

PRESS RELEASE

UK CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS JOIN UP TO PROMOTE SEVEN INCLUSIVE PRINCIPLES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE IN ARTS & CULTURE

#7InclusivePrinciples



Campaigning cultural organisations We Shall Not Be Removed, Ramps on the Moon, Attitude is Everything, Paraorchestra and What Next? have joined together to create a new guide for the arts and entertainment sectors to support disability inclusion.

Today they launch **Seven Inclusive Principles for Arts & Cultural Organisations working safely through COVID-19** to complement the suite of guidance documents already issued by UK Governments and sector support organisations.

The focus of this unique initiative, which has been broadly welcomed by the sector, is to ensure deaf, neurodiverse and disabled people are not discriminated against as creative work begins again and as venues re-open. The Seven Principles offer practical guidance to arts and cultural organisations to support disabled artists, audiences, visitors, participants and employees.

The Principles highlight the importance of: legal obligations, combating ableism in the sector, consulting directly with disabled people, comprehensive public information on Covid measures, remapping the customer journey, engagement of disabled artists and celebrating disability in the workforce.

The Seven Principles are applicable across all art forms and across all 4 UK nations and come with endorsement from a wide range of leading sector bodies including: British Council, British Film Institute, Arts Council England, Arts Council of Wales, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Museums Association, Royal Philharmonic Society, Equity and UK Theatre.

Andrew Miller, UK Government Disability Champion for Arts & Culture and co-founder of #WeShallNotBeRemoved said, *“Disabled people’s continued participation in culture at all levels has been severely threatened by this pandemic. The Seven Principles offer an essential new resource to promote an inclusive cultural recovery and to ensure the UK remains a global leader in disability and inclusive arts through and after Covid-19”.*

Michèle Taylor, Director for Change at Ramps on the Moon said, *“Disabled and deaf people play a vital role in a flourishing theatre industry, both front and back of house, and this has become increasingly evident in the last five years. The Seven Principles will support*

organisations to ensure that this trajectory continues and that theatre re-emerges even richer and more diverse than before.”

Jonathan Harper, Chief Executive of Paraorchestra said, *“Inclusivity cannot be treated as a project that is cast aside as the cultural sector reopens following the pandemic. I wholeheartedly welcome the Seven Principles and Paraorchestra is proud to have played its part in creating them. This document offers context and the practical steps so that anyone within the sector can have the confidence to ensure that disabled artists, workers and audiences can return safely”.*

Lizzie Crump, National Strategic Lead for What Next? said, *“This document gives clear, practical guidance and support to everyone working in our sector, from grassroots community projects to large venues. It details everything from our legal obligations to the ways we can access the right help and support. These principles give us the framework we need to champion equity and access, and ensure the quality of our arts and culture over the next decade”.*

Jacob Adams, Head of Campaigns at Attitude is Everything said, *“The arts sector is a vital positive force in the UK, strengthened immensely by inclusive practice and the participation of Deaf and disabled people at every level. Attitude is Everything is proud to have joined this initiative to support the sector as we rebuild a better and more accessible ‘normal’ together.”*

A wide range of organisations from across the arts, museum and film sectors have welcomed the Seven Principles initiative as follows:

Abid Hussain, Director of Diversity at Arts Council England said, *“Arts Council England welcomes and fully endorses the Seven Inclusive Principles announced today which incorporate the social model of disability at their core and ensuring disabled people are directly informing plans to reconnect with Creative Practitioners, Colleagues and Audiences. The principles provide a strong catalyst to combat and eliminate ableism supporting our ambition to develop a more inclusive and relevant sector that offers everyone equitable opportunities to enjoy and participate in culture and creativity”.*

Nick Capaldi, Chief Executive of The Arts Council of Wales said, *“The Arts Council of Wales offers its unreserved support to this new set of Inclusive Principles for the UK arts & cultural sector. The adoption and implementation of these principles will make a huge difference to disabled people in Wales as they once again engage with arts as participants, audience members and creatives. A fair and equitable approach of this kind is essential to ensure that ALL people enjoy the same opportunities in the arts and cultural sector in Wales.”*

Roisin McDonough, Chief Executive of The Arts Council of Northern Ireland said, *“The Arts Council of Northern Ireland offers its full and unconditional support to the Seven Principles announced today. They provide a practical and meaningful tool for all cultural organisations in Northern Ireland to ensure disabled people are at the centre of decision-making processes as we navigate our way out of these difficult times”.*

Cortina Butler, Interim Director of Arts at the British Council said: *“The British Council is committed to ensuring that people of all abilities, genders and ethnicities can take full advantage of opportunities in the creative sector. We welcome initiatives such as the Seven Principles, which continue to put inclusivity at the forefront of conversations around the future of arts and culture both in the UK and internationally.”*

