



# **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2016-18**

**Agreed with Creative Scotland  
September 2016**

**Fèisean nan Gàidheal  
Meall House  
Portree  
Isle of Skye  
IV51 9BZ**

**[www.feisean.org](http://www.feisean.org)**

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2016-18

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Fèisean nan Gàidheal believes participation in the arts and creativity promotes equality and diversity, contributes to wellbeing and to the economy of Scotland.

The main purpose of the organisation is to support Gaelic arts provision for young people aged 0 to 25. Most of our members provide bilingual activities in Gaelic and English, while some provide Gaelic-medium activities. Children attending a Gaelic-medium Fèis, or related activity, would be expected to have a sufficient level of fluency in Gaelic to be able to participate in the event. Participation in bilingual Fèisean would normally involve some engagement with Gaelic language activities such as Gaelic Song, drama and language. Respect for Gaelic language and culture would be expected from participants, a respect reciprocated by Fèisean nan Gàidheal towards other cultures and languages.

As a provider of arts and cultural activities for Gaelic speakers and Gaelic learners Fèisean nan Gàidheal's position is that, although Gaelic speakers are not specifically protected under the Equality Act 2010, they are nevertheless a minority in Scotland and we believe it is right to focus on their needs, which are different from the needs of other people. Fèisean nan Gàidheal promotes Gaelic language and culture to those who have not experienced it before and facilitates the learning about, and celebration of, a unique aspect of Scotland's diverse culture.

Creative Scotland has a statutory requirement to support Gaelic language, primarily through its own Gaelic Language Plan, but also recognises the important role arts and culture play in increasing the visibility of Gaelic and engagement with the language. Our work provides, in part, the diversity Creative Scotland seeks in this regard.

Creative Scotland is subject to the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) which replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

To help deliver on its duty under the Act, Creative Scotland requires organisations such as Fèisean nan Gàidheal to report on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and implement a clear Action Plan. The Act simplifies the law and extends protection from discrimination in some areas. For the most part the effect of the new law is the same as it has been in the past – meaning that Creative Scotland and, through its funding agreement, Fèisean nan Gàidheal cannot unlawfully discriminate against people because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Definitions of the protected characteristics covered by the Act are included in Appendix 1 to which Creative Scotland has added a further characteristic of socioeconomic deprivation, covering such areas as poverty, crime, rural isolation, low economic activity/unemployment and poor educational attainment.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal has prepared this EDI Action Plan in consultation with Board and staff, in line with good practice and believes the proposed actions are proportionate for an organisation of our size starting from a relatively low base in terms of the data held but an organisation which has, nevertheless, demonstrated over the years that it is inclusive and welcoming. Our future actions will continue to reinforce that as we aim to adopt a fair and accessible approach in everything we do and commit to making EDI an important aspect of all our work and better articulating what we do in that respect.

Although the focus of this Plan is that which Fèisean nan Gàidheal can deliver at its own hand we would hope that, through raising awareness of EDI issues and offering training, we will encourage and support our members to deliver further work that demonstrates equality, diversity and inclusion.

**Arthur Cormack**  
Chief Executive  
September 2016

## 2 WHAT WE DO

The main focus of our work is the support of local Fèisean. Our work supports geographical areas that are rurally isolated, some of which also suffer from low economic activity. In 2015-16, 21 out of 44 Fèisean took place in what Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE) terms fragile areas.<sup>1</sup> Our work encourages participation in the arts in many areas where such provision is disproportionately low and where the activities of the local Fèis may, in fact, be the only cultural engagement on offer.

We provide arts and cultural activities for Gaelic speakers and Gaelic learners and although Gaelic speakers are not specifically protected under the Equality Act 2010, they are a minority in Scotland.

Supporting work geared towards a particular ethnic group, such as those who identify with each other based on Gaelic language and cultural experiences, is not intended to be a barrier to participation by people who do not readily identify with that group. A very important element of Fèisean nan Gàidheal's work is the promotion of Gaelic language and culture, facilitating, in an inclusive way, the learning about, and celebration of, a unique aspect of Scotland's diverse culture.

We organise Cèilidh Trails, which support youth employment. The Blas Festival underpins the employment of musicians, technicians and accommodation providers as well as supporting promoters and community halls through ensuring high quality events are available in rural communities. We provide drama, music and Gaelic language tuition in schools, including special schools, to a diverse pupil base. Youth Music Initiative (YMI) work includes schools in rurally isolated communities and some within areas where educational attainment may be poor. All pupils are included in our work on an equal basis. The same is true of our drama work in schools.

