



**CREATIVITY IN THE UK**

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**Accessibility Commitment**

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**Festival 2022 Ltd**

March 2022

## Document Control

### Document Information

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<b>Executive Owner:</b>	Caroline McGrory, OC Group Chief Legal Officer
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### Distribution List

Name	Organisation	Position
Dame Vikki Heywood CBE	Festival 2022 Ltd	Non-Executive Chair of Festival Board
Ian Reid	Festival 2022 Ltd / Organising Committee	Chief Executive Officer
David Grady	Festival 2022 Ltd / Organising Committee	Chief Financial Officer
Caroline McGrory	Festival 2022 Ltd / Organising Committee	Chief Legal Officer
Martin Green	Festival 2022 Ltd / Organising Committee	Chief Creative Officer
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## **OC Group / UNBOXED**

Festival 2022 Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Birmingham Organising Committee for the 2022 Commonwealth Games Ltd (the “OC”) and is responsible for the delivery of UNBOXED (the “programme”). References to the OC Group refer to company group of both Festival 2022 Ltd and the OC.

## **1. Accessibility Commitment**

UNBOXED believes in enabling everyone to share in what we do, on an equal basis and with dignity and respect.

UNBOXED aims to meet everyone's access requirements equitably. We will work together to create accessible commissions wherever possible, explore new approaches to integrated access and work hard to ensure that all of our projects and commissions are as accessible as they can be.

UNBOXED is the world's first festival of its kind, bringing together stakeholders from across Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Maths (STEAM) sectors to deliver something modern, forward thinking and engaging the whole population of the UK. In keeping with this, wherever possible we and our partners will embrace creative approaches and employ innovative techniques to create experiences that redefine the possibilities of accessible art and culture.

We will be fully inclusive and expect our organisation and all of those that we work with to deliver commissions that we fully accessible and inclusive for all.

We are committed to learning and testing new approaches and continually improving our access offer. As part of our commitment to this belief, UNBOXED has adopted an Access Policy as laid out below. This commitment outlines a strategic approach which will embed accessibility and inclusion within our creative programming, planning processes, Board and UNBOXED as a whole.

For the purposes of this document, 'disability' is understood in its broadest sense, and covers all the disabilities within the scope of the Equality Act 2010.

## **2. Key aims**

These are the aims we're working towards:

- Everyone can access and enjoy UNBOXED events and/or work, collaborate, participate and engage with us on an equitable basis.
- Disabled people are not treated less favourably by UNBOXED for a reason relating to their disability than others to whom that reason doesn't apply.
- Each commission will be reviewed to ensure all appropriate facilities and services are in place to create a truly accessible and inclusive UNBOXED.
- Disabled people feel as valued and have as positive an experience of our services as anyone else we interact with.
- Disabled people are fairly represented across the work we commission, in our workforce and in our governance structure.

- At UNBOXED, accessibility is seen as a creative opportunity. We actively encourage our projects and commissions to explore and integrate new access approaches within their work.
- Equal access as a guiding principle is part of our everyday thinking and embedded in all areas of our organisation.

### **Here's how we're working to achieve these aims:**

- We provide training in disability awareness and etiquette to all of our staff
- We ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and can answer queries about access
- We will set standards driven by the three fundamental principles of access and inclusion identifying specific requirements as appropriate
- We work with the Organising Committee's (OC) Access Manager who works specifically to embed access in everything we do and champions the importance of access across both organisations
- We have established an Access Working Group within UNBOXED to drive forward our commitment to access in everything we do
- We will strive to improve the quality of our information to ensure it is accessible to all
- We are working with our Recruitment provider to ensure that all opportunities are accessible to all

### **3. What is accessibility and inclusion?**

In an UNBOXED context, accessibility and inclusion is about delivering accessible commissions and engagements, supported by inclusive processes and services. UNBOXED will endeavour to meet the requirements of our communities, the various sectors engaged and the people across all of our nations, whatever their background or disability.

Accessibility and inclusion are not about treating everyone the same - it's about being able to meet people's individual requirements in the most appropriate way possible. To achieve this, additional and/or dedicated service provision is often required to provide a quality and positive UNBOXED experience.

### **4. Strategic approach**

Festival 2022 Ltd is committed to delivering UNBOXED nationwide in 2022 to showcase the UK's strengths in creativity and innovation. The Strategic objectives are:

- Bring people together to celebrate our strengths, values and identities and boost pride throughout communities
- Celebrate our collective and unique offers to the world, supporting our brand and helping attract new inward business and investment

The only way that we will be able to meet those strategic objectives will be to be open and inclusive, collaborative and highly accessible. Unconstrained by ambition and uninhibited by boundaries, we will create experiences that are open to all.

As a subsidiary of the Organising Committee (OC) of the Commonwealth Games, Festival 2022 Ltd will be party to some of the excellent work being delivered around accessibility and inclusion delivered by the wider organisation. Some elements of this commitment lean heavily on their approach, whilst other elements are much more UNBOXED specific.

