

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

Reviewed May 2023
Next Review May 2026

Cheshire Dance celebrates and values the diversity of individuals. Equality underpins all of our work. We make space for, listen to, engage, learn and celebrate with participants, audiences, artists and other organisations to enable everyone's dancing voice to be nurtured and heard.

*Create
Learn
Experience*

Contents

- 1. Cheshire Dance Mission**
- 2. Cheshire Dance Values**
- 3. Policy Statement and Commitment**
- 4. Aims and Objectives**
- 5. Who the policy applies to**
- 6. Rights under the policy**
- 7. Responsibilities**
- 8. Legislative Framework and National Context**
- 9. Monitoring and Review**
- 10. Current Position (inc. Covid 19)**

Appendix 1: Action Plan May 2023 to May 2024

Appendix 2: Reality, Equality, Equity, Liberation illustration

1. Cheshire Dance Vision and Mission

To ensure everyone has access to dance and can benefit from its transformative power.

2. Cheshire Dance Values

Cheshire Dance understands and evaluates its understanding of excellence through a set of creative values. These values underpin our work as a creative dance agency, both in terms of our creative practice and how we work with independent artists.

We support dance artists, group leaders, performers, participants and audiences to develop their engagement in ways that are inspiring to them. In sharing our 6 values we emphasise learning, exploring and debating in the knowledge that they are open to interpretation, requiring dialogue as part of deepening understanding of person-centred practice, excellence and diversity.

Awareness

Of self and others, both physical and emotional as well as the space, environment and context

Flexibility

Adapting to others needs and aspirations, the environment and changing circumstances

Authenticity

True to our own unique way of moving, encouraging people to be themselves

Diversity

Celebrating difference as a source of creativity

Enquiry

Forever curious, exploring boundaries, open to new ideas and challenges

Ownership

Developing belonging and personal/group progression

3. Policy Statement and Commitment

Cheshire Dance celebrates and values the diversity of individuals and equality underpins all of our work. Everyone working on behalf of Cheshire Dance has a duty of care to the public, employees and themselves.

Cheshire Dance is committed to:-

- Providing a fair, supportive and discriminatory-free environment that promotes equity of opportunity and values diversity
- Championing access for all people to the arts as practitioners, participants and audience members
- Providing services which embrace diversity and which promote equity of opportunity
- Creating an environment where all staff, artists, customers, suppliers and stakeholders are treated with respect and dignity and valued for who they are and the contribution they make to the organisation and their community.
- Making diversity a driver of creativity and artistic practice

The successful implementation of this Equity and Diversity Policy is dependent upon its integration into other policies and procedures', therefore ensuring good practice is threaded throughout the management of the organisation and its artistic programme.

4. Aims and Objectives of this Policy

This Policy aims to:-

- Support Art's Council England's [Let's Create](#) strategy in particular the Investment Principle Inclusivity & Relevance, including the Creative Case for Diversity
- Promote equality of opportunity for all and actively oppose and eliminate all forms of unfair and unlawful discrimination, bullying and harassment
- Ensure the commitment in this policy is reinforced by our Values of Creative Practice and is embedded in our day to day working practices
- Remove any unfair or discriminatory practices within the company and learn from complaints
- Actively encourage a full contribution from all communities in which we operate by promoting good relations between different groups in those communities
- Provide a service that does not discriminate against its staff, artists, customers, suppliers and stakeholders in any means by which they access the services and goods supplied by us
- Identify, as early as possible, any individual requirements that may need to be met in order for our artists, customers and stakeholders to fully access our services and to be responsive to changing needs and requirements
- Provide clear, meaningful information about what we do and how we do it, to everyone engaged with Cheshire Dance in the way that best suits their individual needs
- Celebrate our similarities and diversity
- Ensure that no employee or job applicant is placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions that cannot be objectively justified. See Employment Policy.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

