

Equality Impact Assessment

DEPARTMENT	Musical Theatre
PROJECT	Disney Theatrical Productions Scholarships

Description

Disney Theatrical Productions funds three full scholarships for students from minority ethnic backgrounds on the Royal Academy of Music’s world-class Musical Theatre Course. The Royal Academy of Music’s renowned Musical Theatre course has been highly successful in providing a multi-skilled training programme at the highest level in a professional environment. Graduates enjoy outstanding success in major West End shows and international productions.

Disney Theatrical Productions and the Royal Academy of Music are committed to encouraging greater diversity in the industry and to enabling outstandingly talented artists from minority ethnic groups to take advantage of the world-class training and opportunities the Academy has to offer. The first three scholarships will be available for the academic year 2017–18.

Scholarship criteria; all candidates must successfully pass the Academy’s audition and meet the Musical Theatre Course entrance requirements, candidates must demonstrate outstanding talent (as determined through the usual audition process). Priority will be given to candidates from BAME (black, Asian and minority ethnic) backgrounds with potential to act as a role model to encourage students from diverse backgrounds that aspire to careers in Musical Theatre.

Applications accepted via UCAS Conservatoires.

Could the policy/project etc. have an adverse impact on equality in relation to:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender or Gender Re-assignment
- Marriage or Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation

No, all candidates are given equal consideration regardless of their age, gender, religion, sexual orientation or marital status. Reasonable adjustment are considered for students with disabilities where appropriate. These scholarships offer a particular opportunity for BAME candidates; see below.

Does this policy/project etc. provide opportunities to make a positive impact on equality?

The Disney Theatrical Productions Scholarships form part of the Academy’s over-arching Widening Participation Strategy and applications from BAME backgrounds are given priority as this is a very under-represented group within the field of musical theatre. The experience that these students gain from the scholarships will further the promotion of equality and diversity as they spread the word and promote the Academy within their own communities. As part of the application process candidates are required to

indicate their interest in being considered for a Disney scholarship and are informed that whilst selection will be based primarily on talent, if they are a recipient of the scholarship, they will also be acting as a role model for the wider community.

The Equality Act 2010 contains provisions, which enable education providers to take action to tackle the particular disadvantage, different needs or disproportionately low participation of a particular student group. These are known as the positive action provisions and allow education providers to take proportionate action to remedy the disadvantage faced by particular groups of students. The Royal Academy of Music, whilst welcoming applications from all groups, has applied positive action provisions of the Act to target particular groups currently under-represented on the musical theatre programme.

What evidence has been considered in the above?

A recent report, 'Centre Stage: The Pipeline of BAME Talent' commissioned by the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation to explore the absence of BAME people in live theatre concluded that "a vast majority" of those who audition for UK productions are "white middle class". The research states, "representation of minority ethnic actors is as low as one student a year in some drama colleges", while there are "far fewer opportunities for career-changing lead roles" for them. Amongst other recommendations, the report urges drama schools to make 50% of their places accessible to students from low-income backgrounds and for funding bodies such as Arts Council England to offer resources and initiatives to ease the BAME path into the theatre.

The following 10 year statistical analysis of the Academy's Musical Theatre programme highlights under representation of BAME students.

Academic Year	Number of UK domiciled BAME students enrolled on the Musical Theatre programme
2007-08	0
2008-09	1
2009-10	1
2010-11	1
2011-12	0
2012-13	2
2013-14	3
2014-15	2
2015-16	2
2016-17	4

The proposal for the Disney Theatrical Productions Scholarships was discussed in detail with the Academy's Senior Management Team including Chair of E&D Committee.

Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? NO

Date: 7 June 2017