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## THE BRITISH LIBRARY – GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

### GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

#### PROGRESS REPORT YEAR 2 - [June 2008 – May 2009]

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## Foreword

*I am pleased to present the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report on the Library's Gender Equality Scheme.*

*This report summarises the steps that have been taken so far to ensure gender equality is embedded in our business and the reports on the progress on implementing the strategic priorities listed in year 2 of our action plan that have enabled us to continue to embed Gender Equality .*



*There are a number of fundamental responsibilities that I hold as important to my role of Gender Champion, which are also inextricably linked into the leading role I also have for corporate social responsibility at the Library. Embedding Gender Equality is not just about strategies or of looking at Gender in isolation from the broader picture of diversity.*

*One of my roles is to promote gender and raise awareness and engagement within the Library. This has begun with raising knowledge and awareness within the Gender Action Group and the work we are doing on domestic violence, sexual orientation and transgender initiatives this year has been enhanced by inviting experienced experts to present to the group and to keep us best informed and understanding of these areas.*

*The Gender Action Group Members this year have developed their confidence in sharing the key role of helping to influence the engagement and involvement of the workforce - We very much look forward to progressing the third year of the plan to further raise awareness and engagement to ensure we meet the actions we have set ourselves.*

**Mary Canavan**

**Gender Champion**

Director of Human Resources

The British Library

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## Introduction

### Purpose of the scheme; and our commitment to the statutory duties

Published in April 2007, the Library's Gender Equality Scheme is a three year strategy with an annual review process that has incorporated practical and measurable actions designed to address any associated weaknesses and also to demonstrate how active we are in promoting gender equality and challenging any related institutional discrimination.

The scheme holds a comprehensive framework for compliance across all Library functions and set out how we planned to meet these requirements. This includes a detailed action plan that was the product of much listening and discussion with gender and transgender stakeholders, inside and outside the Library: for more information see;

- The main Generic Unified Scheme Document for Disability, Gender and Race <http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/>

and the specific gender scheme areas under;

- B1 - The Legal Background for Gender Equality <http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/appendixb1/genderlegalbackground.pdf>

- B2 - Gender Consultation Report  
<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/appendixb2/genderconsultation.pdf>
- B3 - Gender Action Plan  
<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/appendixb3/genderactionplan.pdf>

In developing our Scheme we sought not just to fulfil our legal obligations but, to make the Library a place where everyone feels welcome and able to make the most of our rich resources. This included commitment to positive actions that support both wider public access and to ensure we are an employer that is seen as welcoming to all men and women and transgendered men and women.

The Library's strategy was explained in Part 1 Section 1.1 of the Generic Unified Scheme Document, which also identified how our mission, vision, strategic priorities and organisational values reflect the general duty and how the Library has aimed to carry this throughout our scheme process and within the Action Plan.

Our new general strategic priorities 2008 -2011 are both challenging and forward-thinking building on the progress of redefining the Library for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Our strategic priorities are:

- Capture extensively and store UK digital publications
- Connect our users with content
- Transform access and preservation for newspapers
- Support UK research with innovative services and integrated processes
- Build our digital infrastructure
- Integrate storage and preservation of physical collections
- Develop as an organisation

We believe these strategic priorities will ensure we meet the needs of people of both genders using our services and continuing to strengthen our reputation as an employer of choice.

### **Summary of Progress since June 2008**

Our mission, values, strategic priorities, and organisational values are consistent with, and have a solid basis for, meeting the expectations and responsibilities of the

Gender Equality Duty and The Equality Act which cover broad areas from employment, goods and services, to facilities and other provisions.

### **Action Plan 0809**

- We have a detailed action plan to cover these broad areas, the action plan can be viewed at;  
<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/appendixb3genderactionplan.pdf> (new link address on updated plan)

On this plan there were 44 actions out of which we have<sup>1</sup>:

- 10 actions have been completed for this year
- 34 are currently being implemented or are current ongoing actions in progress

A new action (no 44) has been added to the action plan for 2008-2009 which is to look at developing a Domestic Abuse Policy as a Library, National and DCMS initiative under Gender policy. The need for a Domestic Abuse Policy was also pinpointed by the Trade Union Staff Side during the development of the Library's Managing Attendance Guidance.