While primarily a youth-orientated organisation supporting a large volunteer base, people of all ages already benefit from the opportunities afforded by access to the work our programme supports. *Fuaran, 5 Latha* and the *Blas Education & Community Programme* engage young people in inter-generational work with older people in a number of communities. As one of the partners in the Highland Youth Arts Hub, we support the engagement of young people in making decisions about the arts activities in which they would like to be involved.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal has long operated under an Equal Opportunities Policy that ensures individuals working within the organisation are selected on the basis of relevant merits and abilities. Over many years we have striven to ensure that nobody receives more or less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability or religious beliefs.

In relation to participation, our Access Policy commits us to equality of opportunity in the access granted to participants in events run by the organisation, or on the organisation's behalf. This extends to Fèisean which are members of the organisation. To facilitate access we have a specific fund to enable Fèisean to employ extra tutors and/or carers to ensure young people with disabilities or additional learning needs can enjoy Fèis activities. We have also, in the past, committed funds to specific projects to ensure inclusion of young people with disabilities and/or additional learning needs.

Our Child Protection Policy ensures that people who may have been convicted of minor offences in the past, but who have since undergone rehabilitation and pose no threat to them, may be employed or volunteer to work with young people.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2010/07/30101940/4> "fragile areas are characterised by weakening of communities through population loss, low incomes, limited employment opportunities, poor infrastructure and remoteness."

### 3 CURRENT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTICE WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

Fèisean nan Gàidheal supports work by 21 Fèisean in fragile areas across the Highlands and Islands as well as urban areas, such as Renfrewshire, which has some of the most deprived areas in Scotland. The work we do helps to alleviate rural isolation and low economic activity, supporting around 90 FTE posts.

Our YMI work takes place in schools in fragile areas in the Highlands as well as in Paisley. All pupils get the opportunity to participate in YMI activities during their primary education.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal is a relatively gender balanced organisation. At Board level the current Chair is a man, although the previous 3 Chairs were women. The current Board is made up of 5 women and 4 men.

The organisation's current Chief Executive is a man. Of 3 senior managers, 2 are women and 1 is a man. Of the rest of the team, 7 are women and 2 are men.

Among contractual/freelance staff 23 FTEs are men and 24 FTEs are women. There are significantly more women than men among the membership of local Fèis committees.

We regularly employ students on short-term summer placements as well as graduates on year-long placements. This, along with the short-term employment of young people involved in Cèilidh Trails, addresses issues relating to youth unemployment especially in areas of rural isolation.

Although the focus of our work is on providing arts and cultural activities for young people aged 0-25, there is no age discrimination. A number of our Board members are retired, have time to devote to the organisation and possess valuable skills gained throughout their working lives.

Intergenerational work is regularly encouraged in order to pass on music and Gaelic language skills. This has been amply demonstrated in a number of archiving projects, the recent *Fuaran* and *Taigh an Dualchais* initiatives as well as our *5 Latha* event in Lewis.

Over the past five years, the organisation has supported two members of staff through maternity leave and three members of staff with paternity leave.

We employed two members of staff with disabilities.

We respect any religious beliefs held by staff and ensure we work around those, with no compulsion for them to work at times when such beliefs are ordinarily observed.

We have a specific fund to enable Fèisean to employ extra tutors and/or carers to ensure young people with disabilities or additional learning needs can enjoy Fèis activities. The numbers who have benefitted from access to that support is small, but it has nevertheless ensured that no young person has been excluded from participation in Fèis activities.

## 4 ACTION PLAN FOR CHANGE

While certain aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are embedded in our work, some of which are detailed in 3, we recognise there are gaps. We are committed to playing a part in maximising opportunities for people to engage with and participate in the Gaelic arts specifically, and creativity more generally, throughout the country.

