



**SCHEME**

## THE BRITISH LIBRARY – GENDER EQUALITY

### GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

#### PROGRESS REPORT YEAR 3 - [June 2009 – May 2010]

### Foreword

*I am pleased to present the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final Annual Report on the Library's current Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010.*

*This report summarises the steps that have been taken so far throughout the duration of the current scheme to embed gender equality in our business and our working environment.*

*As the Gender Champion, I have witnessed an increase in the engagement of Departments and staff in raising awareness of Gender Equality throughout the Library which is documented in this report. The Gender Action Group has taken the lead in raising awareness of two key National and Library projects such as Domestic Abuse and Transgender.*

*Sexual Orientation has also become a major project area for the Gender Action Group and we have set up a sexual orientation sub-group as part of the Group's remit to progress the Library's work in this area.*

*We have published our new 3-year Gender Equality including Transgender and Sexual Orientation action plans and we look forward to meeting the actions we have set ourselves.*

**Mary Canavan**  
**Gender Champion**

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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.

In 2008, we published our new Unified Generic Equality Scheme which brings together into one document our commitment to equality across our public duties, (disability, gender and race) and the common generic areas that highlight the initiatives and interrelatedness across the diversity strands. This scheme also holds a comprehensive framework for compliance across all Library functions and sets out how we planned to meet these requirements. This includes a detailed action plan that was the product of much listening and discussion with stakeholders inside and outside the Library - For more information see <http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/finalscheme.pdf>. Part 4

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.

However, the Unified Generic Equality Scheme also importantly recognises the different and separate areas of disability, race, and gender which may require different approaches to achieve equality. In recognition of this, the original Gender Equality Scheme has been reviewed and updated, but our commitment is still focused on improving policy, practice and service provision for gender equality. To ensure that gender equality is effectively embedded, the action plans, legislation and consultations are bespoke and specific to the strand and there are separate action groups.

We are preparing for the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Duty and ensuring we take a holistic approach covering the other diversity strands such as religion and belief, sexual orientation and age.

For more information see:

<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/unifyingdocument.pdf>

The Library's strategy was explained in Part 1, Section 1.1 of the Unified Generic Equality Scheme, 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 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 2009

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 2010 which cover broad areas from employment, goods and services, to facilities and other provisions.

### Action Plan 0910

- 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/appendixb3/genderactionplan.pdf> (new link address on updated plan)

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

- 40 actions where we have completed our actions so far
- 4 are currently being implemented

We have also completed work which was not on the action plan but has been detailed in the report below.

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 0910

The action plan covered the broad areas and services of the Library to ensure we had engagement and accountability from departments to meet our action plan. The 3rd year progress of the action plan focused on building on our key strategic areas and advancing the Library as a service and employer of choice for people of different gender and sexual orientation. These were;

- **Leadership and commitment from the top –**

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

- **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.
  - **Gender Confidence –** we recognise the importance of Gender Confidence and the strategic business case for developing, 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**

- The Gender Action Group widened its remit to incorporate the Sexual orientation strand. A key area was to raise the awareness of Sexual Orientation amongst the Group regarding sexual orientation issues in the workplace. At a Gender Action Group meeting members reviewed Stonewall’s Workplace Equality Index to initially review the Library against their key performance indicators of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual friendly employers. The Library also became a member of Stonewall’s Diversity Champion Programme to learn from member organisation from the UK’s best practice forum on sexual orientation and improve the working environment for lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Although, Stonewall does not specifically represent the Transgender community the Library’s approach is to encompass Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people (LGBT) into the strand.

- The Library celebrated LGBT Month in February by holding a key public talk presented by Bart Smith of the Humanities Reference Service on 500 years of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-related resources in the Library. The capacity audience were shown some rare and historic examples of the genre in the Library. Bart Smith also presented his talk to the Gender Action Group members and to staff. In addition, an intranet news item and an article for the internal newsletter highlighted the month alongside a LGBT quiz for staff.
- The Library, like many organisations celebrated International Women's Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010 with an event. The Business & Intellectual Property Centre, in partnership with Women Unlimited held a conference "Stepping into Success" on 8 March 2010. The event was a success and Keynote speakers included Liz Warom, Founder of Temple Spa; Camila Batmanghelidji, Founder of the Kids Company and Emma Wimhurst, Author of Boom!
- The Library also became members of Opportunity Now a membership organisation for employers committed to gender equality and inclusion. By being a member this will enable the Library to keep abreast of good practice and network with other organisations.
- The eIS Directorate undertook a project in 2009 to devise a gender action plan to meet their specific areas for improvement. Eight main actions were identified and four actions have been completed so far and the remaining actions are work in progress.
- The Estates Building Services began work on improving accessibility to Gate 4 in 2010 which involved building a ramp with handrails which has increased the accessibility for Library users with mobility requirements, parents with pushchairs, and wheelchair users. The creation of the ramp has increased the accessibility of the St. Pancras site for a wide range of users.
- The Business Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) was opened at the Library in March 2006 with a £1 million investment from the London Development Agency, to enable entrepreneurs and experts to support entrepreneurs, inventors and small businesses from that first spark of inspiration to successfully launching and developing a business. A year later, the centre was granted a further £2.4 million to continue the work until March 2011. One of the key targets for the centre was to support entrepreneurs of all genders in business through workshops, events, and business support/advice. From April 2007 – March 2009, the centre has exceeded its targets set by the London Development Agency and has reached a

