

Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales
Strategic Equality Plan 2021-2022

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Strategic Equality Plan 2021-2022: Policy context
3. Wales Public Body Equality Partnership
4. The Social and Economic Drivers shaping our Strategic Equality Plan
5. Introducing our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2021-2022
6. Appendix 1: Wales Public Body Equality Partnership's Strategic Equality Plan 2021-2025
7. Appendix 2: Amgueddfa Cymru's Strategic Objectives 2021-2022

Introduction

Amgueddfa Cymru has seven museums and a collections centre across Wales, each focusing on different aspects of our rich and varied history. We strongly believe that everyone in Wales should be able to participate in and enjoy our museums. The extensive input of diverse communities across Wales has been key to the development of our Ten-Year Strategy, to be launched in Summer 2021. One of the six Goals in the strategy states our commitment to “Making sure everyone is represented”.

As an employer, we recognise that by responding to the needs of our staff, volunteers, visitors and stakeholders, we will help shape services that meet the needs of everybody and attract a workforce which is representative of all communities across Wales. All of this is key to achieving our Vision of “*Inspiring People, Changing Lives*”.

Our Strategic Equality Plan 2021-2022 outlines our determination to advance equality, eliminate discrimination and promote good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, within the context of international legislation, e.g., *Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and several transformational strategies and policy drivers specific to Wales, including *Wellbeing and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Is Wales Fairer (EHRC 2018) Equality and Human Rights Commission Report*.

It is set in the context of the tumultuous social and economic crisis we currently find ourselves in. Covid -19 has exacerbated pre-existing inequalities, while the Black Lives Matter Movement has driven many organisations, including Amgueddfa Cymru, to consider their role in fighting racism and other inequalities.

In direct response to recommendations made by the ‘*Is Wales Fairer report*’ (EHRC 2018) for more effective joined up working across the public bodies in Wales, Amgueddfa Cymru has worked collaboratively with a number of other public bodies across Wales to develop a suite of high-level shared equality objectives as part of the Wales Public Body Equality Partnership. All members of the partnership have committed to working together to deliver the objectives and clearly action their intent within their own organisation’s Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives.

Further to the launch of our Ten-Year Strategy later this year, we will review our objectives to ensure that they are fully aligned to our goals, setting longer-term objectives for 2022 onwards. This will ensure that our Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives are best placed to drive change and contribute to creating a more equal Wales.

Finally, we are determined to go beyond compliance when implementing our Strategic Equality Plan and to become a leader in this field, both in our role as an exemplar employer and in our work with the diverse communities that we serve in Wales, by making culture accessible and relevant to everybody.

Strategic Equality Plan 2021-2022

Policy context to its development

The Public Sector Equality Duties as set out in Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 requires public bodies to publish their equality objectives at least every four years.

The Equality Act sets down the Public Sector Duties that apply to Amgueddfa Cymru as a public body. When making decisions and delivering services, we must have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not.
- Foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not.
- When referring to the legal term 'protected characteristics' it is against the law to discriminate, harass and or victimise someone because of their:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender identity
 - Pregnancy & maternity
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation.

In addition to this duty, International law places obligations on public bodies and authorities to protect and promote these rights and to ensure the active and equal access to participation, in all forms of culture.

Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, *'Everyone [...] has the right to [...] social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality'*. Article 27 states that, *'Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community'*.

The [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) Article 27 states that, *'Minorities have the right to enjoy their own culture...'*

The Welsh Government has also adopted the [UN convention on the rights of the child](#), which defines several directly relevant rights, including those relating to non-discrimination, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, minority and indigenous groups, and play and cultural and artistic activities

In addition to this duty, several other transformative strategies, policy drivers have shaped the development of our strategic objectives, all of which focus on the creation of a more equal, fair and healthier Wales. These include:

- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Is Wales Fairer report (2018) Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024
- Socio-economic Duty Wales

Wales Public Body Equality Partnership

In line with recommendations from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and The Welsh Government, the Public Sector Equality Duty represents an opportunity for public sector bodies in Wales to work together to recognise and collectively impact against the challenges set out in the 'Is Wales Fairer' report, 2018.

Several public bodies, including Amgueddfa Cymru, were keen to work collaboratively to agree shared objectives to take forward a collective approach, involving the sharing of resources, insight and expertise. This approach promotes smarter working and creates capacity for widening stakeholder and community engagement. Uniting behind shared objectives has the potential to influence further collaborative working and shared practice, promoting greater impact across the public sector and public services in Wales contributing significantly to tackling inequalities and the 'prevention agenda'.

This collaborative work reflects the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and will directly contribute to the national well-being goal 'A More Equal Wales'. Throughout the work of the partnership, the sustainable development principle and five ways of working will be applied and evidenced.

The Partnership has developed a suite of high-level strategic equality objectives for 2021-2025, the expectation being that each partner will commit to working together to deliver shared objectives and clearly action their intent within their own organisation's Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives. The Partnership's Strategic Equality Plan launched on 1st April 2021, with support from Welsh Government (*Appendix 1*)

The Social and Economic Drivers shaping our Strategic Equality Plan

Our journey from March 2020 has seen unprecedented events taking place which have shaped our thoughts and renewed our understanding of entrenched inequalities in society:

a) COVID-19

Given the disproportionate impact that the pandemic has had on certain groups of people, there are clear reasons for giving consideration and support to those groups that experience health inequalities. The wellbeing of our staff, volunteers and visitors has been of paramount importance during this time and our commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers as they gradually return to our museums is integrated into our objectives.

According to recent research, the pandemic has driven almost 700,000 people into poverty in the UK, exacerbating inequalities even further (*Legatum Institute Research, November 2020*). This requires an urgent response and Amgueddfa Cymru is committed to removing barriers to culture and work for those experiencing inequalities as a result of living in poverty.

b) Black Lives Matter

The Black Lives Matter Movement has driven many organisations to seriously consider their role in fighting racism. We better understand the role that Amgueddfa Cymru, as an institution historically steeped in white privilege, has played in upholding systemic racism.

Museum collections are often rooted in colonialism and racism. Amgueddfa Cymru is no different.

We have a long way to go, but together with our community partners and young people, we have been and will continue to diversify our collections, increase representation, and contribute to conversations that highlight decolonisation, inequality, and racism. This commitment is embedded into our objectives.

Introducing our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2021-2022

A working group consisting of staff from across the organisation worked collaboratively to develop our objectives. Each strategic equality objective includes some high-level actions that make up our Strategic Equality Plan (*Appendix 2*) and specifies the key legislation and drivers each one supports.

To bring our Strategic Equality Plan into reality, the working group will remain in place to measure the organisation's progress against its objectives throughout this period and will report upon progress, in line with our internal and external reporting requirements. During this period, we will conduct a wider consultation process to shape our longer-term equality objectives (2022 – 2026).

We take an intersectional approach to equalities. We recognise and understand that individuals do not just have a single characteristic and that the interconnected nature of these multiple characteristics, (referred to as intersectionality), can combine to create unique modes of discrimination, barriers and experiences for people.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to read about our Strategic Equality Plan and would welcome all comments or questions on any aspect of this strategy and plan. If you require this publication in printed or alternative formats (large print Braille, audio, BSL and/or languages/ Easy Read) please contact us using the details below:

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