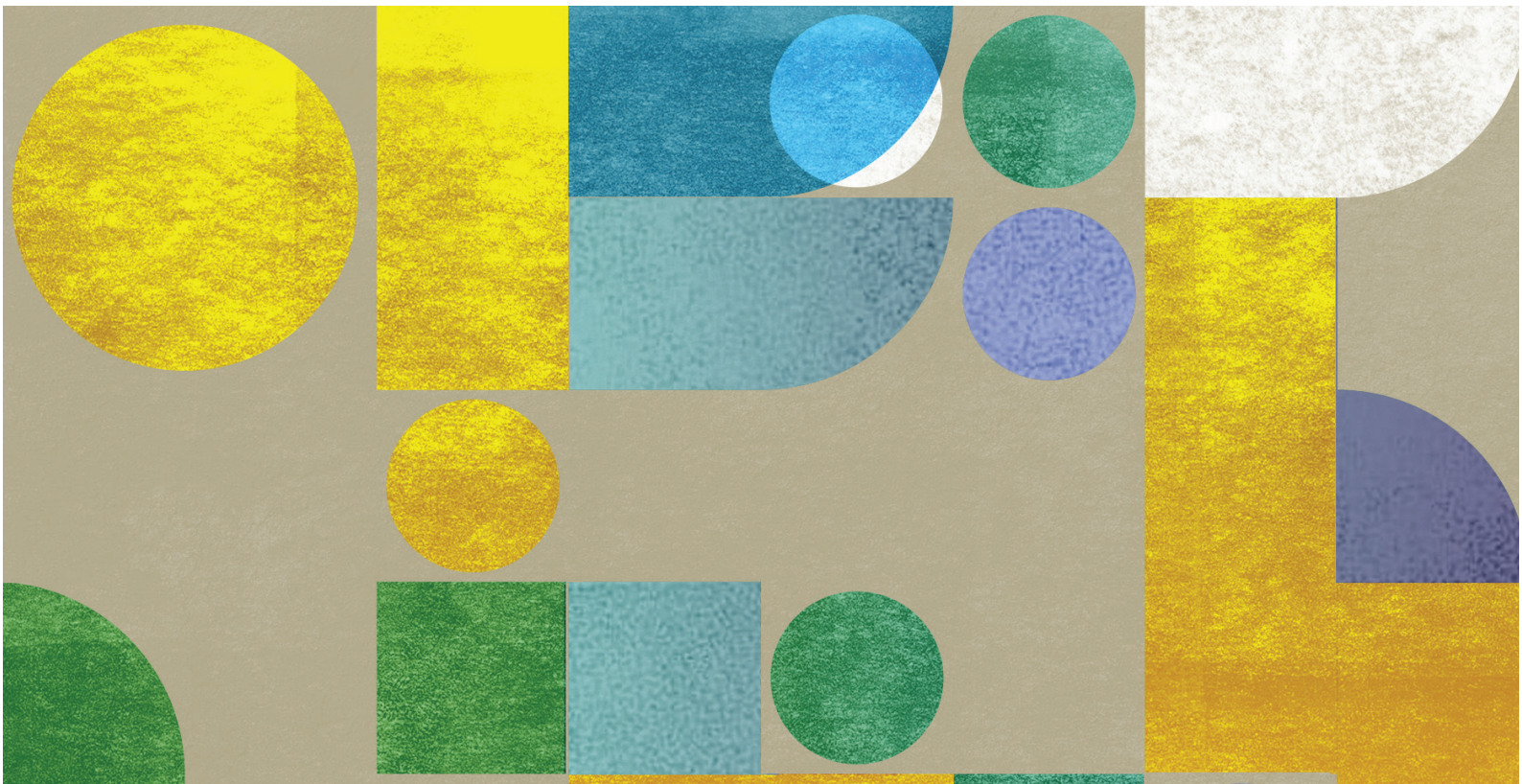




**Arts Council  
Equality, Human Rights  
& Diversity Policy**

**The Arts Council, in everything it does, strives to respect, support and ensure the inclusion of all voices and cultures that make up Ireland today, from all sections of society, from existing and new communities, and from all social backgrounds, ethnicities and traditions.**



This Equality, Human Rights and Diversity [EHRD] Policy builds on a range of existing Arts Council work areas, developments and policies including an Arts & Disability policy, a Cultural Diversity and the Arts policy, and a Dignity at Work policy. It recognises that whilst developmental initiatives have been promoted and supported by the Arts Council over many years, our work in advancing change has still been too limited and too compartmentalised.

We are deeply aware that, within the arts in Ireland, many inequities still exist and that there is a substantial number of people who continue to experience barriers to engaging with and participating in the arts because of their socio-economic background, their ethnicity or religion, their sexual orientation or gender identity, their family status, their age, their membership of the Traveller Community, or through lack of accommodation of a disability. Further, as evidenced by movements such as Waking the Feminists, Sounding the Feminists

and Fair Plé, women artists across a range of artistic disciplines continue to encounter serious impediments to advancing their careers and repertoire in a way that equates with their male peers.

Through previous research and developmental work the Arts Council has gained significant insight into the essential role diversity and equality plays in releasing the full potential of Ireland's artistic and cultural talent and engaging people from every background and perspective in the arts. Harnessing diversity provides unparalleled opportunity for creative collaboration, innovation and learning.

