



Stan's Cafe Equity, access & inclusion statement – January 2021

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Stan's Cafe (pronounced "caff") was formed in 1991 by Graeme Rose and James Yarker while eating at Stan's Cafe, just off Brick Lane in London, and moved to Birmingham soon after. The company is now led by Artistic Director James Yarker.

Stan's Cafe delights in subverting clichéd or proscriptive thinking. We seek to undermine prejudices as to what theatre 'should' be, how it 'should' be viewed or who it 'should' be viewed by. We know that our ability to do this rests on working with company members who are representative of the full diversity of contemporary UK.

Our creative process is centred on devising, which means that it holds space for artists whatever their lived experience, and on working collaboratively, with decisions made through debate and consensus.

This collaborative working process also forms the basis for our creative learning programme. We work in partnership with schools, devising projects that meet the needs of their particular students, embracing all abilities and all lived experience. Our practice is influenced by the diversity of the schools in which we work. We are aware of the need for young people to have the opportunity to work with artists who share their lived experience.

Given the unstable nature of the arts sector, we are committed to developing the careers of practitioners, particularly those living and working in the West Midlands. We therefore seek to develop long-term relationships with and provide development opportunities for the people with whom we work.

In order to become a fully equitable, accessible and inclusive organisation, we recognise that we have work to do in our artistic practice and operational culture; we plan to diversify our policy and practice in the widest sense.

This statement is another step in a new approach to equity, access and inclusion at Stan's Cafe. It is underpinned by a number of things:

- Our longstanding concern with inequality and how everyone can find a fair place for themselves in the world, as explored in artistic projects such as [Of All The People In All The World](#) (2003) and [The Capital](#) (2018).
- Our participation in Arts Council England's [Change Makers programme](#) and our support of staff members with long-term mental health and chronic health conditions.
- Our support of flexible working practice over a number of years, including for parents/carers.
- Our Executive Producer's participation in the working group helping to create the [More Than a Moment Pledge](#). The Pledge forms the basis of this document.

We believe that the action we are taking can be of benefit to people from all protected characteristic groups, that at the same time some actions need to be specific to particular people and groups of people, and that we need to take into account that people live at the

intersections. We are also committed to addressing socio-economic barriers, which are not a protected characteristic.

For the moment this statement focuses on our internal practice – who we work with and how. We have included in this document:

- Our current short, medium and long-term goals.
- Statistics about the make-up of our workforce over the past 3 years.
- A selected list of resources we have been using recently in our work.

This is only the beginning. Future documents will detail our progress, update our goals and outline in more detail our work with audiences, participants and partners. We will publish an update on our website every 12 months.

We welcome opinions, questions and criticism; if you would like to talk to us, please contact James Yarker, Artistic Director on james@stanscafe.co.uk.

Equity, access & inclusion goals

SHORT TERM (over the next 12 months)

Equity, access and inclusion practice is properly resourced at Stan's Cafe.

- Set up three new linked annual budgets as part of our core expenditure. The principle governing these budgets is that if they are not being spent each year, we are failing to fulfil the goals of this statement.
 - Freelance welfare: to support freelance creative practitioners with extra support they might require during our creative process, e.g. working with an artist wellbeing practitioner, sessions with a physio.
 - Equity, access & inclusion: the exact use of this fund will vary each year depending on our activity but it might include: consultation, training, creating new roles (e.g. Assistant Director).
 - Access support: make this budget more visible by placing it in core expenditure rather than individual project budgets.

A range of people's perspectives are able to authentically influence the creative process and outcome.

- Introduce a new induction process that clearly outlines and reiterates our devising and making practice to artists:
 - We use a range of approaches to ensure everyone's ideas, perspectives and feedback are heard in the rehearsal room.
 - The process is not exploitative; collaborators are never asked to share sensitive personal material in the devising process, though we hold space for people to do so if they wish.
 - We use an informal buddying system in which artists who have worked with us before offer support to newer artists.
 - The team on each creative project is different and therefore we re-create a new safe space every time; what is familiar and comfortable to some people will not be for others and we ask all artists to be sensitive to that.
- Introduce "sharings" into our rehearsal process: inviting in people with a diversity of lived experience (e.g. wider company members, board members, sector colleagues) and carefully facilitating feedback for them to share their reflections, questions, challenges and perspectives (conducted with regard to the wellbeing of the artists involved).

Creative practitioners receive pastoral support in order to support their wellbeing.

