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Scottish Queer International Film Festival Safeguarding Policy

This document was put together thanks to guidance from other festivals and individuals, including Take One Action Film Festivals, BUZZCUT Festival, and Alchemy Film & Arts. We thank them for their generosity.

ABOUT SQIFF

SQIFF (Scottish Queer International Film Festival) was formed with the aim of adding to the exciting and growing amount of queer film stuff happening around Scotland. Since 2015, we have held an annual Festival in Glasgow alongside providing year round events across various locations. SQIFF aims to build community through queer films. Our goal is to get people watching, talking about, and making more queer films. We want to screen movies that people might not otherwise get a chance to see and create inspiring and informative events across Scotland. Moreover, we want to support marginalised groups within the LGBTQIA+ community by providing a networking system for queer filmmakers, as well as filmmaking workshops for audiences wanting to start on the medium. We want to challenge inequalities and barriers to accessing the arts.

This Safeguarding Policy includes information on:

- [Policy Statement](#)
- [Purpose](#)
- [Principles](#)
- SQIFF's [commitment](#) to ensuring safe environments for Trans, Non-Binary and/or Gender Diverse People and people of the Global Majority

POLICY STATEMENT

SQIFF is committed to safeguarding all those involved in its activity, including staff, Trustees, volunteers, participants and audiences. SQIFF aims to follow and promote best practice in this area, to reduce risk of harm across all of our activities, and utilise robust processes to address harm when necessary. This Safeguarding policy can be used in conjunction with SQIFF's Fair Work and Whistleblowing policies.

PURPOSE

This policy lays out how SQIFF intends to embed positive and robust safeguarding practice. It sets out what staff and Trustees need to be aware of in this area



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throughout activity planning, delivery and evaluation. This policy makes SQIFF responsible to the public as well its employees, voluntary staff, and audience members for acting on those commitments.

PRINCIPLES

Our team aims to centre care and accountability in all of our interactions. The films we platform and the events we offer celebrate community, solidarity and difference; promote equality and challenge injustice. We are committed to providing an environment that is welcoming, accessible and inclusive for all attendees, staff, guests and volunteers, in person and online.

SQIFF has a zero-tolerance approach towards any form of harm on a micro or macro level whether intentionally or not. SQIFF provides communality, based on the premise that everyone has a responsibility for maintaining a safe space. We expect all staff, guests, volunteers and attendees to comply with our Code of Conduct, Trans, Non-Binary and/or Gender Diverse Statement and Anti-Racism Policy, and we will make every effort to create and maintain a safe organisational culture for all whom SQIFF serves and those working on its behalf. SQIFF will respond in a professional and timely manner to all concerns or allegations of harm. All concerns or allegations will always be taken seriously, and investigated and acted upon where appropriate. Our accountability framework is different from mediation and harmed parties will not be expected to interact with the perpetrator if they do not want to. We seek to centre the person harmed and support the person who caused the harm in taking accountability. Where necessary we will eject people who have caused harm from the space.

This policy document outlines the responsibilities that befall SQIFF and our staff in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of volunteers, staff, audiences and guests.

Key Safeguards

- Everyone working on SQIFF's behalf will treat all children and adults with respect regardless of their race, colour, gender (including gender diverse children/adults), language, religion, opinions, nationality, ethnicity, social origin, property, disability, sexual orientation or other status (in line with our code of conduct).
- No one working on SQIFF's behalf will ever use harmful language or behaviour towards children or adults that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, intended to humiliate or culturally inappropriate.



- No one should ever use language or behaviour towards anyone working on SQIFF's behalf that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, intended to humiliate or culturally inappropriate.
- At every event, there will be a point of contact responsible for responding to safeguarding concerns. This point of contact will be made clear at every event briefing.

Safeguarding Disclosure Process

Throughout SQIFF's activities, a robust Safeguarding Disclosure Process will be followed to ensure:

- the disclosure is appropriately dealt with.
- whomever made the disclosure is supported away from risk of harm.
- whomever the disclosure was made to receives support.