- Ensure that recruitment, promotion, training, development, assessment benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals are determined on the basis of capability, qualifications, experience, skills, behaviours and job role performance. See Employment Policy.
- Actively encourage our freelancers and partners to develop and implement positive equal opportunities and diversity policies, practices and procedures - emphasised through line management and CPD provision
- Create a work culture which values diversity, inclusiveness and respect and empowers our employees to reflect those values in their dealings with artists, customers and all other stakeholders
- To ensure Cheshire Dance maintains an artistic programme that consists of delivery of dance in a broad range of different contexts throughout Cheshire and beyond and well as the delivery of a regional / national CPD programme by:-
 - Ensuring the company identifies and seeks to address issues of inequality of opportunity or lack of diversity. We aim to ensure at least 70% of delivery meets an identified inequality need as identified by [Arts Council England's understanding of Protected Characteristics and the Creative Case for Diversity](#).
 - Actively encouraging integration where appropriate, but doing so only having ensured a safe environment.
 - Ensuring inclusive practice and a diverse range of artists are involved in our CPD and artist development programme
 - Promoting a diverse range of dance forms across our programme
 - Taking positive action towards supporting and promoting the artistic voices of those with an identified inequality need through our artistic programme
 - Develop specific collaborative projects with partners to include artists from protected characteristics group across all strands of our programme, including on our Board, those we employ, engage in CPD Artist Development and support in volunteering

5. Who the policy applies to

Under the Equality Act 2010 the relevant protected characteristics are:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Like the Arts Council of England we also include, in our understanding of protected characteristics, class and economic disadvantage and social and institutional barriers that prevent people from participating in and enjoying the arts.

This policy specifically relates to our staff, artists, participants, audiences, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders and thus, Cheshire Dance seeks to reach beyond traditional organisational boundaries in recognition of the systemic and structural bias and discrimination in the industry and across society and its institutions.

For the avoidance of doubt staff includes:-

- Permanent and temporary employees
- Freelancers, contracted artists and other specialists
- Volunteers

6. Rights under this policy

This policy provides many rights for staff, artists, participants, audiences, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders:-

- The right to be treated fairly and with respect at all times
- The right to participate in the activities of Cheshire Dance and achieve their full potential
- The right to receive full support from Cheshire Dance should they need to raise any concerns or challenge any unacceptable behaviour
- The right to challenge and remove any unfair barriers that hamper progress
- The right to be valued and respected as an individual

7. Responsibilities

All staff and board members of Cheshire Dance are fully committed to the implementation of this policy. They will:-

- Demonstrate a commitment to the policy
- Champion and embed equality and diversity in all aspects of Cheshire Dance's work

Board and Directors

The Board and Director will co-ordinate implementation of the policy and will;

- Ensure the terms of this policy are adhered to and that all staff, particularly those with managerial and supervisory responsibility, are aware of, understand and implement the requirements of this policy
- Ensure appropriate structures and procedures are in place to implement equal opportunities and diversity throughout the artistic programme and management
- Collect and analyse monitoring information and make appropriate changes as a result
- Ensure all other stakeholders are aware of the policy through its inclusion in induction packs for freelancers and on our website.

Staff, Artists, Customers, Suppliers, Stakeholders

It is important for staff, artists, participants, audiences, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders to recognise and accept individual responsibility for equality and diversity. They should:

- Advocate the use of appropriate behaviour and language that does not infringe the rights of others and actively supports their right to be called by names and terms of their own choosing. For example – a commitment to stop the use of reductionist acronyms (see [#BAMEover](#) statement)
- Challenge unacceptable language and behaviour when they see it
- Co-operate with all measures by Cheshire Dance to promote and implement equal opportunities and play an active part in the implementation of Cheshire Dance's Equity and Diversity Policy and Action Plan
- Bring to the attention of management any discriminatory acts or practices

They are further expected **NOT** to:

- Unlawfully or unfairly discriminate against colleagues, participants, audiences, suppliers and stakeholders
- Encourage, instruct or pressurise others to unlawfully discriminate

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

- Harass, bully, abuse or intimidate other members of staff, participants, audiences, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders.

8. Legislative Framework and National Context

This policy has been developed within the framework of existing equal opportunities legislation. This commitment to continual evaluation will ensure that all new or anticipated legislation will be reviewed and incorporated within the policy as appropriate. The policy will be formally reviewed every two years unless legislation or other proposed changes have amended it in the meantime.

Our action plan reflects our aim to make space for, listen to, engage, learn and celebrate with participants, audiences, artists and other organisations to enable everyone's dancing voice to be nurtured and heard. We reject racism, discrimination and hatred of any kind, and will not tolerate institutional and structural discrimination in the dance industry or any other. We acknowledge that it is of vital importance that discrimination be further addressed in order to ensure that leaders, artists, participants and communities from protected characteristics groups can thrive within our dancing community.