➤ **New Gender Equality, Transgender and Sexual Orientation Consultation exercises in 2010**

In 2007, the British Library carried out initial consultations to develop a Gender Equality Scheme this involved seeking the views about gender equality in terms of equality of opportunity for men and women and transgender men and women. The outcome of consultation resulted in the publication of the Library's Gender Equality Scheme and 3-year action plan. As the action plan was coming to an end in April 2010, a project plan for a new Gender Equality and Transgender Consultation commenced in the autumn of 2009. To further progress on the Sexual Orientation strand within the Library a further consultation exercise was run at the same time. The Library consultation involved service users, stakeholders and employees.

An internal review of the work completed during the current three year action plan was evaluated by the GAG members, as well as key project areas for the consultation were scoped out for example Domestic Abuse and Transgender.

To better meet expectations and requirements under Transgender legislation, part of the consultation included a presentation and discussion facilitated by the Gender Trust (the forum and support network for transsexual, transgender and intersex people). This session was well attended by transgender people and gave better understanding of the needs of employees and service users who identify with this group and will inform the development of the Library's Transgender Policy.

The consultations also included the topic area of domestic violence which tends to focus on the majority experiences of women experience abuse (with 1 woman in 4 likely to experience this at some point). The National Centre for Domestic Violence Helpline facilitated a presentation and discussion so that there was more understanding of women to men (1 in 6 men will experience this) lesbian and gay, transgender and honour based domestic violence and how this may be presented and affect employees and service users. This session was well attended and the information gathered helped to inform further understanding.

The Sexual Orientation consultations were run by a consultant from a LGBT background which included a presentation and discussion. The sessions were well attended by service users and employees which allowed more understanding of the issues faced by the LGBT community to inform the development of our 1<sup>st</sup> Sexual Orientation action plan.

The focus groups were supported by a consultant facilitator, Human Resources and action group members. The information gathered from the consultation exercise resulted in a new three year Gender Equality including Transgender and Sexual Orientation action plans.

The consultation reports and new action plans can be viewed at:  
<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/>

## **Overview and Main Outcomes from 2007- 2010**

The following is a synopsis of progress from the three year action plan, the key strategic areas and the additional areas achieved;

### ➤ **Leadership and commitment from the top**

Our Gender Champion is an executive director and chairs the Gender Action Group and is accountable for the delivery of the action plan. The Sexual Orientation strand sits within the Gender Action Group and is championed by the Gender Champion at Executive and Board level. Actions are reported in the quarterly business plan to the Executive Team and a annual report to Board members and this is supported by our other champion directors (e.g. over Service, Workforce, Disability and Race Equality Diversity).

By having a champion at the executive team level this ensures there is driving force at a senior level which demonstrates real commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive workplace culture whatever your gender or sexual orientation.

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

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

The Gender Action Group members (including the sexual orientation sub-group circa 19 from all sections of the Library) are accountable for feeding and cascading of information between the action group and the Directorates / departments. Their roles are clearly defined within the Terms of Reference for the Gender Action group/Sexual Orientation sub-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 across the Library and delivering on our action plan.

During the 3 year action plan the Gender Action Group has had key external speakers on various topics for example, Refuge on Domestic Violence, Stonewall on Peak Performance for LGB staff and Trans people from The Gender Trust. The key speakers have increased the group's knowledge and awareness of the topics whilst, helping to shape the direction on how the Library proceeds going forward.

We shall continue to further engage and raise awareness of the action group members throughout the duration of the new 3-year action plans.

### ➤ **Delivering on the Action Plan – Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation**

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.

#### **Engagement and communication**

This is a key area for ensuring gender confidence, and raising awareness of the new area of sexual orientation for participation and commitment.

