

# Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Policy Number	ORG05
Version	7.0
Approving Authority	NIDA Board of Directors
Date Implemented	January 2016
Date Last Reviewed	May 2025
Date of Next Review	May 2028
Responsible Officer	Director, People and Culture (Staff) Director, Learning and Innovation (Students)
Related Policies, Procedures and Documents	Equity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan Reconciliation Action Plan Anti-Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy Code of Conduct Policy (Staff) Student Charter and Code of Conduct Academic and Artistic Freedom Policy Sexual Misconduct and Gendered Violence Prevention and Response Policy Non-Academic Complaints and Appeals Policy

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) is committed to embedding equity, inclusion and diversity in all its business and activities.
- 1.2. This policy establishes NIDA's approach to ensuring we uphold the principles of equity and inclusion in supporting a diversity of people to access NIDA. The policy sets out our approach to equity of access, our commitment to establishing an inclusive learning and working environment, and the diversity of lived experience NIDA aims to represent.
- 1.3. This policy supports the goals outlined in the NIDA Equity and Inclusion Strategy.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all activities of NIDA, including supporting student and staff access and experience. The policy also applies to the wider NIDA community, including partners, clients, contractors and other stakeholders.

## **3. Principles**

The following sets out the principles NIDA uses to frame its work in equity, inclusion and diversity:

### **3.1. Social justice**

NIDA is committed to repairing historical and contemporary injustices that have led to exclusionary policies and practices in education and the arts. NIDA wishes to collaborate with and be accountable to the historically excluded communities it aims to support.

### **3.2. Human-rights based approach**

According to Article 27 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to participate in the arts and cultural life of a community. NIDA acknowledges that due to systemic issues in Australia, this right to participation is threatened for many communities that experience exclusion. This policy is therefore informed by the principles of participation, accountability, anti-discrimination, empowerment and legality, and is guided by NIDA's local and international obligations.

### **3.3. First Nations first**

NIDA's equity and inclusion commitment takes a First Nations first approach to improving access, inclusion and belonging within the institution. This policy supports NIDA's Reconciliation Action Plan.

### **3.4. Diversity of lived experience**

NIDA recognises lived experience of exclusion as a valuable form of knowledge and encourages a diversity of lived experience in decision-making processes. This includes the proactive engagement of people from historically excluded communities, including but not limited to First Nations people, people with disability, people of colour, the LGBTQIA+ community and people living in

regional and remote areas.

### 3.5. **Intersectionality**

NIDA's approach to equity, inclusion and diversity is intersectional, understanding that a person may experience compounding discrimination due to their identity falling across multiple experiences of exclusion. This involves acknowledging the intersecting identities and experiences of individuals, and recognising that discrimination and exclusion can manifest differently for each person.

## 4. Policy

- 4.1. NIDA is dedicated to cultivating generations of dramatic artists, storytellers and creative workers who authentically represent the diversity of Australian experiences. In shaping the future of the creative industries, our vision is to be a leader in equity of access and in fostering inclusion and belonging for all at NIDA. NIDA's commitment to equity, inclusion and diversity coalesces into three specific goals: equity of access; inclusion and belonging for all; and respect for, and valuing of, diversity.
- 4.2. These goals are supported by the NIDA Equity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan.

### **Equity of access**

- 4.3. As an education and training institution, NIDA must proactively ensure equity of access to the education and training it provides for historically excluded communities, including, but not limited to: First Nations people, people with disability, people of colour, the LGBTQIA+ community and people living in regional and remote areas.
- 4.4. NIDA seeks to widen the lived experience of students applying for and attending its courses, via targeted approaches to outreach and inclusive student recruitment. NIDA will make reasonable arrangements to ensure that the protected attributes of individuals do not improperly or unfairly influence their progress in applying for courses, attending auditions and interviews, and ultimately progressing their studies on the NIDA sites and/or within NIDA programs.
- 4.5. NIDA will actively seek to ensure that applicants for employment reflect the diversity of lived experience within the Australian community. This includes, but is

not limited to: targeted outreach, making reasonable arrangements for individuals with protected attributes to attend interviews, and subsequently to work on the NIDA sites and/or within NIDA programs.

### **Inclusion and belonging for all**

- 4.6. NIDA is committed to being an environment free from discrimination, and where people from historically excluded communities feel a sense of belonging. NIDA requires the full cooperation of staff and students in promoting awareness and embedding inclusion and belonging for all.
- 4.7. NIDA recognises that safeguarding inclusion and belonging for all is critical when recruiting a diversity of lived experience in both staff and students. NIDA is committed to targeted activities to support the inclusion of students and staff from historically excluded communities.
- 4.8. Historical barriers to education and other disadvantages have created distinctive challenges for student success and retention. Course content and assessment procedures at NIDA will ensure diversity is valued. In addition, learning and teaching methods will be employed that promote inclusion in the classroom and on stage.