### **Key Strategic Areas 0809**

The action plan covered broad areas, but within the text of the scheme we had also identified several important strategic areas as a key priority, particularly for this initial year of the scheme and for advancing the Library as a service and employer of choice for people of different gender. These were;

- **Leadership and commitment from the top –**
- **Ascribing Leadership in the directorates – Business Planning Strategy -**  
Ascribing leadership and accountability was deemed essential to the successful delivery of the action plan. We have maintained our strategic focus on achieving Gender equality by ensuring our action plans are linked to our corporate business plan each year.
- **Engagement and communication**
- **Development and People Strategy –** Developing our people was a major driver of the gender agenda for embedding equality and creating gender confidence.

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<sup>1</sup> REFERRING TO NUMBERS ON THE ACTION PLAN AS LISTED BELOW:

- **Gender Confidence** – we recognise the importance of Gender Confidence and the strategic business case for developing, including understanding how gender affects every aspect of the business.
- **Embedding the duty** - The Library has strived to relate and generate an understanding of the scheme, the duty and of our commitment, and to embed this into all aspects of the organisation. This includes giving 'due regard' to the need to promote gender equality in proportion to its relevance to gender. We have made adjustments to enable specific individuals to contribute – as employees, customers and partners; and promoted the benefits to strategic, commercial, legal, ethical, societal and professional aspects of the business. Our Gender Action Group was formed in 2008 and was tasked with implementing the action plan. The Group is chaired by our Gender Champion with representatives from the various Directorates. This ensures there is on-going engagement and communication between action group members and the Directorates. The group meets quarterly to review progress on the scheme and is a major driver for embedding the duty across the workforce and services to ensure we deliver gender equality.

### **Additional Areas Achieved**

- During the year we have focused on completing and working towards achieving our published actions. The Gender Action Group remit of work involves responsibilities for policy development in the following areas such as Domestic Abuse and Gender Reassignment. To assist in our policy development in terms of best practice we invited representatives from Refuge to give a presentation on Domestic Abuse and its effects on employees and society in general. We also invited a representative from A:gender to raise awareness of individuals undergoing gender reassignment. Both these presentations have enable us to prepare for and develop policies appropriate for the Library
- The Gender Action Group has also widened its remit to incorporate Sexual orientation. A representative from Stonewall gave a presentation regarding sexual orientation issues in the workplace. The group will be taking forward this area of work in raising awareness of sexual orientation issues and identify best practice in this area.

## **Overview and Main General Highlights**

We have linked some of the progress from the action plan, the key strategic areas and the additional areas achieved into an overview of and synopsis of the main general highlights of the year which are as follows.

- **Leadership and commitment from the top**

The main highlights for the year commence with how we addressed our strategic driver that meeting expectations and responsibilities of the duty would require top level leadership and example to be cascaded down the organisation.

Our Gender Champion is an executive director and leads the Gender Action Group and is accountable for the delivery of the action plan. Gender actions are reported in the quarterly business plan to the Executive Team and Board and this is supported by our other champion directors (e.g. over Service, Workforce, Disability and Race Diversity)

The Executive Team and Board approved £116,000 funding during 2008 to supporting diversity training, to creating an inclusive environment to further embed gender equality and other diversity strands.

### ➤ **Ascribing Leadership in the directorates**

Ascribing leadership and accountability was deemed essential to the successful delivery of the action plan and the link in of this to business planning strategy.

The Gender Action Group members (circa 17 from all sections of the Library) are accountable for feeding and cascading information between the action group and the directorates / departments. Their roles are clearly defined within the revised Terms of Reference for this group including who is going to own and lead the duty within their department / directorate and be accountable for the success of their actions and for the contribution to a corporate approach.

This has helped meet our organisational objectives of maintaining engagement, championing gender equality in our directorates and delivering on our action plan.

### ➤ **Delivering on the Action Plan – Finance, Funding & Gender Equality Being High Profile**

With the leadership and commitment coming from the top and cascading down the organisation it has not just been the work of the Gender Action Group and the Champion but also the work of many of our employees and contacts across the Library. The extra funding for this year and the commitment helped to deliver on the action plan (see LINK).

### **Engagement and communication**

This is a key area for ensuring gender confidence, embedding the duty and ensuring participations and commitment.

**Internally** - We continue to focus on engaging employees - creating and sustaining an effective communications system for staff, including intranet, email, staff magazine, a team briefing system with regular briefings from the Executive Team. The Library launched a revised Staff Survey in 2008 to measure key

indicators such as equality and diversity. The results from the Staff Survey relating to gender provided positive results from both women and men. There were no significant differences in satisfaction rates across the range of indicators which suggests women and men have positive experiences working for the Library.

