

Access for all

Film Audience Network Inclusive Cinema Strategy

Diversity and inclusion underpins every project undertaken by the ground-breaking work of the Film Audience Network (FAN). We aim to bring British international and independent film to audiences, regardless of the many barriers they may face, placing access at the heart of our strategy. We work to increase the range and diversity of audiences engaging with film, promoting active participation and opportunities for all.

In partnership with our creative network of exhibitors UK wide, we celebrate meaningful representations of diversity on screen. We prioritise ongoing skills development through the development of further learning opportunities, working where possible to ensure fair representation behind the camera.

We support young audiences (16-30) to encourage the growth of a long-lasting and inclusive cinema culture and celebrate our heritage on screen, with a focus on regional and national collections. The Film Audience Network embraces the [BFI Diversity Standards](#) throughout our work.

Our approach:

1. The support of successful accessible screenings models UK wide, encouraging sustainable long-term delivery,
2. Shared learning via a UK wide online resource, which offers multiple toolkits and reduces duplication,
3. The provision of training with expert partners, leading access champions and stakeholders,
4. Continual analysis and development of models and programmes, learning as we deliver,
5. Highlighting and leveraging further funding for accessible screenings,
6. Awareness raising and further education for audiences, stakeholders and wider partners,
7. Advocating for and supporting the implantation of raised standards, such as the delivery of accessible formats, and environments that are welcoming and inclusive,
8. To develop further research and gather audience feedback where there are noticeable gaps across the sector.

Definitions:

Our definition of diversity is to recognise and acknowledge the quality and value of difference. Our focus is on disability, gender, race, age and sexual orientation (as they pertain to the Equality Act 2010), with significant under-representation in these areas. We also seek to ensure that people from lower socio-economic, rural and isolated groups and minority languages are more regularly, and fairly, represented.

Our definition of an inclusive/accessible screening is a film screening where the cinema provider has taken specific measures to engage (a) diverse audience/s. These could include adaptations to the screening environment, or provision of specific aids and devices, alterations to venue, programme and audience development methods. This could be in relation to a standard screening that the cinema provider usually runs, or a specially-created screening.

The case for better inclusion

Cinema one of the most accessible forms of experience for audiences on a tight budget, straddling the arts, entertainment and leisure categories. That means that cinema is best placed to be a gateway for people seeking experiences to improve their quality of life, and looking for transformative and positive social interactions.

There are some compelling statistics to clarify why cinemas should be supported to provide accessible screenings and to ensure a focus can be adopted by cinema providers across the UK:

- There are 850,000 people living with dementia across the UK, and this is set to rise to over 2 million by 2051. 34% of these people don't feel part of their community and 61% felt anxious or depressed recently.
- It is estimated that 1 in 6 people in the past week experienced a common mental health problem and major depression is thought to be the second leading cause of disability worldwide and a major contributor to the burden of suicide and ischemic heart disease.
- 34% of respondents with hearing loss said they were dissatisfied with the accessibility of cinemas. Less than 1% of cinema showtimes are accessible via captions in the UK. 83% of people with hearing loss said they would attend cinema regularly if a nearby cinema had captioned shows at convenient times.

Efforts should be placed in creating environments that are inclusive to multiple groups, ensuring a growing relationship with intersectional audiences.

Cinemas also have a moral and legal (Equality Act 2010) obligation as public venues to be accessible to all types of audience, and to make suitable changes to their programme and environment to accommodate audiences that may be marginalised by disability, minority or a mixture of traits that could see them feeling alienated.

What we will do

Our strategy will focus on enabling and empowering FAN members to build inclusion into their existing offers, as well as to increase their provision of adapted screenings for specific audiences. We will focus on supporting the membership to build the following audiences: people living with dementia, D/deaf and Hard-of-hearing people, people with learning disabilities, people with autism spectrum disorders, refugees, those with physical disabilities, LGBT people, BAME people, those with visual impairments, rural or isolated audiences, people with mental health issues, minority languages and those with lower socio-economic backgrounds.

With expert partners and input from audiences themselves, we will deliver a combination of UK wide audience-facing projects and sector-facing training to support FAN members with inclusivity.

