

The Cultural Inclusion Manifesto

We believe that:

- Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the exercise and enjoyment of human rights.
- While inclusion will mean different things depending on the setting, the starting point and driving force should always be the needs of disabled young people and their personal experience of the offer.
- Cultural institutions are extensions of schools and the wider community. They provide unique learning opportunities and promote vital educational experiences.
- There is an urgent need for strategic partnerships between Special Educational Needs organisations and Cultural Institutions in response to the shifting political landscape to ensure continued focus on guaranteeing the availability of enriching cultural experiences for all our young people.
- Policy - makers at all levels should regularly reaffirm their commitment to inclusion and promote positive attitudes among children, teachers and the general public towards those with special educational needs, the integration of disabled persons in society and the importance of overcoming prejudice and misinformation.
- The dissemination of good practice, the pooling of experience and the development of documentation centres should be supported at national level.
- What constitutes good practice in terms of inclusion will vary depending on location, institution and the needs of individuals engaging with the offer. However, it should always place the young person at the centre of the experience, value their input and empower them to participate in order to ensure maximum engagement.

We affirm our commitment to:

- **Article 31** of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** which confers on children and young people the right to a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities.
- The spirit of the **Salamanca Statement** which posits that cultural institutions are also places of learning and key in building inclusive communities.

We pledge to:

To ensure that the cultural offer available is both inclusive and sustainable we pledge to:

1. Meet at least once a year as a collective group of cultural institutions and SEN practitioners to develop and signpost opportunities for young people to access a diverse range of inclusive cultural experiences.
2. To identify how we can support each other to achieve our aims and maximise our impact by promoting our work through our respective networks.
3. To share our experiences and insights in order to enrich our individual programmes, develop new and innovative partnerships and ensure the resilience of our offers to young people with SEN.
4. To consult with young people with disabilities and draw on the best available evidence of what works for young people in regard to engagement with the arts and culture.