



## **What is an accountability agreement and why does Fast Familiar have one?**

The world we live in is not fair.

People get treated differently - your gender, ethnicity, how you talk, religion, dis/ability and lots of other things affect how you are treated. This isn't (just) about horrible people who say and do intentionally hurtful things. It's bigger than individual actions: these prejudices are built into the systems we use to move through the world, perpetuated by what we learn in school, the characters we see in stories, the things that society considers as valuable, and by language itself. We're often not aware of what we've absorbed. Even if you don't want to be a prejudiced person, you can end up doing or saying things that perpetuate inequality and oppression. We need to be more alert to this.

Fast Familiar acknowledges that we live in a society which is white-supremacist, ableist, homophobic, sexist, transphobic, and holds prejudice based on ability, asylum status, class, ethnicity, gender, gender presentation, nationality, and religion. That is the world we live in and the world we make work in. When we do things in a respectful and considerate way, we are making the change we want to see in the world.

In our work, people are active - taking decisions, thinking things through, interacting with other people. The structural issues that affect the world in general don't stop in the spaces where our work exists. So we want people engaging with our work to keep half an eye on how those structural inequalities are playing out - and avoid doing and saying things that will hurt other people, including unintentionally. Or better still, challenge those inequalities. This is so that everyone can feel happier and more comfortable.

Some people talk about 'safe spaces'. We talk about accountable spaces because safety is a really personal thing that's going to be different for everyone. Also, each person can really only take responsibility for their own actions. We cannot guarantee a safe space because we don't know what other people will do - but we can work towards a safer and more accountable space where we ask individuals to subscribe to a code, and there are consequences if they don't - i.e. they are accountable for their actions.

We hope that through this we can address violence, abuse or harm and create safety, justice, learning and healing. To practice accountability is to:

- acknowledge and validate the hurt/ harm that has been caused
- start by listening to the person who has been hurt and be led by their needs
- provide opportunities for the person who caused harm to recognise what they've done, learn and change
- change our own organisational practices to make an incident like this less likely in future

Through doing this, there will be moments of awkwardness and difficulty but we think this is preferable to upholding systemic inequality by turning a blind eye.

## Safer Spaces code

At the start of any artwork or workshop situation, participants are asked to read our Safer Spaces code, and are advised of how they can contact a Fast Familiar moderator.

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Fast Familiar (FF) believe that it is our responsibility to create spaces, both offline and online, that are respectful to everyone.

Below is a list of agreements that you sign up to when you play one of our shows. Sticking to these agreements is a collective responsibility and everyone is individually responsible for checking their own behaviour. If you don't think you will be able to follow these agreements, please don't participate in our work.

- Ableism, homophobia, racism, sexism, transphobia, or prejudice based on ability, asylum status, class, ethnicity, gender, gender presentation, nationality, or religion is not welcome.
- Be sensitive to your own privilege. You didn't get to choose this but you do get to choose how you wear it.
- Be kind with your words. Allow others space to share their thoughts. If you don't, you're missing out on their wisdom.
- Be aware of the language you use and how this relates to other people.
- Don't make assumptions about other people's opinions or how they identify. Kindly ask first and then actively listen.
- If you realise that the impact of what you say doesn't match your intention, apologise and breathe.
- All this all still applies if you are under the influence of drugs and/ or alcohol or having a bad day.

If you find yourself in a situation where people are not sticking to this code, contact a member of the Fast Familiar team. For details on our procedures, see below.

If you think this list is missing something, please let us know.

Thank you.

**interventions and consequences**

This details the levels of consequence for people who have caused harm, where an intervention takes place.

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| <p>Level 1:<br/>check-in</p>                   | <p>Checking in can be used when a person causes harm through the use of language that oppresses or hurts others.</p> <p>The aim is to let someone know they have breached the Safer Spaces code and ask them to be mindful of their behaviour in future, through a brief calm conversation. Checking in can be done by another participant, or an FF moderator – we aim to create spaces where everyone feels they can check in with someone causing harm, but we appreciate this can be difficult. If you experience someone using harmful language but aren't sure how to address it, you can speak to an FF moderator who will then do the checking in.</p> <p>A check-in can be in person (most appropriate during an artwork) or via email (perhaps more appropriate for a longer project). Depending on the situation in which the harm was caused, it may be appropriate to check-in as part of the course of a group discussion; other times a separate private check-in may be more appropriate.</p> <p>The person we are checking in with may feel confused or embarrassed as a result. They may get defensive. In this instance we will suggest they take some time out.</p> <p>If someone checks in with you because you've caused harm, please listen carefully to what they are saying. Being able to listen and take in what someone is saying is often a massive step towards healing and remedying what you have done to hurt someone. Even if you think they may be wrong in this instance, understanding why someone is hurt is more important than defending yourself.</p> |
| <p>Level 2:<br/>call in +<br/>consequences</p> | <p>This method is more likely to be applicable if someone has perpetrated any kind of physical, sexual or psychological violence, or has repeatedly ignored check-ins.</p> <p>A FF moderator may choose to do this because of something they have observed, or because they have been alerted to it by another participant. If, as a participant, you experience someone perpetrating violence, you can speak to an FF moderator who will then do the calling in.</p> <p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• firmly remind the person that their violent words or behaviour are unacceptable</li> <li>• ask them to take some time out and reflect</li> <li>• ask them to stay away from the person they hurt, or give them space as appropriate</li> </ul> <p>If the person hurt explicitly says they would appreciate an apology, FF will suggest that the person who caused harm apologise, and will offer to act as a witness to that or be on hand for support if needed.</p>  |

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| Level 3:<br>call out =<br>consequences | <p>For serious breaches only, where it is felt that immediate safety of other people is at risk. This can be flagged by another participant but is likely to have been noticed by a FF moderator.</p> <p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• let the person know that we need to ask them to leave the FF activity</li> <li>• ask them to contact FF if they wish to participate in activities in future</li> <li>• make it clear they must enter into dialogue via email if they hope to participate in any FF activity in the future.</li> </ul> <p>FF reserve the right to ban people from future activity if we remain concerned that other participants' experiences will be negatively impacted by this person's presence.</p> <p>We will arrange to physically remove the violent person from the space, as a last resort.</p> |
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FF will record any interventions made. This is because unchecked behaviour can escalate.

FF will seek training for all company members who will perform moderator roles, to equip them with the skills they might need to handle these situations sensitively and appropriately.

In the case that a participant does not wish to speak to a FF company member about their experience, we encourage them to contact the Chair of our Board on [chair@fastfamiliar.com](mailto:chair@fastfamiliar.com).

### **acknowledgments and resources**

Fast Familiar acknowledge that this document benefits from the work done by DIY Space for London (especially their Accountability Working Group) and their [Accountability Agreement](#); the [Sisters Uncut Toolkit](#); and the [WithForAbout 2020 conference](#).

We also acknowledge our lack of expertise in this area and we will update this document as we learn.