### 4.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

The following is a SWOT analysis based on the current situation:

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board membership is more or less gender balanced and representative of local Fèisean from diverse communities</li> <li>• Staff consists of more women than men</li> <li>• Tutor base is more or less gender balanced</li> <li>• More women than men are involved in local Fèis committees</li> <li>• Programme of work supports Gaelic language which is used by a minority in Scotland</li> <li>• Programme of work includes work with young people from rurally isolated areas</li> <li>• Programme of work brings financial benefits to areas of low economic activity</li> <li>• Formal education work includes schoolchildren from all backgrounds and protected characteristics</li> <li>• Programme of work provides engagement for people in care homes and hospitals</li> <li>• Programme of work includes reduced price tickets/free entry to certain events to engage more young people in the arts</li> <li>• Programme of work includes reduced price tickets for older people and those on benefits to ensure engagement in the arts for as wide an range of people as possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of relevant data to help us articulate fully our current EDI practice</li> <li>• Lack of relevant data to assist us in addressing gaps in provision</li> <li>• Under articulation of the extent of our current EDI practice</li> <li>• Our Board membership and workforce is not reflective of a range of ethnic backgrounds</li> <li>• Tension between demonstrating diversity and fulfilling the Gaelic language needs of the organisation at staff level</li> <li>• Disparity in demonstrating diversity and fulfilling the need for local Fèisean to be represented at Board level</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of positive nature of gender balance within the organisation</li> <li>• Collection of relevant information that would assist in addressing gaps in provision relating to EDI</li> <li>• Implement the tasks in our EDI Action Plan to begin fully embedding EDI issues in the work of Fèisean nan Gàidheal</li> <li>• Ensuring access to our work by a more diverse range of people through digital means</li> <li>• Ensuring engagement with more diverse audiences</li> <li>• Examining ways to make Board membership more diverse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding under threat if EDI Action Plan is not implemented and EDI issues are not addressed</li> <li>• Less funding could lead to a reduction in economic benefits for artists and communities with a resultant reduction in diversity and inclusion</li> <li>• Reductions in funding could lead to fewer opportunities for young people in rurally isolated areas</li> <li>• Lack of sufficient funding could mean artists not being paid at a level that would offer parity with other careers</li> </ul>

## 4.2 OBJECTIVES, RISK AND FIT WITH PROGRAMME

With a relatively short time in which to deliver this Plan, we propose to focus on the following areas of activity as well as continuing the good practice in which we are already engaged. These primarily address some of the weaknesses and opportunities identified in the SWOT analysis, which will be a start in working towards changing the way we work in the future and ensuring fuller consideration to issues of EDI.

A full risk assessment has been carried out for each task and is available on request, but for brevity, only the risk score and status is shown against each task in section 3, assessed as follows:

<b>High</b> (16 to 25)	<b>Medium</b> (11 to 15)	<b>Low</b> (5 to 10)

The areas of work in our Programme Plan 2015-20 to which each objective relates is also indicated.

Objective One	Risk Score
<b>Collection of a range of relevant data against which articulation of equality, diversity and inclusion within our programme can be based and future planning informed</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Area/s of Work in Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Programme Plan 2015-20 to which objective relates</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Governance and Staffing</li> </ul>	
<b>Rationale</b>	
Fèisean nan Gàidheal does not currently hold reliable data on the people with whom we work to deliver our programme. This is a weakness that requires to be addressed to enable us to ensure we can be reaching a wide range of people including those of protected characteristics.	
<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Conduct a survey among current staff members to collect baseline data on EDI	Executive Manager
<b>Target and date</b>	11 staff questionnaires returned by 30 November 2016
Conduct a survey among current Board members to collect baseline data on EDI	CEO
<b>Target and date</b>	9 Board member questionnaires returned by 31 December 2016
Conduct a survey among tutors and contractors engaged by Fèisean nan Gàidheal	Executive Manager
<b>Target and date</b>	Survey of 600 tutors and all external contractors returned by 30 June 2017
Introduction of EDI questionnaires in recruitment processes for staff and Board members	Executive Manager
<b>Target and date</b>	From 1 January 2017 and ongoing thereafter
<b>Measures of success</b>	
Availability of baseline data for all current staff	
Availability of baseline data for all current Board members	
Availability of baseline data for 50% (300 individuals) of tutors and contractors	
Ongoing availability of data that will allow better EDI monitoring over the long term	