- Update our grievance, complaints and whistleblower policies to ensure they encompass robust equality measures and that the routes by which people can make challenges are accessible and fair.
- We currently make use of Wellness Action Plans for permanent staff (using the template from [MIND](#)); we will encourage these for freelancers and expand this to welcome the use of access documents.
- Invite [Equity](#) (trade union) to every significant rehearsal period, so they can provide details of their services and how to join. Provide details about other trade unions for non performers (e.g. [BECTU](#)).
- Apply for [Independent Theatre Council Ethical Manager Status](#).
- As we pay at least the trade union agreed rates for our industry (and improve upon them where possible) and never less than the living wage, we will enquire into becoming [Living Wage Employer](#) accredited.

Open up more opportunities within Stan's Cafe.

- Create assistant creative practitioner roles to give talented but inexperienced artists – including people with protected characteristics that are currently underrepresented in our workforce (see statistics below) – paid experience in a supported environment. These opportunities are additional and do not replace existing roles, to which we will also recruit people from a wide diversity of backgrounds and lived experience.

Appreciate the barriers some people may have to getting professional/educational experience, and seek to address them through our recruitment practices.

- Continue to move our recruitment processes for creative roles from passive to active, using a mixed recruitment model that enables us to expand our knowledge of contemporary practice and to meet people with a wide range of lived experience, including:
 - Open calls, utilising channels that reach deeply into a diversity of communities.
 - Actively seeking out artists with whose work we are unfamiliar, e.g. attending performances, scratches and artist talks, seeking out and following up recommendations.
 - Introducing ourselves, our practice and our organisation to people more widely.
- Update and improve our recruitment processes in order to make them as accessible and equitable as possible. This will be adapted to the role in question and might include, but not be limited to:
 - Higher education/post-18 education is not a requirement for the role.
 - Ensure interview dates do not fall within any major religious festivals.
 - Outline the interview process in the job pack so candidates know what to expect.
 - Make sure the pack is accessible, e.g. provide it in large print or audio.
 - Provide an opportunity to have an informal, confidential discussion about the role in advance.
 - Consider the format in which applicants can apply, e.g. providing a video or voice-note instead of a written application.
 - Apply the 'Rooney Rule' to selections.
 - Provide a contribution to travel costs to attend interviews or castings.
 - Provide interview questions in advance.
 - Use a panel that represents a diversity of lived experience, including ensuring there is always at least one woman and one Black or Asian person on each panel and being mindful of other protected characteristics.
- Seek paid consultation on application packs and processes from people with a diversity of lived experience.

- Offer to provide feedback to applicants, which will be direct and constructive and which we will provide in a timely manner.
- Evaluate each recruitment process to find out where the barriers occur.
- Maintain our policy of offering internships and work experience only as either a paid opportunity or to students undertaking them as part of their course.

Appreciate the barriers some people may have to getting professional/educational experience, and seek to address them through our support for the administrative/permanent team.

- Work with individual staff to create a bespoke training programme that enables them to fulfil their role and to develop their skills more generally.
- Set up external, confidential mentoring relationships where appropriate. We'll work with individual staff to find the right person, e.g. it might be someone whose career they admire, it might be someone with whom they shared lived experience (especially if nobody else in the organisation does). Mentors will be paid to ensure they are able to give time to their mentee.
- We currently make use of Wellness Action Plans; we will expand this to encourage the use of access documents.

Our physical spaces are accessible.

- Undertake a full access audit of our office and stores.
- Create access audit templates for use within all spaces in which we work (e.g. rehearsal spaces, venues).

Language is important.

- Eradicate the use of BAME, People of Colour and other acronyms that generalise about people.
- Commit to listening to the language people use when speaking about themselves, respect it and reflect it back to them by using their own language.
- Eliminate the use of sector jargon, which can be exclusionary.

All company members (permanent staff, freelance practitioners, board members) are accountable for upholding equity, access and inclusion.

- Our board and staff to set targets together for the organisation to fulfil, and the board will hold senior staff to account.
- Make these goals public, e.g. circulating them to our freelance team, publishing them on our website, and encouraging feedback.
- Add equity, access and inclusion as a standing agenda item at staff and board meetings.
- Publish statistics on our workforce on our website, updated once a year.
- Commitment to equity, access and inclusion will be included as part of all job descriptions.
- Expectations for staff behaviour will be included in our induction processes; we will require people to acknowledge their commitment to our codes of contact and breaches will be treated seriously through our disciplinary policy.
- Identify and undertake appropriate training for permanent staff members. Given our commitment to the More Than a Moment project, this will include anti-racism training.
- Provide time and resources for all company members to learn about and reflect on equity, access, anti-racism and inclusion; we have provided a non-exhaustive list of resources we have recently been using at the end of this document.

Board

- Board will set goals for its own development.

- Board will monitor all goals against progress and will update them at each quarterly board meeting.
- Continue to ensure board meetings are as accessible as possible, e.g. online meetings if necessary/required, at appropriate times for people with caring responsibilities.
- Appoint a board member to have responsibility for supporting the team on the implementation and progress of this statement.