Cheshire Dance is a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) with Arts Council England (ACE). The ACE [Let's Create](#) Strategy (2020-2030) and in particular the Investment Principle 'Inclusivity & Relevance' is at the forefront of our plan. As an NPO we must show how we contribute to the Inclusivity & Relevance three core characteristics, Communities, Workforce Leadership & Governance, and Creative Case for Diversity.

Communities

Actively listening to, and taking account of, the views of the local community, children and young people, artists, practitioners, and stakeholders we work with. Actively forming relationships with our underserved communities.

Workforce, Leadership and Governance

Have a workforce, leadership and governance which fully reflects and represents the communities we are serving. Have an inclusive organisational culture which values and develops the talent of all the people we work with. Fostering a safe workplace where harassment and discrimination can be challenged and eliminated.

Creative Case for Diversity

Our programmes and activities reflect the culture and talent of creative practitioners and cultural workers drawn from all backgrounds.

In order to ensure we meet our aims and the terms of our NPO funding our Equity and Diversity Policy, Action Plan and information monitoring must be up to date, relevant and robust.

Coupled with monitoring and performance information required by our other funders, this has informed and targeted our Action Plan in Appendix 1.

9. Monitoring and Review

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Cheshire Dance is a good practice organisation due to the very nature of its purpose. As a dance organisation that specialises in participation and continuing professional development Cheshire Dance's core business is deeply concerned with recognising and celebrating diversity as well as ensuring good practice in delivery. In so doing, Cheshire Dance has always recognised the need to take positive action where necessary.

Cheshire Dance monitors the delivery of its activities through various means:

- Specific qualitative evaluation
- Performance indicator information
- Team and partner review meetings
- Board meetings
- Annual retreat

Cheshire Dance reviews its approaches to ensuring Equality on a continual basis as part of:-

- Recruitment, selection and employment
- Artistic programming, planning and delivery
- CPD programming and delivery
- Internal and external reporting
- Policy Review

10. Current Position

Main Achievements since implementing Single Equality Policy

Awards

- ❖ Cheshire Dance was awarded Outstanding Project Partner by Cheshire Downs Syndrome Support Group 2019 awards ceremony
- ❖ Jody Morgan awarded Dance Health Practitioner in the One Dance UK awards 2019 for her work with older people, particularly those living with dementia.

Recent Achievements:

- ✓ With [Movema](#) - co-designed, developed and delivered Wildfire Rising Artist Development Programme Year 1 for Global Majority Dance Artists 2021
- ✓ With Movema - co-designed, developed and are currently leading on the delivery of Wildfire Rising Associate Artist Programme Year 2 2022/23
- ✓ With Associate Artist Connor Elliman, co-created, developed and delivered Project #1 and #2 – for and with young LGBTIA+ people 2022/23
- ✓ Secured funding from Vivo Care Choices for the ‘*Wanna dance?*’ project with people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities 2022-26
- ✓ Established a Young Producers group who have delivered festival activity in Northwich in 2022 and 2023
- ✓ Secured funding for ‘*The Spotlight Project*’ with young people from low income neighbourhoods in Winsford with mental health challenges – 2022/23
- ✓ Board and team taking part in three modules of Anti-Racism Training with Anthony Walker Foundation – spring/summer 2023
- ✓ Removed pay barriers for freelance artists attending our CPD, and introduced paid training bursaries for freelancers wherever possible (funding/budget dependent)

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Historical Achievements:

- ✓ All groups that Cheshire Dance sustains on a weekly basis target Protected Characteristics (or young people living in low income neighbourhoods)
- ✓ Taken positive action in the area of 'Race' equality through the 'Cultural Diversity in Dance' roundtable event at NOW Dance 2017, the subsequent focus on and selection of culturally diverse dance artists for Inquiring Bodies 5 (January 2018) and the programming of Now Dance 2018, Quay to the Streets 2018, Roots of Rumba 2018 and commissioning Movema and Juba do Leao for Now Dance 2019, Now Northwich Festival 2019 and 2022
- ✓ Deepened collaboration with Movema through hosting World in a Box training and supporting the 3 co-Artistic Directors in business planning and their Elevate application
- ✓ Board members deepened understanding of ACE Let's Create Strategy, Creative Case of Diversity and Inclusivity and Relevance Investment Principles through workshops and away days
- ✓ Undertaken Makaton training and achieved Makaton Friendly status
- ✓ Deepened the diversity of group engagement alongside championing accessibility of Now Northwich 2019 (more volunteer stewards, NCT tent, quiet space, Makaton signage, highlighted changing places in the town as well as all accessible parking locations. All this information was summarised in a handy access document on the website and was downloaded more than 2,000 times)
- ✓ In 2019 ACE upgraded Cheshire Dance's Creative Case rating to 'Strong' (previously 'Good').
- ✓ Implementation of standardised Induction Document.
- ✓ Advertisement of Board Vacancies through Better Board Bank.
- ✓ Identified specific networks for distribution of job vacancies, volunteering and participation opportunities – targeting disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, transgender, race and ethnic minority groups.
- ✓ Engagement of an Equality and Diversity professional to advise on 2013 review and update (John Dyer of Credibility)
- ✓ Launched the Values to embed diversity into all areas of the Artistic Programme.

Covid-19

The Covid 19 pandemic which began in early 2020 has had a devastating economic and social impact on our country that will be felt for many years to come. Peoples' physical and mental health & well-being has been challenged, social isolation has increased and financial pressures have compounded what is an unprecedented challenging situation leaving us with a cost of living crisis. The pandemic has disproportionately impacted upon those from who already faced inequality of opportunity, including those in protected characteristic groups. Freelance artists have also found themselves in precarious situations with hugely reduced incomes and less support from central Government – forcing many to leave the sector and seek alternative employment.

It is therefore imperative that our Equity and Diversity action plan focuses upon embedding diversity within our organisation and ensuring that we continue create more opportunities for those who find themselves vulnerable following the pandemic and initiatives to deepen practice with artists and participants from protected characteristic groups and low socio-economic groups.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Covid-19 will have a lasting impact on our society and we commit to re-evaluating and developing our current approaches and systems, to challenging assumptions and to forging new, more equitable ways to develop our work which truly value and reflect the diversity and creative wealth of our society.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Appendix 1: Action Plan 2023 – 2024

Cheshire Dance acknowledges that simply having a Single Equality Policy on its own means nothing. Therefore, we will demonstrate our commitment by producing and communicating to all staff a programme of action to make this policy fully effective.

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
All	Provide and promote a clear feedback mechanism on our website for all stakeholders to inform the organisation, to whistle-blow, to endorse and to call out any practices that contravene this and our other policies, whether anonymously or not	Gathering, analysis and documented action on the feedback received	Review for clarity, ease of use and visibly open to all stakeholders	Direct and Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator	January 2024
All	Continue to refine and streamline systems for assessing number of people from 'protected characteristics' that are engaging with Cheshire Dance. Training freelance artists to support participants in completing monitoring forms.	Performance indicator monitoring When using Dance Biz, Google forms and other systems to include questions on protected characteristics, ensuring definitions and categories align to Illuminate/IIT Use of ACE Illuminate and Impact & Insight mechanism which include quarterly	Stakeholders are able to engage with our monitoring and evaluation systems. Analyse information gathered to inform future actions Artistic Programme is targeted and addressing identified needs/areas in its programming	Director Administrator Creative Director	Review May 2024

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

	Offer support for participants to complete monitoring forms.	reporting			
Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
All	Establish and run regular Board Inclusivity and Relevance Working Party group	Working parties planned at quarterly intervals Minutes from meetings are shared and actions followed up Regular communication between staff and board	More people from protected characteristic groups are connected with the board and can influence board process and decision making Board meetings become more accessible	Chair of Board	First meeting April 2021, quarterly reviews
All	Equity and Diversity Review annually	At the May/June Board meeting Through regular reviews in Cheshire Dance team meetings and at Annual Retreat	Let's Create Investment Principles including Inclusivity and Relevance and the Creative Case for Diversity are embedded within Artistic Programme	Director/Creative Director Chair of the Board	Every May
All	Embed diversity within Artistic Programme as key driver of creative practice and art form innovation	Artistic programming outputs and monitoring	Diversity is embedded in 2023-2026 Artistic programme is increasingly representative of diverse artists and participants.	Creative Director	Ongoing with annual review May