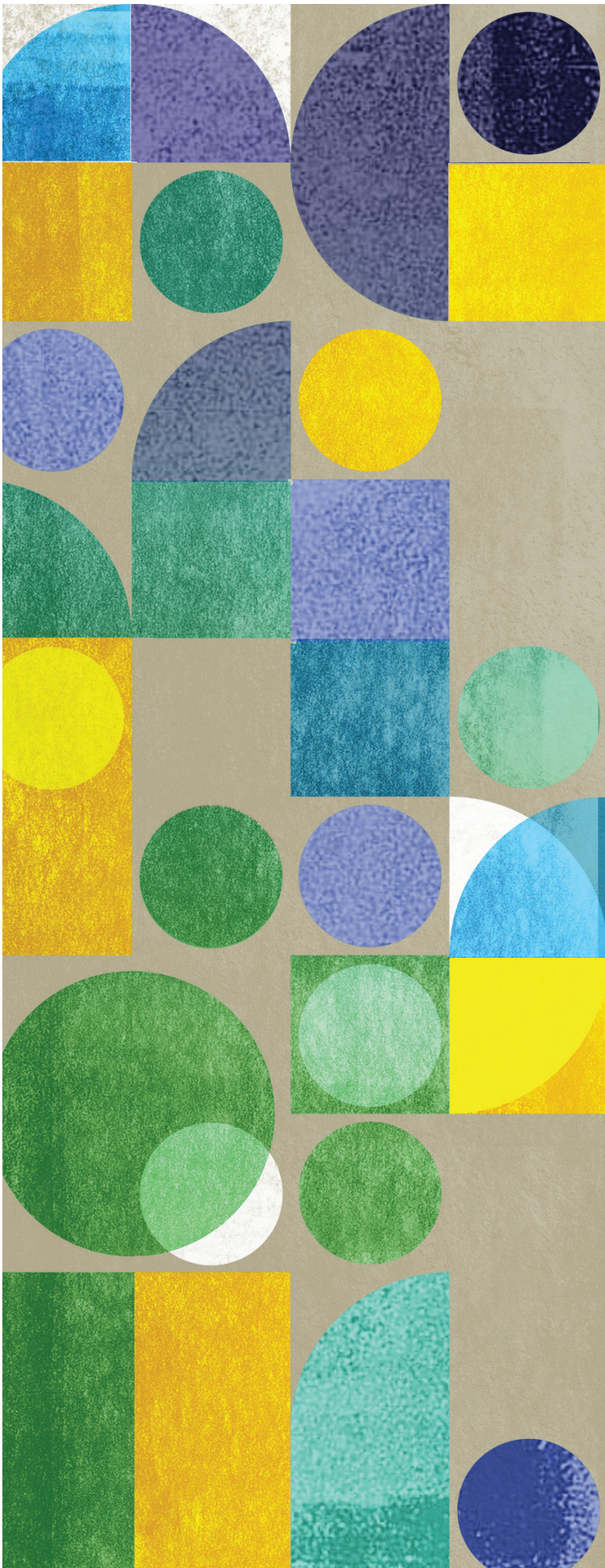
We also believe that through promoting equality, human rights and diversity in the arts in Ireland, we can benefit from rich artistic outcomes and contemporary practice that is challenging, relevant and more accurately reflective of our society today.

**As the agency tasked with the development of the arts in Ireland, it is crucial that the Arts Council takes a proactive and focused approach to guaranteeing a basic human right:<sup>1</sup> Ensuring that everyone who lives in Ireland has the opportunity to engage with, and participate in the arts.**

### **UN Declaration of Human Rights – Article 27.**

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.





## Statement of Policy

In publishing this policy we are committing to taking actions over the course of the coming years to actively deepen our understanding of inequalities in the arts and develop substantive ways to address them. We recognise that our policy must be embedded from the outset in our own institutional structure and practice and we will work towards ensuring that our board, staff, advisers and panellists, best reflect and represent the diversity of contemporary Ireland.

Diversity is a core organisational value in the Arts Council's 10-year strategy to 2025, Making Great Art Work, centred on respecting diversity of artistic practice, of public engagement, and of social and cultural traditions. This core value attests to the organisation's commitment to and appreciation of the value of diversity. This EHRD Policy commits to placing equality, human rights and diversity at the heart of the Arts Council's operational and strategic plans. This will require fundamental changes in our structures and operations, as well as for those we support in delivering the arts in Ireland.

**The Arts Council acknowledges and firmly believes that every person living in Ireland has the right to create, engage with, enjoy and participate in the arts. Through this EHRD Policy, and in the context of its civic and statutory role, the Arts Council:**

- States its absolute commitment to the Public Sector Duty (and equality legislation), which outlaws discrimination and requires all publicly-funded organisations to take positive policy measures to promote equality of opportunity, access and outcomes for all those living in Ireland regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community. Furthermore, the Arts Council notes the ground of socio-economic background as a further basis for which equality of opportunity, access and outcomes must be guaranteed.
- Asserts its belief that a diverse organisation is a more dynamic and effective organisation and undertakes as a State Agency to become more representative of the population in Ireland today.
- Is invested in the creative case for diversity, recognising that increased diversity and equality in the arts supports richer creativity in Ireland and impacts positively on arts development, as well as wider social, cultural and economic development.
- Sets out its understanding of the need for the arts sector to be reflective of Ireland in all its diversity, ensuring equality of opportunity; equality of access, participation and outcomes; and equality of representation.
- Undertakes to review and adjust its awards and funding programmes, towards ensuring their recipients and beneficiaries better reflect the population profile of contemporary Ireland, inclusive of the most disadvantaged group.

To find out more about the Arts Council's EHRD Policy, or contact the EHRD Project Lead, email Olwen Dawe [olwen.dawe@artscouncil.ie](mailto:olwen.dawe@artscouncil.ie) or Strategic Development Manager, Monica Corcoran [monica.corcoran@artscouncil.ie](mailto:monica.corcoran@artscouncil.ie).



the arts  
council  
as chomhairle  
ealaíon