Objective Two	Risk Score
<b>Raising awareness of EDI issues within Fèisean nan Gàidheal and among our member Fèisean</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Area/s of Work in Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Programme Plan 2015-20 to which objective relates</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhancement of Skills &amp; Creative Talent</li> <li>▪ Governance and Staffing</li> </ul>	
<b>Rationale</b>	
In order to ensure Fèisean nan Gàidheal's staff team is equipped to make changes over the medium	

term, training in awareness of EDI issues will be required. This should be extended to Fèis organisers, through time, to ensure the local community groups with which we work are also equipped to affect change.		
<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Measures of success</b>
Publish our EDI Plan and highlight the measures within to Board, staff and Fèis organisers	Business Officer	Plan available online and its content promoted
<b>Target and date</b>	Plan published as soon as it is agreed by Creative Scotland	
Offer awareness-raising training on EDI issues to Fèisean nan Gàidheal Board members	CEO	All Board members having undergone training
<b>Target and date</b>	9 Board members trained by 31 December 2016	
Offer awareness-raising training on EDI issues to Fèisean nan Gàidheal staff team	CEO	All staff having undergone training and are more aware of EDI issues
<b>Target and date</b>	11 staff members trained by 31 March 2017	
Offer awareness-raising training on EDI issues to Fèis tutors as part of normal tutor training	CEO	35 tutors have had EDI training with more on a regular basis
<b>Target and date</b>	15 tutors by 28 February 2017 Further 20 tutors by 31 August 2017 Ongoing each time tutor training takes place thereafter	
Through conditions of grant, encourage volunteer Fèis organisers, and support them financially, to undertake online EDI lessons using resources such as those available through virtual-college.co.uk and elearningmarketplace.co.uk	Development Officers	50 volunteers having undertaken an online course with greater awareness of EDI issues
<b>Target and date</b>	Volunteers undertaking online training before 31 March 2018	

<b>Objective Three</b>	<b>Risk Score</b>	
<b>Increase access to our work by a more diverse range of people through digital means and ensure engagement with more diverse audiences</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Area/s of Work in Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Programme Plan 2015-20 to which objective relates</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Audience Development and Engagement</li> </ul>		
<b>Rationale</b>		
<p>While Fèisean nan Gàidheal currently engages with a large number of people, there is little doubt the range of people could be greater. Through digital means, primarily our new FèisTV service, we aim to increase access to our work for as diverse a range of people as possible. Free online streaming of some events, and music tuition, will address discrimination in terms of low income and rural isolation, meaning events can be enjoyed and lessons undertaken without the need to travel to areas of higher population. The availability of lessons in Gaelic will address the lack of access to, and inadequate provision for, such lessons among users of a minority language.</p>		
<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Measures of success</b>
Establish online streaming of events with integral monitoring of user information	Development Manager	Events streamed on a regular basis lead to an increase in the number of people accessing our work digitally and our ability to report on user characteristics
<b>Target and date</b>	Service to be launched by 31 December 2016	
Establish online music lessons with integral monitoring of user information from the start	CEO	Lessons available with the ability to monitor uptake and

		report on user characteristics
<b>Target and date</b>	An initial 10 lessons in 4 disciplines to be available in Gaelic and English versions by 31 March 2017	
Develop further online music lessons with integral monitoring of user information	CEO	Further uptake of lessons with the ability to promote their availability to people from a range of backgrounds
<b>Target and date</b>	An initial 10 lessons in a further 4 disciplines to be available in Gaelic and English versions by 30 September 2017 A further 10 lessons in the original 4 disciplines to be available in Gaelic and English versions by 30 September 2017 A further 10 lessons in the original 4 disciplines and the second 4 disciplines to be available in Gaelic and English versions by 31 March 2018	