Disclosures can be made directly, indirectly, behaviourally or non-verbally. Individuals may not be aware that they are disclosing information, and/or may make partial disclosures, for fear of getting in trouble, pointing blame, feeling ashamed or needing to protect themselves from reliving traumatic events.

Should any SQIFF staff member, Trustee, volunteer, and/or audience member receive a disclosure from another person that indicates that themselves and/or another person is at risk of harm, they should follow the below process:

If the individual is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

If the individual is not in immediate danger, follow SQIFF's process as outlined below:

- support the individual by showing you care, giving your full attention and remaining compassionate.
- do not promise to keep the disclosure a secret, instead explain that you may need to share the information they have told you with someone who will be able to support.
- avoid interrupting an individual during a disclosure to support them in making what might be difficult statements.
- reflect back what you've heard to check you have understood correctly, using the language the individual has used.
- ask the individual if they consent to this disclosure being shared with SQIFF's Safeguarding Lead, explaining why you'd like to share this information and what the information will be used for. Ensure the individual understands the



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consequences of this information not being shared and that they are aware that they can withdraw their consent at any time.

- offer to support the individual in the aftermath, i.e. making a drink or escorting them to a quiet space.

After receiving a disclosure, individuals should record what has been shared with them, including:

- the individual's name.
- what the individual said or did that gave you cause for concern.

This should be shared with SQIFF's Safeguarding Lead who will take appropriate action.

Staff Wellbeing

The festival environment often means working long hours in what can be stressful conditions. SQIFF understands that our team's health and wellbeing is key to delivering a successful event. We will ensure that all staff members:

- Are provided with a work schedule for every event/festival.
- Identify suitable periods for breaks, food and rest.
- Agreeing deliverables in advance with staff and contractors.
- Pay staff at least the Real Living Wage in accordance with our Fair Work Policy.
- Look out for each other and carry out regular wellbeing checks.
- Take the weekend before the festival off - unless previously discussed.
- Are guaranteed a safe journey home (SQIFF will cover taxis home – locally – for staff and volunteers working past the time in which suitable public transport is no longer available).

Incidents

All staff, but in particular those who have lead roles at events, have a duty to be active bystanders and be aware of the safety of fellow staff, volunteers, guests and audience members. Should an incident occur that goes against our code of conduct, our Trans, Non-Binary and/or Gender Diverse Statement or our Anti-Racism Policy, SQIFF will respond and report it professionally and efficiently, by:

- Ensuring the immediate safety and support of anyone experiencing any form of harm.
- Reporting the incident as soon as practically possible to the designated safeguarding lead and/or a relevant team member at the venue.



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- Ensuring complete confidentiality of any anyone who reports a hate incident.
- Recording it in the Festival Log Book.

Event Health & Safety

In theatrical venues or other licensed entertainment or cultural venues, the venue's own health & safety guidelines will be adhered to at all times. A health and safety risk assessment will be carried out prior to any in-person event taking place in any other venue or outdoors setting. This will outline:

- Venue & event accessibility
- First Aid-trained individual(s)
- Procedures in the event of a fire

In the event of an accident or incident relating to health & safety, SQIFF will:

- Ensure the immediate safety and support of the individual(s) involved;
- Report it to the designated first aider;
- Record it in the Festival Log Book.

COMMITMENT TO TRANS, NON-BINARY AND/OR GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE AND PEOPLE OF THE GLOBAL MAJORITY

We are committed to providing an environment that is welcoming, accessible and inclusive for all attendees, staff, guests and volunteers, in person and online. In particular, SQIFF works to provide the safest environment for Trans, Non-Binary and/or Gender Diverse People and people of the Global Majority.

Please refer to SQIFF's Trans, Non-Binary and/or Gender Diverse People Statement and our Anti-Racism Policy to see our full statement and measures.

We welcome any comments and suggestions that can help us to develop our Safeguarding Policy: info@sqiff.org.