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
All	Maintain Artistic Programme focused on participation of protected characteristics groups at over 90% - developing specific strands as identified	<p>Monitor through performance Indicators</p> <p>Continue to engage with specific, expert partners</p> <p>Keeping sessions accessible (location, cost, content etc.)</p> <p>Developing our key programme strands – young people, people with disabilities, older people, dance and health, artist development</p>	<p>Programme continues to be targeted and well attended</p> <p>New elements of programme developed to further increase inclusion across our work. E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project #2 LGBTQ+ Young People - Young Producers - Wildfire Rising - The Spotlight Project - Wanna Dance PIMD 	<p>Director</p> <p>Creative Director</p> <p>CWaC Dance Development Artist</p>	<p>Report through quarterly board papers</p> <p>Sustain and review annually in May</p>
Disability	<p>Deepen and grown provision of dance for people with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities (PIMD) and their representation in dance programming through <i>Wanna Dance?</i> Project with Vivo Care Choices and UCLan</p> <p>Running 2 national PIMD Dance practice sharing network groups per year</p>	<p>External evaluation by UCLan</p> <p>Project Steering group meetings</p> <p>Individual Dance Partner Reviews</p> <p>Capture no. of artists attending meetings and qualitative experiences of impact</p>	<p>People with PIMD starting to be involved as co-creators in making of creative dance content (i.e. film)</p> <p>Vivo Care Choices invest in Dance and PIMD work</p> <p>CD growing national profile in supporting dance for people with PIMD</p>	<p>Creative Director</p>	<p>Year 1 evaluation Aug/Sept 2023</p>

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
Age	Maintain regular older adult sessions on programme Responding to need, develop where appropriate.	Monitor no. of sessions for older adults on regular programme	Sessions for older adults grow in participant numbers and are self-sustaining	CWaC Dance Development Artist	Review progress and action plan quarterly
Age	Maintain regular youth sessions on programme Responding to need, develop where appropriate. Focus on developing education programme	Monitor no. of sessions for young people on regular programme Monitor no. of schools engaging on regular basis Develop Education Strategy	Sessions for young people grow in participant numbers and are self-sustaining Increase in no. of schools engaging with CD on a regular basis	CWaC Dance Development Artist	Review progress and action plan quarterly
Class/Socio-economic status	Targeted engagement work in areas of economic deprivation	Monitor amount of CD programme taking place in areas of deprivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rewind in Blacon, - The Spotlight Project in Winsford - Step in to Dance & Capoeira Ellesmere Port 	CWaC Dance Development Artist	Quarterly review – link to CWaC Review meetings
Class/Socio-economic status (& all)	Pay freelancers to engage in CPD required/directly linked to their work Remove pay barriers to CD CPD/Artist development programme for freelance artists	Monitor in no. of freelancers engaging in regular CPD Monitor attendance of artists from protected characteristics groups and low socio-economic groups in CD CPD Monitor freelancer's sense of satisfaction with and	Freelance team becomes more diverse in terms of protected characteristics and socio-economic status Freelancer sense of satisfaction with and belonging to CD improves	Director and Creative Director	Annual planning Develop and self-fund approach 2023-26 – aim to embed within 2026 NPO application

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

	Ensure CPD programme responds to freelancer need	belonging to CD Freelancer consultations Qualitative Evidence Log			
Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
Race	Wildfire Rising Programme for Global Majority Artists (in partnership with Movema)	External continuous evaluation by Rachel Gnagniko Data collection on % of Global Majority artists paid to engage in CD Artistic Programme (delivery and CPD) Data collection on dance styles being delivered through CD Artistic programme Financial investment in developing Global Majority artists	Engagement of global majority artists in Cheshire Dance programme Broader variety of dance styles included in CD regular programme More Global majority artists working with CD.	Creative Director Administrator Director and Creative Director	Year 2 runs until Oct 2023
Race	Anti-racism training with Anthony Walker Foundation for team and board	Evaluations, reflections and policy and action plan changes Anti-racism informed practice	An anti-racism culture is strong within CD Team and board feel confident addressing issues of racism and race inequality and are allies for global majority people	All team and board	May/June/July 2023