<b>Objective Four</b>	<b>Risk Score</b>	
<b>Expand our work in rural communities and deliver further Gaelic cultural activities to people of all backgrounds across Scotland</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Area/s of Work in Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Programme Plan 2015-20 to which objective relates</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support and Development of Fèisean</li> <li>▪ Enhancement of Gaelic Arts &amp; Culture in Creative Learning</li> </ul>		
<b>Rationale</b>		
<p>Research has shown that the work of the Fèis movement has been transformational in promoting community and social cohesion, no more so than in geographically isolated areas. More recent initiatives such as Sistema Scotland – the Big Noise - work in socially challenged areas using classical music as a means of engaging young people in overcoming social problems and building confidence in themselves and their communities. Sight should not be lost of the role the Fèisean have played in doing exactly that, using traditional music and Gaelic arts, over the 30+ years of their existence. While the areas in which the Fèisean operate might not have the same challenges as Raploch and Govanhill, they have their own challenges which the Fèisean have contributed to overcoming.</p>		
<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Measures of success</b>
Establish two new Fèisean in HIE fragile areas	CEO	2 new Fèisean established
<b>Target and date</b>	2 new Fèisean by 31 March 2018	
Tour of <i>Le Meas</i> – a Gaelic drama production telling the story of an online friendship between a Scottish girl and a Syrian girl, promoting respect for people from all cultural backgrounds	Fèisgoil Manager	1,000 school pupils are more aware of issues of immigration and the need to respect people from ethnic backgrounds other than their own
<b>Target and date</b>	A tour completed by 31 December 2016	
Tour of a drama performance relating to Gaelic culture for schools where Gaelic is taught as a second language	Fèisgoil Manager	Greater awareness of Gaelic culture for 800 school pupils who experience the show
<b>Target and date</b>	A tour undertaken by Meanbh-Chuileag before September 2017	
Increase in the number of pupils across Scotland engaging with Gaelic language and culture in school	Fèisgoil Manager	1,200 school pupils with an awareness of Gaelic language and culture
<b>Target and date</b>	Gaelic lessons in schools in 3 local authority areas by March 2018	

### **4.3 OUTCOMES**

The outcomes that will be delivered as a result of our undertaking the foregoing include:

- Continued delivery of that which we already do in relation to EDI
- Availability of a range of data to help articulate EDI, identify gaps and ensure further measures are taken to improve EDI in future planning
- A workforce trained to be aware of the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion which should ensure they fully consider how to overcome any issues when planning future work
- An increase in the range of people engaging with our work digitally, with the ability to monitor their characteristics and gain a clearer picture of inclusion and diversity among them
- Increased access to Gaelic language and cultural activities addressing issues of rural isolation and low income
- Increased support for further work in fragile areas or areas of deprivation
- Promotion of diversity through our work in schools
- Inclusion of more young people across Scotland in work relating to one of Scotland's minority languages and its related culture

### **4.4 MONITORING**

Ensuring tasks in the Action Plan are carried out will be the responsibility of the Chief Executive along with the lead officers named against each one. The EDI Action Plan will be a standing item on Fèisean nan Gàidheal staff meeting agendas to ensure regular monitoring of the tasks.

Each task will be added to the other deliverables on which we report to our Board and funders quarterly. At the end of each quarter, progress against each of the tasks will be detailed in the report.

Implementation of the our EDI Action Plan will be reported on to Creative Scotland in the annual review process and the annual statistical survey.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Board will receive a separate EDI Action Plan implementation report annually, at its February meeting, detailing delivery over the year from the previous April.

## APPENDIX 1 – FURTHER INFORMATION

### Definitions

**Diversity:** Diversity literally means difference. Diversity recognises that though people have things in common with each other, they are also different and unique in many ways. Diversity is about recognising and valuing those differences. Diversity therefore consists of visible and non-visible factors, which include personal characteristics such as background, culture, personality and work-style in addition to the characteristics that are protected under discrimination legislation in terms of race, disability, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation and age.

**Equality:** Equality means access to all opportunities and treating people in a way that is fair and equal and appropriate for their needs.

**Inclusion:** Inclusion is about equal opportunities for all participants, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment and background. It pays particular attention to the provision made for, and the achievement of, different groups of pupils within an activity. There is a need to create a productive environment in which everybody feels a sense of belonging, respected and valued for who they are.

**Discrimination:** Discrimination is the prejudicial treatment of an individual based on their membership in a certain group or category.

### Protected Characteristics in 2010 Equality Act

**Age:** It is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of age unless the practice is covered by an exception allowed for by the Act.

**Disability:** A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Gender reassignment:** The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

**Marriage and civil partnership:** Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples.

**Pregnancy and maternity:** Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

**Race:** Refers to the protected characteristics of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

**Religion and belief:** Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live it to be included in the definition.

**Sex/Gender:** A man or a woman.

**Sexual orientation:** Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

To the above list Creative Scotland has added its own characteristic of socioeconomic deprivation covering such areas as poverty, crime, rural isolation, low economic activity/unemployment and poor educational attainment.

In addition to maternity leave, Fèisean nan Gàidheal would consider paternity leave as well as shared parental leave and protect staff against discrimination.