deprivation; children and families; climate justice; and minority cultures and languages, including Scots, Gaelic and the cultural expression of Traveller communities.

A large proportion of traditional arts are delivered through local languages that are often marginalised in society. We will include programming to support speakers of minority languages such as Scots, Gaelic and BSL.

TRACS champions the traditions of Scottish Travellers or Nawken, and we will continue to participate in Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month, and the Nawken Knowledge Project. We will include the at-risk languages of Cant and Beurla Reagaird in our languages policy.

### **2) Nurture and support inclusive and sustainable networks for Traditional Arts**

TRACS is committed actively to promoting and valuing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) amongst its employees, volunteers, audiences, stakeholders and partners.

The aim is for our workforce - permanent, freelance and volunteer - to be truly representative of all sections of society, to feel respected, and to be able to give their best.

Across our Forums, we are also cognisant of the important sector-specific work of e.g. the Bit Collective and Bogha-frois: Queer Voices in Folk. As a sector support body, we work to spread knowledge of these initiatives and support ongoing reviews and training to ensure we are employing best practice through the Creative Scotland-convened Traditional Arts Working Group and across our own boards, staff and networks.

### **3) Foster diverse voices through festivals and events**

EDI is at the heart of TRACS collaborative programme: Scottish International Storytelling Festival's (SISF) 'Open Call' and thematic programming; to the Scottish Storytelling Forum's (SSF) work with Re-Act: Refugee Action Scotland; to the Traditional Music Forum's (TMF) online platforms giving visibility to experiences of

practitioners living with a range of issues including disability, chronic illness, autism and poor mental health.

TRACS' partnership with the Scottish Storytelling Centre (SSC) supports year-round programming including Queer Folks' Tales, Sensing Stories with Intercultural Youth Scotland, the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival and Deaf Action.

TRACS will continue to collaborate with organisations supporting marginalised or disadvantaged communities (e.g. Scottish Community Alliance, BEMIS, Deafblind Scotland); as well as engaging directly with socially diverse communities including areas of multiple deprivation and disadvantage through e.g. our People's Parish project.

#### **4) Widen access to participation in TRACS' programmes**

TRACS programmes in-house and outreach events and projects that reflect the diversity of artists and their practice, and the past and contemporary cultural and historical landscape of the places or communities they represent.

TRACS aims to involve its audiences, artists and staff at all stages of the planning, implementation and evaluation of in-house and outreach programmes.

We want to celebrate diversity amongst our artists and audiences, and provide accessible routes into TRACS events and activity for people of all ages, backgrounds, and levels of understanding and awareness.

For events at the SSC, a range of descriptive Access Guides are produced and shows are offered with BSL Signing, Captioning, Social Distancing, Relaxed Performances and Touch Tours. SSC is listed on Euan's Guide for disabled access, and a full access statement for the Centre (incorporating TRACS branding) is available online and in a range of formats. The venue has received several awards for its accessibility.

# TRACS EDI Action Plan 2026-2027

## 1. Ensure marginal voices are represented

TARGET	ACTION	DEADLINE	RISK	RISK MITIGATION
A diverse Board and Staff cohort with due regard to the protected characteristics and other marginalised groups	Implement fair, transparent, and honest recruitment and selection processes	December 2026	Suitable candidates not forthcoming	Ensure opportunities advertised widely, well in advance, and beyond TRACS' standard networks
Minority cultures and speakers of minority languages in Scotland championed and supported	Revise TRACS Gaelic and Scots Language Policies, and add policies for Cant and Beurla Reagaird, to inform TRACS strategy and programming	October 2026	Communities and speakers not engaged	Contacts established and maintained through advocacy and networks
Inclusive directories of traditional arts performers developed and maintained to promote practitioners from all backgrounds	Access practitioners with protected characteristics through partner organisations e.g. Bogha-Frois, BEMIS, Deafblind Scotland	October 2026	Practitioners not forthcoming	Ensure opportunities advertised widely, well in advance, and beyond TRACS' standard networks

## 2. Nurture and support inclusive networks for Traditional Arts

TARGET	ACTION	DEADLINE	RISK	RISK MITIGATION
Access to Traditional Arts practice widened through professional mentoring and support, with protected characteristics prioritised	Provide at least 12 more funded Trad. Arts Mentoring Prog. opportunities across the traditional arts in 2026-27, prioritising practitioners with protected characteristics	March 2027	Funding not forthcoming	Continue to explore funding opportunities to support, extend, and widen access to the Traditional Arts Mentoring programme
EDI at the heart of all TRACS gatherings, and policy and planning events	Embed EDI strands in all forthcoming Forum Development Days, TradTalk events, and in the annual TRACS/Forum Gathering	December 2026	Importance of themes not recognised	Provide strong advocacy within TRACS governance and communications networks
TRACS workforce trained and conscious of up-to-date statutory EDI policy and concerns	Organise regular training sessions (at least 3) in the year 2026-27 for staff, board members and Forum networks	March 2027	Sessions not given priority by invitees	Encourage maximum attendance by making sessions free to attend and as accessible as possible
Awareness of EDI make-up across networks, as well as areas of need, full and maintained	Survey artists and creative practitioners at regular intervals over year 2026-27	March 2027	Surveys not completed	Make surveys as accessible as possible; ensure maximum distribution

### 3. Foster diverse voices through festivals and events

TARGET	ACTION	DEADLINE	RISK	RISK MITIGATION
Promote participation in SISF beyond TRACS established creative networks	Continue 'Open Call' process for the Scottish International Storytelling Festival, employing diverse selectors panel, including 2 creatives with protected characteristics	May 2026	Only existing TRACS network members participate	Advertise Open Call outwith TRACS existing network
Promote the use of minority languages, including Scots, Gaelic and BSL	Feature minority language events in network programming (festival, forums etc); continue to produce series of Gaelic and Scots podcasts (subject to funding) and keep Scots and Gaelic web content refreshed	October 2026	Events and communications do not reach target audience	Ensure content and services promoted widely through national and international networks and organs
Increase ethnic diversity in the traditional arts in Scotland	Enable and support up to 3 projects focussing on ethnic and/or religious diversity across TRACS networks with suitable partners	March 2027	Suitable partner organisations cannot be identified	Reach out to relevant networks of interest before designing projects

## 4. Widen access to participation in TRACS' programmes

TARGET	ACTION	DEADLINE	RISK	RISK MITIGATION
TRACS programme in festival and network events open to all - with specific focus on blind, deaf, disabled and neurodiverse people	Review and improve access features, such as BSL and sub-titling on live and digital platforms	March 2027	Unaffordable in TRACS' RFO-supported core budget	Designate funding within additional project bids for SISF
Diverse participation of young people in the Traditional Arts encouraged and prioritised	Partner with at least 2 key youth cultural organisations in year 2026-27 to raise awareness of TRACS work, ICH and opportunities in the Traditional Arts	March 2027	Suitable candidates not forthcoming	Integrate with People's Parish pilot projects and Culture Collective award budget
TRACS programme, services, venues and communications accessible, clear, consistent and relevant to all	Work with venues e.g. SSC to ensure all TRACS events (TradFest, SISF etc) are inclusive, diverse and accessible to all, through targeted marketing and access improvements	December 2026	Target audiences not reached/attracted	Targeted marketing through networks and partner organisations; targeted funds to support improvement of access features