### **Respect for, and valuing of, diversity**

- 4.9. All NIDA staff and students will:
  - Show respect for diversity in their dealings not only with their peers and colleagues, but also with the wider community
  - Value a diversity of lived experience in all activities
  - Avoid any behaviour that could constitute bullying, harassment or vilification
  - Seek advice if they do not understand any aspect of this policy
  - Report any behaviour that is in breach of this policy

### **Breaches of policy**

- 4.10. Appeals, complaints and grievance procedures are available to all NIDA staff and students. If a student has experienced discrimination at NIDA, they can refer to the Non-Academic Complaints and Appeals Policy and report a grievance via the [Non-Academic Complaints and Appeals e-Form](#). They can also report sexual or sex based harassment or assault via the [online incident report form](#).

If a staff member has experienced discrimination at NIDA, they can report a grievance via the [Online Grievance Portal](#). They can also report sexual or sex-based harassment or assault via the [online portal](#).

## 5. Definitions

Term	Definition
Equity	‘Equity’ refers to the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement of all people, while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent the full participation of historically excluded groups. Equity is different from “equality” as it recognises that people do not exist on an equal playing field, encompassing different experiences, privileges and barriers. Equity acknowledges the different needs and experiences of people and the need to develop strategies that are tailored to these differences.
Inclusion	‘Inclusion’ refers to the conditions for people to feel respected and valued as their true selves, and in their differences. Critical to inclusion is a sense of belonging, and the capacity to have one’s voice heard, valued and reflected within the organisation.
Diversity	‘Diversity’ refers to individual differences and circumstances, and how these are recognised and promoted within an organisation. ‘Diversity’ measures the mix of people with varying identities, including age, cultural background, disability status, gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.
Historically excluded communities	‘Historically excluded communities’ refers to people who have experienced barriers to a career in, and enjoyment of, the arts and higher education, including First Nations people, people with disability, people of colour, people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, women, regional and remote communities, and the LGBTQI+ community.
Intersectionality	‘Intersectionality’ refers to how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics (or protected attributes) “intersect” with one another and overlap to condition people’s experiences. Barriers to access and opportunity are often amplified when an individual identifies with more than one historically excluded community.
Protected Attributes	This policy makes reference to ‘protected attributes’ as outlined by

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the relevant State and Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. These include, but are not limited to:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Ethnic and racial identity;
- Gender identity;
- Marital status;
- Political affiliation, views, or beliefs;
- Pregnancy and parenthood;
- Religious affiliation, views, or beliefs;
- Responsibilities as a carer;
- Sexuality; and
- Actual or imputed characteristics of any of these attributes

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## 6. Change history

Date	Change description	Reason for change	Author	Version
02/06/2015	Creation		Chair, Equity and Diversity Working Group	1.0
18/06/2015	Working Group redrafting		Equity and Diversity Working Group	2.0
17/07/2015	Redrafting in consultation with Director, Staff and Student Services		Chair, Equity and Diversity Working Group	2.1
28/07/2015	Minor corrections		Chair, Equity and Diversity Working Group	2.2

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13/10/2015	Minor corrections in consultation with Executive Team (ET)	Broaden language to include all of NIDA's activities	Chair, Equity and Diversity Working Group	2.3
17/11/2015	Structural corrections	In order to ready the document for online publication	Chair, Equity and Diversity Working Group	3.0
21/07/2016	Changes to the definition of equity	To clarify equity as it operates at NIDA	Executive Director People and Culture	4.0
01/01/2023	Review and Update	Compliance review	Director, People and Culture	5.0
27/03/2024	Change to approving authority	Compliance review	Director, People and Culture	6.0
15/05/2025	Review and Update	Changes to support NIDA's new Equity and Inclusion Strategy, including title change.	Head of Equity and Inclusion, Director, People and Culture, Director Learning and Innovation	7.0

## 7. Benchmarking and acknowledgements

Benchmarked against policies and practices from a number of higher education providers and other sources.

Relevant policy documents from the following are gratefully acknowledged:

- University of New South Wales
- University of Technology, Sydney
- Australian Film, Television and Radio School
- Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts
- Diversity Arts Australia

<b>Legislation and regulatory framework</b>	<p>This Policy supports NIDA's compliance with Commonwealth and NSW laws, regulations, standards or other legislative instruments dealing with: education, human rights, employee entitlements, student rights, health and safety, and unlawful discrimination and harassment.</p> <p>This includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</li><li>• Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)</li><li>• Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</li><li>• Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</li><li>• Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)</li><li>• Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</li><li>• Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</li><li>• University of New South Wales Act 1989 (NSW)</li><li>• Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)</li><li>• Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)</li><li>• All related regulations, standards and codes.</li></ul>
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