MEDIUM TERM (over the next 12-24 months)

Our creative learning programme recognises the diversity of lived experience of the students with whom we work.

- Identify and undertake appropriate training for creative learning practitioners, which will include unconscious bias/anti-racism training in 2022. The training programme will be updated annually (future training could include working with neurodiverse students, for example and LGBTQ+ students).
- Work with schools to create new policies and procedures for decolonising areas of the curriculum in which we work.

Appreciate the barriers some people may have to getting professional/educational experience, and seek to address them through our recruitment practices.

- Set goals for representation within our workforce, taking into account the local context in which we work.

Open up more opportunities within Stan's Cafe.

- Create opportunities for more people to work with us, via 'micro-productions' that will take artists not experienced in devising through a full – albeit condensed – making process.
- Introduce a new Assistant Director role to our major new productions, both to contribute to the devising process – making it richer in terms of developing the work – and to give devising experience to a director inexperienced in that field.

Freelance practitioners receive pastoral support in order to support their wellbeing

- Introduce a new induction pack for new and returning company members:
 - Outlining their rights, including ones of which they might not be aware. For example, in recent years this has included providing information on the right for suitable private rest facilities for people who are breastfeeding.
 - Who they report to, and who they can speak to if they have concerns during rehearsals and on tour, including clear information on our grievance procedure.
 - We realise that – while it can be exciting – touring the UK and internationally can be challenging and expose company members to prejudice. We will research the places to which we travel, share this information with touring company members, and set up systems of support on tour.
- At least one permanent staff member will be trained as a Mental Health First Aider, to support permanent staff and freelance practitioners.

Language is important

- People should be able to self-define. We will review the language we use in our workforce data collection, how it is analysed and reported, and how it is used to track progress in the company.

Board

- Board will set targets for recruitment in order that the board reflects the demographic make-up of Birmingham.

- Update and improve our recruitment processes for board positions in order to make them as accessible and equitable as possible (using the same principles as with staff recruitment).
- Update the induction process to include:
 - A clearer induction process (in person and in a pack) to the company's work, finances and operations.
 - Training where necessary, e.g. finance, chairing skills.
 - Matching new board members with a "buddy" from the current board, to support their introduction to the company, answer questions and support them in making contributions to the board's work.
- Attend training in issues of equity, access and inclusion, beginning with anti-racism training in 2022. This training programme will be updated annually.

LONG TERM (beyond the next 24 months)

Open up more opportunities within Stan's Cafe.

- Explore partnerships with local and national cultural organisations to provide development opportunities for creative practitioners, producers and administrators, and technical/production specialists.

Appreciate the barriers some people may have to getting professional/educational experience, and seek to address them through our recruitment practices.

- Use our long-term relationships with schools to educate young people about career possibilities and entry paths to jobs in the cultural industries.

Workforce statistics

- These statistics are taken from our annual report to [Arts Council England](#) as part of our [NPO](#) funding requirement. We have used the options they provide for our workforce survey. Some notes on these options are included below.
- Where nobody has chosen a category, we have left it off the reporting below, to make it easier to read.
- We recognise that the options provided in these surveys may be exclusionary and not fit for purpose, and we will review the language and system we use in the next 12-24 months.
- “Not known” includes people who did not return their form at all, or who left a particular question blank.

Permanent staff:

- Our core team consists of between 4 and 5 people each year.
- These statistics only apply to staff currently in our employment on 31 March each year, and not anyone who may have left or been on a fixed-term contract within the previous year.

AGE	2021	2020	2019	2018
20-34				40%
35 - 49	25%	25%	75% (inc. 25% part-time)	60%
50 - 64	75% (inc. 50% part-time)	75% (inc. 50% part-time)	25%	

DISABILITY AND/OR IMPAIRMENT	2021	2020	2019	2018
Identify as a deaf or disabled person, or have a long-term health condition	25% (part-time)	25% (part-time)		20%
Non-disabled staff	75% (inc. 25% part-time)	75% (inc. 25% part-time)	100% (inc. 50% part-time)	80%

ETHNICITY	2021	2020	2019	2018
White British	100% (inc. 50% part-time)	100% (inc. 50% part-time)	100% (inc. 25% part-time)	100%

GENDER IDENTITY	2021	2020	2019	2018

Female (including trans women)	25%	25%	50%	60%
Male (including trans men)	75% (inc. 50% part-time)	75% (inc. 50% part-time)	50% (inc. 25% part-time)	40%

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2021	2020	2019	2018
Heterosexual/ Straight	100% (inc. 50% part-time)	100% (inc. 50% part-time)	100% (inc. 25% part-time)	100%

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND	2021	2020	2019	2018
Modern Professional Occupations	50%	50%	n/a	n/a
Senior Managers and Administrators	25%	25%		
Middle or Junior Managers	25%	25%		

A question about socio-economic background was included for the first time in 2020, for staff and board members, not for freelance practitioners. It asks for the closest relevant occupation of the main/highest income earner in your household when you were 14.