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact be monitored?	Early success indicators	Who is responsible for implementing?	Timescale
All	<p>Language around protected characteristics groups</p> <p>Team members championing particular areas (older adults, gender, race)</p> <p>Sharing and questioning embedded into CD culture of ongoing learning.</p>	<p>Sharing key learning points and shifts in attitudes from staff following training</p> <p>Changing internal language use in reporting etc</p>	<p>All staff are confident in use of respectful and appropriate language and practices</p> <p>Staff feel able to discuss and challenge issues of language.</p> <p>CD participants and partners feel seen, heard and respected by CD.</p>	Director/Creative Director	Ongoing – review quarterly
All	Steering and participant groups of people with protected characteristics have more interaction with Board	<p>No of. Meetings and interactions between groups and board</p> <p>Protected participant group voices present in Board discussions</p>	<p>Meetings begin to be programmed e.g. Bettina going to Young producers group June 2023</p> <p>Regular opportunities to connect board and groups are planned</p>	Creative Director/Dance Development Artist and Inclusivity and Relevance Board Working Party	Review at Inclusivity and relevance board working parties and feed into quarterly board meetings
Disability	TIN Arts Associate Artist Programme	<p>Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Associate Artist experience</p> <p>Shared learning and development with TIN Arts and Yorkshire Dance</p>	<p>Associate Artist workshop programme co-designed and run</p> <p>Associate Artist engaged in development programme</p>	Emma Thomas (Project Lead)	May 2023 for 3 years – official review after year 1

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Appendix 2: Reality, Equality, Equity and Liberation Illustration

We have taken the decision to call our Policy an 'Equity and Diversity' policy because:

- We believe in equity - recognising that each person has different circumstances and therefore will require different resources and opportunities in order to reach an equal outcome
- We recognise that we still talk a lot about 'inclusion' and 'inclusive' practice but we're not entirely comfortable with this term – there is still a debate to be had about the word inclusion within the team and board

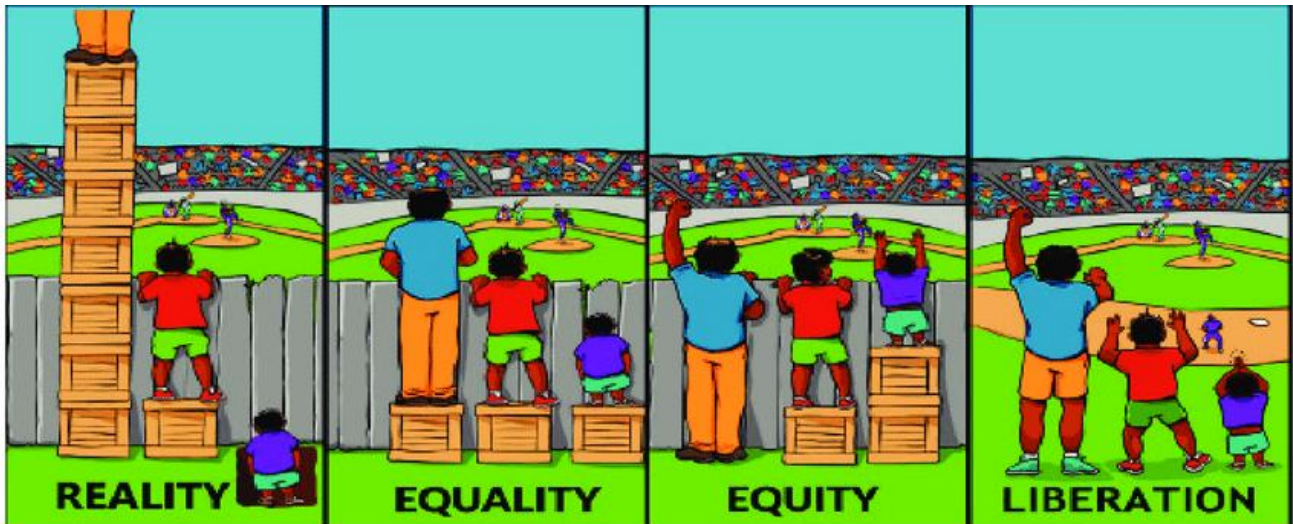


Illustration taken on 25th May 2023 from:

<https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Missions/18707/Equality-versus-Equity-What-s-the-difference-as-we-EmbraceEquity-for-IWD-2023-and-beyond>