By end of FY 17/18 we aim to see:

1. A FAN wide approach to diversity and inclusion which we can adapt into 2018 and beyond,
2. An online resource established which will act as a benchmark and go-to place for future activity (traditional pdf toolkits, searchable repositories of articles, reports and case studies, alongside training videos, interactive calendars and social media content, including live Twitter Q&As),
3. A programme of additional activity to include online content, printed materials, face-to-face training and development. The training focus will be developed by the Training Working Group in collaboration with the Access Officer, who will work in partnership with UKCA, ICO, and other relevant cinema training providers, to ensure a comprehensive offer,
4. An increase in trained cinema staff with greater confidence to work with diverse groups, and a good understanding of the barriers to access.

By end of FY 18/19 we aim to see:

1. An increase in audience members from diverse groups attending cinema screenings, whether standard or adapted, and evidence of higher uptake in use of supportive aids, with more adapted screenings on offer,

2. A greater number of diverse titles screened, including films that do not have specific diversity themes, and higher attendance at screenings featuring diverse representation, and proof or broader awareness from audiences,
3. Wider and more reliable industry provision of accessible formats, and a growing culture of support for inclusive cinema.

Partnerships

Strong partnerships with key agencies are key to the delivery of this project:

- ICO independentcinemaoffice.org.uk
- UKCA cinemauk.org.uk
- Alzheimer's Society alzheimers.org.uk
- RNIB rnib.org.uk
- Action on Hearing Loss actiononhearingloss.org.uk
- Dimensions dimensions-uk.org
- National Autistic Society autism.org.uk
- Your Local Cinema yourlocalcinema.com
- A Life More Ordinary dukes-lancaster.org/alifemoreordinary

Toolkits

Toolkits will be released in three phases and will include:

1. How-to guides - including setting up screenings and supporting guidance around finding volunteers, preparing a case for funding, funding calendar, training information, case studies, lists of potential partners
2. Activity ideas, film lists, evaluation packs, assets, key dates calendar.
3. Business case points, templates for preparing projects, advocacy materials and signage, getting the BFI Diversity Mark of Good Practice

Training and Awareness

The cultural changes we're seeking will be supported through a range of methods:

1. Creating access champions through development days with training resources, input directly from experts and members of diverse groups, using case studies and peer-to-peer sharing, live streaming events to broaden reach.
2. Online training through hosting on platforms like Future Learn and CultureHive, and via online training videos.
3. Inclusive events - an opportunity to share best practice, 'show how it's done' at audience-facing events.

Funding

The existing FAN access budget will fund initially delivery of this project, but further funds are sought for completing into 2018 and 2019.

FAN will support with funding calendars and training resources, so members can self-fund.

Marketing the resources and training

Resources and training will be marketed through digital and social media, partnerships with digital and face-to-face training providers and specialists in key diverse groups, through a PR campaign with press and print distribution, as well as appearance at relevant industry events and conferences.

Advocacy

We will collate the views, opinions and experiences of our membership and share these findings, ensuring that cinema inclusivity is represented across the cultural, educational and political agenda.

This work will consist of

- Making a strong case for the impact of film on people's mental, emotional and physical well-being and the benefit it can have as a tool for engagement, as well as the economic benefits of the Purple Pound (the potential spending power of disabled people), while participating in national discussions about a cultural shift to more inclusive environments and cinema experiences.
- Lobbying for the provision of more accessible formats and more reliable delivery from distributors, with partners such as UKCA, FDA.
- Drawing together relevant data to evidence the case for a greater focus on inclusivity, as well as sharing best practice and sustainable models, thus furthering the rollout of the BFI Diversity Mark of Good Practice, and the implementation of the BFI Diversity Standards, referencing the Equality Act 2010.

Timeline

Each quarter we'll publish/signpost a phase of between 3-5 toolkits with marketing campaigns to support them, alongside regional training/development days.

Measurement

Evaluation of a project with this many audiences on this scale will naturally be quite complex. We'll take an interim report at March 2018, and a further report on results March 2019.

We'll collect data via surveys, reports from members, qualitative audience feedback, voting mechanisms and creative evaluation techniques.

For further information on the FAN access Strategy, please contact toki@filmhubwales.org