

## Arts Nova Scotia Equity Framework

**Approved:** December 11, 2023

### Purpose

The Arts Nova Scotia *Equity Framework* provides context and supports the application of equity principles and practices in our programs and activities. The framework will be reviewed annually to ensure it serves the arts community in Nova Scotia.

### Objective

To communicate the values and tools that:

- support the Arts Nova Scotia's implementation of equity in the arts, and
- provide the definitions that inform policy and program development, strategic initiatives, communications as well as staff and board training and professional development.

### Authority and Responsibility

Authority for the *Equity Framework* resides with the Board of Directors. The Director of Arts Nova Scotia is responsible for the development and implementation of the *Equity Framework*.

### Definitions

What is Equity? Equity is both a principle and process that promotes equality of opportunity and fair conditions for all persons to fully participate in society. Equity recognizes the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family but acknowledges that due to historical and ongoing oppression not all persons experience equal access to opportunities and benefits. Equity acknowledges the unique needs and experiences of individuals and groups in society and promotes active measures to eliminate barriers and level the playing field so that all persons can thrive and take full advantage of opportunities and benefits. As a process, equity may require treating individuals or groups differently in order to achieve fairness. \*

### Value Statement

Arts Nova Scotia supports and implements policies and measures to ensure:

- equity of opportunity and equity of access to its programs, services and decision-making processes;
- the removal of barriers for artists to access to our programs;
- an equitable division of funds to Nova Scotia's diverse arts sector; and
- Arts Nova Scotia is inclusive and accessible to all qualified Nova Scotian artists and arts professionals.

**Strategic Priorities (2022-2025)** In 2022, the Board of Directors identified strategic priorities to define the direction of our work. The priorities will inform our work to improve and/or change programs. Specifically, the priority of Anti-Oppression acknowledges the power imbalances

embedded in our systems and aims to mitigate the effects of this oppression. We commit to adopting anti-oppressive frameworks to increase accessibility and reduce barriers in our programming and policies.

### **Equity Tools and Practices**

- Self ID form

To better understand and serve equity-seeking communities, we collect information through self ID forms. For some programs, the form will be mandatory and others voluntary.

- Strategic/Targeted Funds

Arts Nova Scotia has designated funds to targeted groups through the Arts Equity Funding and the Mi'kmaq Arts Program. The board has also designated internal funds that look at underserved areas within its granting programs to augment success rates in disciplines or regions within identified communities.

- Priority groups in programs

To better promote and evaluate equity in our programs, Arts NS will develop assessment tools that will include Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility in the scoring matrix.

- Peer assessment

The peer assessment committee members are selected from a list of qualified artists or arts organizations provided through community consultation, peer recommendation and self registration. These lists are reviewed to ensure broad community representation.

Committee composition is sensitive to regional, gender, equity and cultural differences. A different peer assessment committee is appointed for each competition.

### **Definition of Priority Groups**

The designated priority groups have been identified as applicants and arts and cultural practitioners who are:

- Indigenous (Mi'kmaq, First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit);
- African Nova Scotian, Black or people of colour;
- Deaf or experience disability; or
- Located in regional areas (outside greater Halifax Regional Municipality).

These identified groups will be the focus of Arts Nova Scotia's strategic measures, through dedicated programs, funding prioritization processes and outreach to better address historical inequities.

\* from the Toronto Arts Council.