

EDI Report – Accompanying Statement

The EDI Change Team wishes to address several areas of the report we feel may be subject to questions or scrutiny in the hopes that the wider Conservatoire body will gain a better understanding of some of the barriers faced when conducting a review of EDI practices. There were certain limitations we had to contend with but we hope that these will not affect our ability as a community to implement long-term, sustained, systemic change.

The EDI Change Report focuses on several key areas which were decided upon based on several different factors. Fundamental to who we are as an institution is what we teach, therefore Curriculum poses a significant area of consideration, but specifically, in relation to our community and lived experiences. Similarly, Institutional Culture was deemed a vital means of exploring the systems we currently have in place and how they influence policy and practice. We had access to both quantitative and qualitative data which we used respectively to inform different focuses within the report. However, we freely acknowledge that we need to collate more qualitative data to better inform our recommendations and strategic planning, and we will look to do this through consultation, both internally and externally, as well as accessing and providing a variety of different training opportunities.

Building more on the idea of consultation, we believe that it is intrinsic to better understanding the lived experiences and practical interventions related to EDI. Sadly, due to the ongoing pandemic, we found it difficult to organise comprehensive consultations. However, this is an area we will be pursuing further. Beginning in the 2021-22 academic year, we are implementing strategies to engage more effectively with the student voice via the appointment of Liberation Officer which will be taking place throughout October. Again, we welcome any and all feedback and suggestions on how best to engage the wider Conservatoire community with our EDI work.

The data collated via the staff-wide survey was somewhat limited due to the lack of respondents. The survey was available for 6 weeks with multiple emails sent from various faculty representatives to encourage engagement, however, the uptake was low. We hope that we can increase engagement in future with the wider staff body and welcome any comments, feedback or suggestions that could help tackle this, including methodology and best times of year. We will be looking to send out another survey to hone the nascent knowledge that we have.

We as a team also wish to address some initial feedback we have had on the report pertaining to our recommendations, specifically, that more radical recommendations would have been welcome. We consider this report our starting point and hope that it will be utilised as a basic framework upon which we can build. We believe that in order to achieve long-term systemic change, it is absolutely necessary to begin by ensuring that we have a sound, structural foundation that everyone in our community understands and has faith in. We hope this report will be seen as a vehicle to convey that message and help us build that framework. We would also be amiss not to acknowledge that we were limited in certain ways- we were a team of four working to assess and analyse systems influenced by wider social, political and economic structures that are not unique to the Conservatoire. As a result, we have every intention to put forward more radical recommendations formed through wider consultation, but only once we have built a sustainable foundation to do so.

Lastly, we wish to emphasise that this report and its recommendations are just the beginning of the work we wish to do at the Conservatoire, but this work cannot and should not be confined to a team of four, this has to be a community-wide effort. We actively encourage any comments, feedback or general interest, and we will do everything we can to ensure that we tackle this

collaboratively. We do not want to speak for others, we want to empower people to speak for themselves and take an active part in shaping how we become a better, more inclusive community.

Thank you.

EDI Change Project Team