Jennifer Smith, Head of Inclusion at British Film Institute said, *“The BFI wholeheartedly support and endorse these important principles that give such clarity and structure for cultural venues to work to. They lay helpful foundations for the whole sector, to enable us to re-open our venues safely and inclusively for all cinema lovers.”*

Julian Bird, Chief Executive of Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre said, *“We fully support and welcome the seven inclusive principles and will be promoting them as part of our See it Safely toolkit created to ensure that all our venues are compliant with the latest government safety guidelines”.*

Sharon Heal, Director, Museums Association said, *“We wholeheartedly support the Seven Principles which are a timely reminder that museums need to work hard to support staff, visitors and community members that have a disability and that we need to be inclusive now more than ever”.*

Jon Morgan, Director of Theatres Trust said, *“It is vital that the pandemic doesn't result in a step backwards for accessibility. Theatres Trust fully supports the Inclusive Principles, which will help theatres reopen accessibly and inclusively.*

James Murphy, Chief Executive, Royal Philharmonic Society said, *‘We heartily encourage all colleagues in the music profession to make time now to read and act upon these timely and vital Principles. They are packed with positive leads, guidance, ideas and insights for us all to draw upon, not just in light of the pandemic but in helping us advance and embolden our ongoing shared commitment to inclusivity.’*

Toki Allison, BFI Film Audience Network Access Officer, Inclusive Cinema said, *“These inclusive principles are invaluable for independent cinemas looking at how they can minimise the destructive impacts of Covid on D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent audiences & workers”.*

Dr Ian Manborde, Equalities and Diversity Organiser at Equity said, *“Equity welcomes the opportunity to endorse the call for the creative and cultural industries to adopt the Seven key Principles for a recovery which engages with D/deaf and disabled artists and audiences. We look forward to supporting this initiative as part of the union's own focus on activity to support a diverse, inclusive sectoral recovery”.*

Naomi Pohl, Deputy General Secretary of the Musicians Union said, *“It's essential that work to reopen the music industry considers access and inclusivity from the very beginning. We have the opportunity to rebuild a sector that works for all musicians and the Seven Inclusive Principles help enable us to facilitate that”.*

Richard Bunn, Chair, Association of British Theatre Technicians said, *“The ABTT believes that our Industry should be as diverse in all respects and attributes as the members of the society in which we all live. These Principles provide a clear approach to help actively promote inclusion and remove barriers to disabled people’s participation within our sector.”*

Notes for Editors:

The Seven Inclusive Principles are:

1. All organisational activities must comply with the requirements of The Equality Act (2010) and make reasonable adjustments to operating practice that ensure disabled people are not unlawfully discriminated against
2. All actions relating to disabled people should be undertaken in accordance with the Social Model of Disability and aim to combat and eliminate ableism
3. Co-production with disabled people: disabled people should be consulted when organisations develop bespoke operating or re-opening plans, and undertake Equality Impact Assessments before making decisions
4. Organisations need to provide clear, accurate and comprehensive information about Covid-19 measures to enable disabled artists, employees, audiences and participants to assess their own levels of risk, and be prepared to adapt to specific enquiries or requests
5. The customer journey for disabled audiences should be thoroughly mapped, ensuring it is equality impact assessed, clearly communicated in multiple formats to the public, and prioritises free companion tickets to maintain essential access
6. Disabled artists are an important cultural asset in the UK and their engagement in all new creative projects should be prioritised
7. Organisations should ensure they celebrate diversity, embed anti-ableist principles to support and protect disabled people, and should demonstrate due care for the disabled workforce when making decisions about redundancy, restructuring and new ways of working

The full Seven Principles document is housed on all launch partners websites and can be found here: <https://www.weshallnotberemoved.com/7-principles/>

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The Seven Inclusive Principles launch partners are:

[#WeShallNotBeRemoved](#) is the UK Disability Arts Alliance formed in May 2020. With 700 members, it aims to raise profile for deaf, neurodiverse and disabled people in the creative industries through and after Covid and to campaign for an inclusive cultural recovery.

[Ramps on the Moon](#) is an award winning consortium of major producing theatres “that enriches the stories we tell and the way we tell them” by normalising the presence of D/deaf and disabled people both on and off stage.

[Paraorchestra](#) is the world's only large-scale integrated virtuoso ensemble of professional disabled and non-disabled musicians, whose mission is to redefine what a 21st century orchestra can be.

[Attitude is Everything](#) is a disability-led, ACE funded charity with 20 years of experience supporting non-profit and commercial organisations to make festivals and music venues more accessible and inclusive for Deaf and disabled audiences, artists, professionals and volunteers.

[What Next?](#) is a national movement that brings together cultural freelancers and organisations to debate and shape the future of UK arts and culture, and champions the sector's vital role in creating a more equitable society.

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