Freelance Practitioners:

- The number of freelance practitioners we work with each year varies depending on our programme of work, but is usually between 50 and 60.
- These statistics apply to all freelancers with whom we have worked (artists, technicians, administrative staff) but do not include contractors (e.g. graphic designers, photographers, accountants).

AGE	2020/2021	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
0 – 19				2%
20 – 34	19%	33%	34%	35%
35 – 49	68%	33%	27%	26%
50 – 64	13%	10%	10%	17%
65+	3%	5%	2%	
Not known	26%	19%	27%	20%

DISABILITY AND/OR IMPAIRMENT	2020/2021	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Physical disabilities	6%	5%	3%	2%
Mental health condition				
Non-disabled	55%	62%	63%	70%
Prefer not to say	3%	5%	6%	8%
Not known	35%	28%	28%	20%

In 2018 and 2019 the survey provided the options: Identify as a deaf or disabled person, or have a long-term health condition / Non-disabled staff.

ETHNICITY	2020/2021	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Asian:				
Bangladeshi	3%		5%	
Indian		5%		4%
Pakistani				7%
Any other Asian background		5%	2%	
Black:				
African			3%	2%
Caribbean	10%	10%	3%	2%
Mixed:				
White & Asian	3%	5%		2%
White:				
White British	51%	43%	53%	56%
Any other White background		10%	6%	7%
Other ethnic group				
Any other ethnic group	3%	5%		
Not known	29%	17%	28%	20%

GENDER IDENTITY	2020/2021	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Female (including trans women)	48%	57%	47%	50%
Male (including trans men)	26%	24%	24%	50%
Not known	26%	19%	29%	0%

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2020/2021	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Bisexual	13%	10%		
Gay man	10%		3%	7%
Gay woman/ lesbian			3%	7%
Heterosexual/ Straight	45%	67%	56%	56%
Prefer not to say	6%		11%	7%
Not known		23%	27%	23%

From 2020 the survey has included the option Queer.

Board members:

- Our Board currently consists of 7 people.
- These statistics only apply to current board members on 31 March each year, and not anyone who may have left within the previous year.

AGE	2021	2020	2019	2018
35 - 49	14%	14%	80%	67%
50 – 64	71%	72%	20%	33%
Not known	14%	14%		

DISABILITY AND/OR IMPAIRMENT	2021	2020	2019	2018
Identify as a deaf or disabled person, or have a long-term health condition	14%			
Non-disabled	86%	86%	100%	100%

Not known		14%		
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ETHNICITY	2021	2020	2019	2018
Asian:				
Indian	29%	29%	20%	17%
Any other Asian background			20%	17%
White:				
White British	71%	57%	60%	66%
Other ethnic group				
Any other ethnic group		14%		

GENDER IDENTITY	2021	2020	2019	2018
Female (including trans women)	57%	57%	40%	33%
Male (including trans men)	43%	43%	60%	67%

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2021	2020	2019	2018
Heterosexual/ Straight	86%	100%	100%	100%
Not Known	14%			

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND	2021	2020	2019	2018
Modern Professional Occupations	29%	43%	n/a	n/a
Senior Managers and Administrators	29%	57%	n/a	n/a
Not Known	43%			

Selected resources

Culture Is Bad For You; by Orian Brook, Dave O'Brien & Mark Taylor; published by Manchester University Press (2020)

[Doing Things Better](#) blog by Matthew Xia, Artistic Director of ATC on the ITC website (2019)

[Socio-Economic Diversity and Inclusion in the Arts: A Toolkit for Employers](#); Jerwood Arts and the Bridge Group (2020?).

[The impact of Covid-19 on diversity in the creative industries](#); by the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre/Nesta (2020)

[The School That Tried to End Racism](#); Channel 4 (2020)

Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race; by Reni Eddo-Lodge; published by Bloomsbury (2017).

[David Olusoga's James MacTaggart Lecture](#) at Edinburgh TV Festival (2020)

[Michaela Coel's James MacTaggart Lecture](#) at Edinburgh TV Festival (2018)

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We also acknowledge the work of [Aisha Mahmood](#) and [MAIA](#) in their recent support of our recruitment processes.

We are grateful to them all for their generosity in sharing their knowledge, expertise and emotional labour.