## 5. Setting standards

UNBOXED will work to deliver the best access and inclusion standards possible. Using current legislation, regulations and best practice as a base, we want to set the standards for accessibility in the cultural arts and wider STEM sectors, which can be used by future festivals and artistic endeavours, across the region and beyond as a blueprint for accessibility and inclusion.

The standards will be derived using the following three fundamental principles of accessibility and inclusion:

- **Equity** – Ensuring all people, regardless of their disability, receive the same level of service and a great UNBOXED experience.
- **Dignity** - Making sure the way in which a facility is operated, or the services are provided maintains the status and respect of the person using it.
- **Functionality** – It is essential to ensure the design or delivery of a commission or service really, practically works.

Standards will be defined confirming specific design requirements, considerations and solutions for festival specific issues in areas such as:

- Accessibility Strategies and initiatives
- Assistive technology and digital
- Training
- Recruitment
- Accessible facilities (if required)
- Marketing and communications
- Benefits and Legacy

## 6. Accessibility Manager and Working Group

Festival 2022 Ltd is a subsidiary of the Organising Committee of the Commonwealth Games an organisation that has a dedicated Accessibility Manager in place who can also shape the work of UNBOXED. We will work closely with the Accessibility

Manager to ensure we embed access provision and requirements into our thinking at all stages of the project.

As part of our ongoing work to contract manage and support the various commissions we will encourage and support them to deliver an accessible festival through a regular Accessibility Working Group. This will consist of Access and Inclusion Leads from the 10 commissions and representatives from the Strategic Delivery Bodies, Festival 2022 Ltd and any other partner organisations as required. The groups aim will be to ensure that the commissions are designed, operated and delivered to follow the three fundamental principles of Equity, Dignity and Functionality. By following these principles, the group will ensure that an accessible and positive UNBOXED experience is available to all. At the group, various topics such as services, processes and operations can be reviewed and discussed to ensure an appropriate standards and levels of accessibility are being delivered by UNBOXED.

As well as that, we have ensured that we have access partners that can guide us to ensure that we are continually evolving and developing our approach to Access throughout the project. Most recently we have engaged with a partner called Direct Access who have shaped our approach and engaged with the Commissioned Teams in a very positive manner. We will continue this approach moving forward.

## **7. Accessible Information**

A wide range of information will be made available in the build up to UNBOXED. Ensuring this information is as accessible as possible is key to ensuring everyone can make an informed decision regarding their various options for engaging with UNBOXED.

We will ensure that accessibility is considered in the production of all of our information. Whenever we are developing content for the public we will be sure to include the following:

- Full consideration of access at initial publishing for example, by providing accessible information about a commission and any issues can be resolved before the public's arrival.
- Making information clear and concise by ensuring all information is as user friendly as possible. Formatting and wording will be concise and clear.
- Utilising Assistive Technology and the right technology to make our processes more accessible including regularly exploring options to improve the experience on our website and developing systems to be fully accessible and inclusive.

## **8. Reducing the disability employment gap**

Findings from the House of Commons 2019 'People with Disabilities in Employment' paper, state that people with disabilities have an employment rate that is 28.9% lower

than people without disabilities. In committing to reducing this gap, there are various initiatives which Festival 2022 Ltd will follow.

These include:

- Ensuring Recruitment processes are truly accessible and inclusive
- Running 'Guaranteed Interview Schemes' for those with disabilities
- Working to ensure recruitment processes are accessible
- Advertising vacancies across specialist partners and disability recruiters

As part of our relationship with the OC as our umbrella organisation we will also be part of their drive to achieve specific certification including:

- **Disability Confident Employer** - A government scheme which focuses on employers recruiting and retaining disabled employees
- **Leaders in Diversity** - A programme run by the National Centre for Diversity which gives organisations the tools and knowledge to build a culture of - Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and engagement

## 9. Responsibilities

Ensuring UNBOXED is accessible and inclusive is the responsibility of everyone involved in delivering the project.

### Accessibility Partners

Our accessibility partners Direct Access will work with us on the development of policies and practice whilst integrating and embedding accessibility across UNBOXED. Working with the Creative Teams Direct Access are reviewing plans and processes with the aim to reduce risks, trouble shoot, and problem solve by creating solutions, confirming standards and providing recommendations. Accessibility terminology can often change by generation and differ by nationality which is important to remember in an UNBOXED context as we are working across four nations of the UK.

To instil confidence in and promote the use of accessible language, we will be working with Direct Access to help stay abreast of changes in language throughout the duration of UNBOXED.

### Festival 2022 Ltd Directors, Staff, Contractors and Volunteers

Accessibility is everyone's responsibility and should be embedded into everything done by Festival 2022 Ltd as second nature. Each functional area and workstream will already have regulations, legislations and best practice which they need to follow as part of standard process.

Support will be provided by the OC and Direct Access along with additional training and workshops to assist with a better understanding and therefore implementation of accessibility.

## **10. Related documents, policies and legislation**

The Equality Act 2010 helps to enforce, protect and promote the rights of disabled people in the UK. Further regulations and guidelines will apply to the delivery of UNBOXED, which will help to shape standards, policies and procedures as appropriate.