There have been several initiatives in this area such as;

**Electronic Information Systems Directorate [eIS] development of gender action plan** - The eIS Directorate consulted with employees on gender equality to gather views on gender issues in the directorate and take an appropriate action to solve them. The aim of sessions was to provide a forum for staff to raise comments, ideas and issues to help shape a gender action plan for eIS. All staff from the directorate were encouraged to attend. A consolidated list of ideas and issues raised in the session was produced and circulated to the directorate, inviting further comments or participation in shaping the plan. The Plan was discussed by the eIS senior management team at its away-day as part of a half-day session on diversity. The aim was to identify a manageable number of practical actions. The diversity discussion followed a review of the eIS colleague opinion survey results. This provided a useful context for identifying key areas of concern where action might have the greatest impact. The consultation provided 8 agreed specific actions for the Directorates which are being progressed.

**Employment Law Newsletter** – an Employment Law Newsletter was developed and published for senior managers to ensure relevant case law, updates and new information are brought to the attention of managers with their relevance for the Library.

**Externally** – as reported within the action plan results and within this report and highlights, we have made progress in external engagement in several ways. For example;

- the Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) has continued to build relationships with Delivery and Strategic Partners who specialise in supporting women inventors and entrepreneurs. These include Invention Intelligence, Women-unlimited and Every Women and ensure its marketing material is gender inclusive
- Scholarship and Collections continue to have representatives on external advisory groups to promote issues to on diversity and gender equality and feed back experiences which are summarized in Collection Highlights.
- Increasing interest in our on line general reader bulletin which has increased from 11,000 to 65,000 readers in just over a year and reports on all activities;

- During 2008, our central procurement unit (CPU) published the Responsible Procurement policy which aims to provides opportunities for a more diverse supply base including SME's, BME's, Women's and Voluntary groups. In addition, our Tender evaluation for procuring services now includes confirmation that bidders have equality / diversity policies meeting UK legislation to ensure they meet the Library's standards on disability equality and diversity.

➤ **Supporting and Promoting Gender Initiatives across the directorates and Improvements to Accessible Products and Services**

These are samples of some of the highlights of this year;

- **The Business and Intellectual Property Centre – The BIPC;**
  - Actively engage with audiences of different gender to meet gender targets set by funding agreements with the London Development Agency. Supports women and BAME women in business and also entrepreneurs of all genders. This year saw the delivery of 2000 plus business advice sessions comprising 55% women and 40% BAME groups.
  - Hosts campaigns to support women and BAME women, for instance “Mothers of Invention” to celebrate international women’s month on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2009.
  - Partners different groups who support events and initiatives for all genders. For instance; the “African Caribbean Business Network - Association of Community Based Business Advice” (ACBBA) who provide resources to enable grass root organisations to offer business support to entrepreneurs in their communities or; “Everywoman”, a leading provider of training, resources & support services for women in business.
  - Vary the time of some workshops to help facilitate the attendance of individuals with caring responsibilities thereby increasing the accessibility of BIPC events.
  - Within Scholarship & Collections inclusion continues to be a key driver for collection development and interpretation. For example, the archiving of gender websites.
  - A Research break awarded to resource discovery project on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual and Transgender materials in the collections. This will form part of the input into 2011 Censorship exhibition.

- Human Resources are members on various diversity networks for example DCMS, CIPD and Museum Libraries and Archives to share ideas and foster closer working in the cultural sector.
- **NB: Further information about Library activities around gender and diversity can be found (a) in the Annual Progress Report to the Equalities Commission Northern Ireland ECNI – which can be found on the Library website under diversity and (b) in the full 2007 -2008 GES Action Plan Progress report at Appendix A of this report.**

**Development and People Strategy** – Developing our people was a major driver of the gender agenda for embedding equality and creating gender confidence. These are samples of some of the highlights of embedding disability equality this year:

- **Recruitment monitoring** – We introduced a comprehensive monitoring of our recruitment activities by gender and other diversity strands such as disability, race and age. We have collected data from the last two years (March 2007- March 2009) on the recruitment activities of women and men for monitoring. The monitoring of the data has shown gender statistics remain relatively consistent and proportionate throughout the recruitment process.
- **Career Development workshops-** We have introduced three career development workshops for staff starting in 08/09. The monitoring of the attendance of by women and men has shown female employees have attended significantly more workshops than men. We shall continue to monitor the attendance rates for on-going workshops.
- An Equality Impact Assessment Review on access to flexible working has begun and the results will inform the policy development of our flexible working policy.
- **Partnering Internally** - There has been increased partnering of HR, Trade Union Side and service leads in liaising over diversity requirements and initiatives and a continuing high level of involvement from the Trade Union Side in development and progress. The Equality and Diversity Working Group consists of Human Resources and representatives from the Library's Trade Union Side and takes an active approach to ensure that equality and diversity are embedded across the Library. TUS representatives also participate in the Disability, Gender and Race Action Groups and make a positive contribution to the Library's strategic work on Equality and Diversity. For the service leads the Front Line Services Diversity Group was formed and continues to meet to address matters of equality and diversity regarding service delivery.