**Internally** - We continue to focus on engaging employees - creating and sustaining an effective communications system for staff, including intranet, email, internal 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;

- The Library produced its first Diversity Newsletter for employee celebrating diversity and dignity. This highlighted the diversity champions, the work of the action groups and outlined key diversity initiatives and actions.
- The revamping of the new Diversity intranet and external website pages to inform the public and employee of the Library's approach to

**Equality and Learning at Work Days** - during May and June 2010 events were run for employees to inform them of the different types of learning such as informal and formal learning, the benefits of bringing people together to learn from each other, the strength of partnerships and the role of learning in organisational success. The other purpose of the events was to further employees learning on equality and diversity and the benefits it can bring to the workplace. Staff had the opportunity to meet the members of the Library's Action Groups for Gender, Disability, Race and the newly formed Sexual Orientation Sub Group; and learn about the work of the groups and what had been achieved so far. The events received complementary feedback from staff and were a success.

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

**Externally** – as reported within the action plan results and within this report, 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 Everywoman, the Ogunte Network, Precious Online and She's Ingenious!
- Scholarship and Collections continue to have representatives on external advisory groups to promote issues on diversity and gender equality and feed back experiences which are summarized in Collection Highlights.
- Increasing interest in our online general reader bulletin which has increased from 11,000 to 65,000 readers in just over a year and reports on all activities;

➤ **Supporting and Promoting Gender Initiatives across the Directorates**

Samples of some of the highlights throughout the 3 year action plan:

- **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 ethnic minority women in business and also entrepreneurs of all genders.

- Hosts campaigns to support women and ethnic minority women, for instance “Mothers of Invention” to celebrate International Women’s Day on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2009. In 2009, the Centre held a large-scale dinner for successful women in business as part of women’s day in Global Entrepreneurship Week with Kanya King (MOBO awards), Rachel Elnaugh (Red Letter Days) and Karen Darby (Simply Switch).
- 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. The Centre’s Marketing team also attended the Everywoman annual conference 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 the Centre events.
- Ensuring the marketing material used for example, leaflets or web site is gender inclusive.
- Within Scholarship & Collections inclusion continues to be a key driver for collection development and interpretation. For example, the archiving of gender websites and running Family Day tours in the Conservation Centre.
- 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 2009 -2010 GES Action Plan at Appendix A of this report.**

**Development and People Strategy** – Developing our people was a major driver for our diversity agenda for embedding equality and creating gender confidence. Some highlights of embedding gender equality in the 3 years include:

- **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 three financial years on the recruitment activities of women and men for monitoring purposes. The monitoring of the data has shown candidates of both genders are fairly proportionate at the application and interview stages. However, women and those who do not declare their gender are more successful at the offer stage. Further exploration of the data at this stage did not show any discrimination was evident in the recruitment cycle. We shall continue to monitor our recruitment activities across the diversity strands.
- **Career Development workshops-** We have introduced three career development modular workshops for employees. We encourage all employees to attend career development modules regardless of their gender. The monitoring of the attendance of women and men has shown female employees have attended significantly more workshops than men. We shall continue to monitor attendance.
- **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. 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 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** - Library employees have worked in partnership with many organisations and communities nationally and locally in helping to shape the knowledge provision of the future 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. From mid 2009 the on-line equality course, 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. Over 90% of our

- **Equality Impact Assessment – Corporate Policy** - Equality Impact Assessment Training for managers who influence decision making and policy were run and 136 managers have now been trained on how to assess the impact of their decisions and policies.
- The policy to support the training was developed, agreed with Trade Union Side and has been published. An Equality Impact Assessment Review on access to flexible working has been shared with TUS and the results will inform the policy development of our flexible working policy. The Equality Impact Assessment policy has begun to be implemented and used to inform organisations restructures and Human Resource People policies.
- **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. An initial draft review report has been compiled on the findings with recommendations and shared with Management and TUS. Equal Pay will form an on-going piece of work and is included on the new Gender and Transgender action plan.
- **The Draft Domestic Abuse Policy** has been developed and is ready for negotiation with TUS.

### ➤ **Embedding the duty**

We recognise the importance of Gender Confidence and the strategic business case for developing and 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. Throughout the three year action plan Directorate budgets have been reviewed annually to ensure any planned initiatives for Gender Equality or Sexual Orientation can be resourced.

## **New Three year Action Plans 2010- 2013**

### ➤ **Planning for 2010 - 2013**

The next 3 year Gender Equality including Transgender and Sexual Orientation action plans will be implemented from June 2010 which is available from:

<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/diversity/schemes/index.html>.

The Library will continue to promote the active engagement of readers, visitors and stakeholders, in order to secure their key involvement in meeting the new actions. The key driver is to maintain the progress made to date and deliver as appropriate and proportional on the action plans that have been agreed.

However, the financial constraints the public sector will be facing with reduced funding in the foreseeable future will have an impact on the Library's resources. We shall endeavour that our action plans can be efficiently, appropriately and proportionally delivered with the resources available to us.