



IHME
CONTEMPORARY
ART FESTIVAL

Pro Arte Foundation Finland/IHME Contemporary Art Festival

14 May, 2018

IHME CONTEMPORARY ART FESTIVAL EQUALITY STRATEGY

Background

Equal opportunities mean that people are treated fairly, barriers are removed, and injustices corrected, so that disadvantaged groups get equal opportunities to participate fully in working life, in society, and in art and culture. Some of the factors affecting equality are: age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion/beliefs, sexual orientation, and a work-life balance that creates the basis for good physical and mental health.

The Pro Arte Foundation Finland / IHME Contemporary Art Festival organization has three year-round employees: the Executive Director, Cultural Producer and Communications Officer. The Foundation has a Board with six members. There is also an Administrator, who handles the Foundation's finances and all administrative matters. The five-person [Expert Team](#) – apart from the Executive Director, all also members of the Board – sets the guidelines for the contents of IHME's work. Each year, some 5–25 temporary staff are taken on for the period of the Festival, depending on the production requirements of each IHME Project and on the rest of the Festival programme.

In what follows we set out how diversity in a changing Finnish society is reflected in our organization and our work: how we take account of the various factors affecting equality in the planning of the programme of events, in production processes, in events aimed at the public, and in how we publicize them.

Promoting Equality and Diversity

The diversity viewpoint is taken into account in the choice of the artist for the IHME Project, in designing the Festival's themes, and in the choice of guest speakers for the discussion programme. This principle is also followed in the choice of partners in collaboration and workers on each occasion. The annual recruiting advert for waged workers to be taken on for the duration of the Festival is published in English as well as Finnish. Depending on the vacant position, besides language, consideration is also given to the visibility of other factors affecting equality when creating the advert. According to the circumstances in the production of the Festival we practise positive special treatment of workers representing minorities. Recruiting adverts are also published in the forums of equality-promotion bodies (e.g. Culture for All, Globe Art Point), so that they will also reach applicants who belong to minorities.

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In the planning of events and in communications, we listen to the views of the IHME Panel, which has been running since 2012, to increase the various client groups' enjoyment of the events and to ensure that communications are accessible. The age range of the IHME Panel is broadened by feedback from school pupils on Kulttuuri-TET cultural-work experience, and by the feedback collected regularly on audience work aimed at children and young people.

The Foundation publicizes its events in Finnish and English, and less fully in Swedish. Marketing and communications make information available for all levels of interest and understanding, and thus create possibilities for participation for all. The obscure expert talk sometimes associated with contemporary art is avoided, care is taken to make visual materials clear and the mode of speech is chosen to suit each target group.

The diversity viewpoint is taken into account in content production on the level of both texts and visual messages. Feedback on marketing communications is also requested in advance from minority and specific target groups.

In choosing venues for events attention is paid to their accessibility. Accessibility information is posted on the Info page of the IHME website. In the future, potential barriers to participation will be subject to consultation, and details posted on the website. On the website and other channels of communication, and at event venues, care will be taken to ensure that the information given is clear and allows everyone to participate in the events. As far as possible specific target groups are selected each year, who are then targeted in the publicity material, and extra effort made to encourage their participation.

In the future, funds will be allocated in the budget for workers' participation in equality and accessibility training. Funds will also be put into consulting on diversity and accessibility. In addition to taking diversity into account, various forms of norm-critical thinking are brought up in event-workers' training.

Economic equality

Festival events are free of charge and open to everyone. There are no volunteer workers at events, instead, everyone is paid the same wage for the same work and the same work experience. Artists are paid an artist's fee. Any Finnish artists who take part and show their work as part of the festival are paid a Kuvasto fee. IHME has also hired artists for various jobs in Festival productions and will continue to do so in the future.

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The work of the Client Panel is entirely voluntary and the terms of work are clear to all participants. The work done by the panellists' is compensated in whatever way they wish, but without benefiting them financially.

Freedom of expression in art, opposing hate speech

The IHME Contemporary Art Festival supports the invited artists' freedom of expression and freedom of speech by producing the works that they want to make. Works can be linked to current social events. For example, in [Yael Bartana's True Finn](#) film eight Finns from different backgrounds got their voices heard, in addition to the work addressing the increased popularity of populist, nationalistic parties all over Europe. For several years now, the participants in the IHME Marathon have been artists resident in Finland who represent diverse factors affecting equality. The Festival's talks programme also gives the public an opportunity to participate and share their opinions.

In marketing and communications texts or visual messages discriminatory modes of speech and representation are countered by focussing attention on whether they reinforce stereotypes or problematic power structures. The impact of hate speech and other forms of discrimination is not underestimated. The publication of this equality plan is also a statement in itself. It says that the organization is highlighting existing injustices and committing itself to act to remove them.

The values that guide the evaluation of the art and the programme

The rules of Pro Arte Foundation Finland stipulate the purpose of its operations, and the general goals set the parameters used to evaluate the success of those operations. The goals set for the invited artist's IHME Project also determine the evaluation of operations. In addition, five values are laid down by the Board, the expert work group and the staff for the annual IHME Project, and the implementation of those values assessed in the final report. Those values, might, for example, be: public participation, the administration and sustainability of the project, social activation, a challenge/critical discussion, and social inclusion. In addition, we collect audience feedback each year using methods custom-made for each Project, and we discuss the success of the Festival with the Client Panel, our partners in collaboration, and workers.

Fair wage and workforce practices

Wages and fees are determined on the basis of the worker's experience and the responsibilities involved in their job. The same wage is paid for the same work and experience.

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Get in touch

We are happy to take new members onto the Client Panel, so that equality will be better implemented in our operations in the future. If you are interested, contact our Cultural Producer **Päivi Matala**:
paivi.matala@ihmefestival.fi.

We are also happy to receive feedback on how we are succeeding in our equality efforts. You can send it to: info@ihmefestival.fi.

Let's make a more equal IHME together!

Helsinki 31.1.2018

The Board of Pro Arte Foundation Finland and the staff of IHME Contemporary Art Festival

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