- **Partnering Externally** - The Library employees have worked in partnership with many organisations and communities nationally and locally in helping to shape the knowledge provision of the future and in building and developing a Library service where people from different backgrounds can learn and work together whilst still retaining their distinct identities in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.
- **Training and Development** - Development of managers and front line services has continued to be particularly high on the agenda in 0809. From mid 2009 the on-line diversity, which included gender equality training, has been rolled out to all employees. The on-line training aims to raise awareness of equality and diversity amongst all staff with a separate module for managers to ensure they are equipped to manage a diverse workforce.
- **Equality Impact Assessment – Corporate Policy** - Equality Impact Assessment Training for managers who influence decision making and policy was implemented between January and March 2008 and further workshops were run in Year 2 of the action plan. 136 managers have now been trained on how to assess the impact of their decisions and policies.

The policy to support this training has been developed and agreed with Trade Union Side and will be published in 2009. This will help to ensure that the service, policies and practice are designed with full recognition of the diversity of people of different gender who might wish to make use of them and the need for flexibility to ensure satisfactory access and outcomes for all groups.

- **Equal Pay Audit** – During our second year of the action plan the Equal Pay Sub Group, which comprises members of Human Resources and Trade Union Side, was set up. The group remit was to consider pay equality. Statistical analysis of an audit shows positive results from comparing the average salary for the respective genders for each grade in London and Boston Spa. In all instances, the percentage comparison between the different genders was beneath the acceptable threshold of 5% (as set out by former Equal Opportunities Commission – now with reference to the Equality and Human Rights Commission).

### ➤ **Embedding the duty**

We recognise the importance of Gender Confidence and the strategic business case for developing, including understanding how gender affects every aspect of the business.

The Group will be continuing its work to embed gender equality by increasing the visibility and promotion of the Group across the Library. The Library has strived to relate and generate an understanding of the scheme, the duty and of our

commitment, and to embed this into all aspects of the organisation. This includes giving 'due regard' to the need to promote gender equality.

The Library has promoted the benefits to strategic, commercial, legal, ethical, societal and professional aspects of the business.

## **Scheme Overview and Planning for Year 2 – 2009-10**

### ➤ **Planning for 2009 - 2010**

When creating the GES, the Library identified and outlined within the scheme the links between; the key principles of the general duty and how the scheme evaluation aims to meet these principles; and between the duty, the scheme and the Library's overall business plan/ strategy. We planned that this would form the basis of how gender equality will feature in business and strategic planning for and in the future and this includes;

- **Facilitation of the involvement of people of different gender** - The Library will continue to promote active engagement and inclusion of all irrespective of gender or sexual orientation, in order to secure their key involvement in meeting the GES and Gender Equality in the Library. This will include continuing to work towards a more sustainable mechanism for involving people of different gender and look at ways of securing open dialogue as well as profiling needs and issues.
- **Mapping, Planning, Consultation and Evidence Gathering to reach the 3 year plan** - The mapping and planning steps taken to implement the general duties and to reach the 3 year plan we have are fully described in Parts 2, 3, and 4 of the Unified Generic Scheme. This included the consultation and involvement of people of different gender, the gathering of evidence and mapping of where we were and where we want to be by each of the directorates which culminated in Part 5 – the summation of the Action Plan which has now been updated in Appendix A of this document.
- **Monitoring and Reviewing** - The above process gave the Library a strong foundation of information, evidence and the methods will be used again in gathering further evidence about progress and performance in the scheme. However, at this stage, where we have just completed year 2 of the 3 year plan we will only partially review the plan to accommodate;
  - New improvement initiatives e.g. looking at a domestic violence and gender reassignment policy and reviewing flexible working policy
  - Additional actions which have been achieved and will continue into Year 3 for example, the establishing a sexual orientation sub-group to raise awareness and engagement.

- The actions planned for year 2 which may need to be delayed to year 3
- **Subsequent 3 year schemes** – The next 3 year scheme is due to be implemented from April 2010 and will require us to consult and involve people of different gender, readers, customers and stakeholders on how we can further embed gender equality and will require greater levels of monitoring and review and all the other requisite components listed in the original scheme in order to be effective and meet requirements.
- The planning stages for the involvement and consultation for the new action plan will begin in 2010.