



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Statement and Policy

We believe that diversity of all kinds enriches our organisation and the broader craft and conservation sectors. We are committed to working tirelessly to become an inclusive, welcoming, and supportive organisation through listening, learning, and taking meaningful action in collaboration with our staff, trustees, partners, and those we fund.

While we are keen to encourage opportunities to develop or excel in craft skills for all, we recognise that historical and structural inequalities, as well as explicit prejudices and preconceptions, can create additional barriers for people from marginalised or underrepresented communities.

We want to be better at representing the multitude of talented makers, conservators, and supporters of craft across the UK, those born here and those that have chosen to make it their home. This includes people of different genders, ages, religions, sexualities, ethnicities, and social backgrounds. To be effective we need to understand the challenges faced by different groups, and how they intersect across identities.

Sector statistics and accounts of makers with lived experiences of discrimination and barriers to participation show how much work there is still to do to build the inclusive future we need. According to the *Who Makes* Report (2018):

- 17% of craft workers have a disability or health problem.
- Craft workers are likely to be paid less than the average wage and are likely to be self-employed.
- 40% of craft workers are over 50.
- Only 4% of craft workers are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background.

We believe the best way to facilitate change is to work in partnership with others, whether that is through our Crafting Tomorrow programme or our work with grant applicants and alumni. We are privileged to be supported in our efforts by a board of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Champions, made up of QEST alumni from across our grant programmes and a trustee representative, who advise us and raise awareness of the challenges and barriers facing professional makers and conservators.

Together we are working to reach our objectives which provide a framework for our decision making:

- Improve our knowledge and understanding of equity and access issues, and how they impact individuals lived experiences, as well as broader policy issues.
- Build a more diverse and inclusive organisation at all levels of our activities and partnerships.
- Actively tackle systemic barriers to becoming a craft professional, including (but not limited to) racism, ableism, inequality of access to education, and socio-economic disadvantage.
- Recognise, respect, and celebrate the diversity of our staff, partners, alumni, and networks.
- Champion a socially conscious approach to craft, including environmental sustainability, ethical making, and community engagement.

To make tangible change we also need to commit to bold, measurable actions set out in our aims for the next two or five years.

Over the next two years we aim to:

- Train all staff, trustees and skills assessors in Unconscious Bias, Disability Awareness, and Anti-Racism.
- Improve our support for grant applicants with learning difficulties and neurodivergency.
- Implement a policy guiding internal and external language, imagery, and branding.

Over the next five years we aim to:

- Increase the number of grant applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds to 16%, with specific focus on makers from Black British communities who are currently poorly represented in our applications.
- Have a cohort of skills assessors where at least 20% are from backgrounds underrepresented in the sector.
- Commit at least 20% of funding to programmes advancing diversity, inclusion, and removing barriers for young people engaging with craft.

An action plan towards achieving these aims will be published at the beginning of 2025 with an updated policy which will set out commitments alongside our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. We are continuously learning and improving, but we formally review and publish our progress annually ensuring that our aims are targeted, relevant, and transparent. We welcome discussion, challenges, and suggestions about our approach.

Last updated: January 2025

A note on terminology:

We recognise that any terminology that groups people together can be limiting and contested. In our policies and statistics, we do use some terms that are frequently used in the UK to make comparisons and collate information, as this allows us to monitor progress and align our data with other organisations. However, we keep our approaches to data collection and use of such language under review and regularly seek guidance from our advisory boards. We support the right of individuals to self-identify or reject such terms, and always create space for this when asking for information.