

# BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF ART THERAPISTS

## EQUALITY, EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

We acknowledge that structural racism and all forms of discrimination have had an enormous impact across our society and that there is much that needs to be done to ensure our art therapy community is truly representative of our community. As part of our commitment to creating a more diverse and inclusive culture, BAAT is committed to taking action in five areas:

1. **Our Practice** - We will aim to ensure our direct work is accessible and delivers impact to the full art therapy community.
2. **An inclusive and diverse mental health workforce** - We will promote the value of a diverse workforce and encourage training programmes to be accessible to all, so that people from all backgrounds and life experiences are more able to access training, succeed on their training journeys, and enjoy a fulfilling career as an art therapist.
3. **Our People** - We will create an inclusive workplace to attract, retain and develop a talented team from different backgrounds, race, cultures, socio-economic backgrounds, ages, sex, gender, or sexual orientation, faith and ability.
4. **Learning** - We will educate ourselves, establish and promote an open and honest dialogue about diversity, race and inclusivity within BAAT and across the art therapy community.
5. **Promotion** - We will consistently demonstrate our commitment to inclusivity in our communications, both internally and externally.

### Steps that we've already taken

- We have arranged a series of online recorded CPD events, starting with art therapy practice, so practitioners are better equipped to support their clients to engage with difference, racism, trauma and identity:
  - Jacqui McKoy-Lewens (an art therapist, who is programme leader of the Art Therapy Northern Programme) ran a workshop on 24th September 2020, called "*BLM is not just a #Hashtag! How you can help to ease the trauma*".
  - Anthea Benjamin spoke about on "*Facilitating spaces where conversations about difference power and privilege can take place: working with collective trauma in groups using the arts*", and "*Exploring themes of identity with children who are adopted transracially and intercountry. How to explore race and support children to build a positive identity when they are in the minority*".
  - Dr Dwight Turner spoke on "*Exploring the intersections of privilege and otherness*", which supported art therapists to reflect in-depth on their own experiences of privilege and disadvantage.
  - Rebecca Hetherington spoke on "*Thinking outside the box: Working with LGBTQIA+ service users*".
- We arranged for the Art Therapy, Race and Culture (ARC) SIG to meet our Educators' Group to share ideas about how to develop training resources that are more inclusive and support students on their training journey.
- Through AHPF, the BAAT funded leadership training for people from communities that may have experienced racism. A BAAT member has successfully applied for this programme and is now undertaking the training.
- We have also requested and reviewed data from the HCPC to better understand the demographics of those in our profession, at different stages of their career, so that we can better understand the challenges.
- We have appointed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor for BAAT Council.
- We have joined the *Diversity and Inclusion Coalition*, in collaboration with other industry bodies, to focus on addressing the gender and ethnic disparity in the therapeutic sector.
- We set up a working group, which included colleagues from England, Scotland, Wales

and Northern Ireland, to develop an EDI Policy and Strategy for BAAT.

- We worked with our journal's Editorial Board to develop a new category for articles to our BAAT journal, so that an important opinion piece on white privilege and art therapy in the UK could be published in the journal.
- IJAT has now planned a special issue entitled "*International Examinations of Anti-Oppressive Art Therapy: Intersectionality, Anti-colonialism and Cultural Humility*". This is currently expected to be published in 2023 and will be a joint issue, in conjunction with the Canadian and the American Art Therapy Associations' journals. Each journal has invited Guest Co-Editors to work with the Editors-in-Chief. The BAAT's issue will focus on Intersectionality and be Guest Co-Edited by Corrina Eastwood, Dr Dwight Turner, and Patrick Vernon OBE.
- A new EDI Advisor role was developed for the IJAT Board – Corrina Eastwood, published IJAT author on related topics, was appointed to this role. The EDI Advisor will continue to hold annual open consultation surgeries with BAAT members to feedback to the journal any ongoing concerns, successes and potential barriers to be considered.
- IJAT Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Advisor worked with the Editor-in-Chief and a diverse group of members and colleagues of the journal's learned society to create clear actions for change for the journal. These include: 1) introducing a new category for the publication, 2) collecting data on identity markers and lived experience amongst the peer reviewing network, 3) an invitation for reviewers to include lived experience related to intersectional experience of identity and community in specialisms, 4) meaningfully considering the lived experience of reviewers when anonymously matching them to submissions, 5) a thorough review of the current specialisms, 6) the redesigning of the Peer Review training to use an intersectional framework for identifying bias, 7) an updated and comprehensive review of language and terminology and guidelines for diversity and inclusion language, 8) the 'deposit' arrangement for peer reviewer training will no longer be required and the advert for peer review training will be re-written to feel more inclusive, 9) an acknowledgement that racism and prejudice is pervasive in scholarly publishing that those who do not fit the dominant norm in the profession may face barriers and trauma when navigating these spaces, 10) and ongoing review of the potential barriers to involvement.
- An IJAT mentoring programme scheme has been set up for those who submit their first drafts, following the call for papers for the special issue on anti-oppressive practice; this begins in September 2021.
- We have arranged regular Telephone Research Clinics with the BAAT Research Officer, as the initial support for all BAAT members who'd like to undertake research so that this work is more accessible for a wider group of art therapists.

### **Steps that we will now take**

- Empower members to engage more directly with BAAT, by providing clear information about the organisation and how they can more easily understand and influence BAAT policy and practice.
- Encourage members to stand for BAAT Council and our volunteer coordinator roles, by developing short videos that explain the process and the commitment.
- Take steps to become a Disability Confident Employer, a Stonewall Diversity champion, and sign up to the [Race at Work Charter](#) (committing to five calls to action to ensure employees who may have experienced discrimination, racism and disadvantage are represented at all levels and improve our recruitment processes to reflect diversity and inclusion best practice).
- Promote accessibility by producing videos about art therapy in British Sign Language and Irish Sign Language.

- Provide leaflets about art therapy in both English and Welsh; develop an area on the BAAT website for Wales, with information in Welsh and English.
- Develop a resource for BAAT trainings and CPD events to provide explicit guidance on boundaries, sensitivity, safety and self-care when attending events, so that all attendees of events can be more aware of how shame and discomfort may be acted out and invalidate people's experiences, or even re-traumatise them.
- Set up a BAAT mentoring space for students on approved art therapy training programmes, so that all art therapy trainees feel heard, supported in their professional development, and prepared for the workplace.
- Set up a mentoring programme for qualified art therapists from communities that may have experienced racism and/ or other discrimination, who are considering a career in education and training in order to support them to understand the sector, the process of managing a training programme, and to gain experience of teaching. Review after a year and expand the programme, if feedback from participants indicates that this was valued and helpful.
- Develop an e-training on EDI and encourage all members to complete this.
- Work to ensure that the HCPC understand our profession and the difference that members from the arts therapies professions bring to the Allied Health Professions; also, how our work can engage clients who might otherwise struggle to access support, thus enabling them to access wider services too. And continue to lobby to ensure that anti-oppressive language and practice are fully embedded in the revised HCPC Standards of Proficiency.
- Work with HEE and other partners and stakeholders to explore ways to make funding available for those who want to undertake art therapy training.
- Encourage art therapy apprenticeships across the UK; support new ways of working that may support those in areas of the UK where there are not currently trainings to be able to train as art therapists.

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*This equality, equity, diversity and inclusion strategy is fully supported by BAAT Council, senior management and has been developed in consultation with employee representatives and BAAT members. The strategy was adopted by BAAT Council on 16 October 2021 and will be reviewed in October 2023.*