



**THE BRITISH LIBRARY - RACE EQUALITY SCHEME**  
**RACE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN**  
**PROGRESS REPORT YEAR 2 – [November 2009 – October 2010]**

---

## **Foreword**

*I am delighted to present our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual report on the progress of race equality at the Library. As Race champion, I am passionate about ensuring staff and users of our collections feel the Library is an inclusive organisation and provider of services for all.*

*We are a unique organisation and as an educator and influencer we pride ourselves on continuing to meet the needs of society and reflect the wide range of diversity in our collections.*

*This second annual report illustrates the good progress that we have made towards race equality and inclusion across the organisation.*

*We are pleased with our achievements and hope that you will be too. However, there is still progress to be made in meeting our actions and ensuring diversity remains central to us as an employer of choice and that we are able to meet the current challenges we face, together with our stakeholders.*

**Steve Morris**

**Race Champion -**

Director of Finance and Corporate Services  
The British Library

Equality Officer contact details: Diane Brown – 020 7412 7127

HR.diversity-team@bl.uk

## Report Contents

No.	Item	Page Number
1	Foreword – (from our Race Champion Steve Morris - Director of Finance and Corporate Services)	1
2	Introduction	2-3
3	Summary of Key Progress since November 2009	3-5
4	Overview and Main Outcomes of progress	5-11
5	Final 3rd year action plan	12
	<b>Appendix</b>	
A	Results of Year 2 Action Plan – November 2009 – October 2010	
B	Workforce Profile as at October 2010	

## Introduction

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

In 2008, we published our Unified Generic Equality Scheme which brought together into one document our commitment to equality across the then current public duties of disability, gender and race ) and the common generic areas that highlight the initiatives and interrelatedness across the diversity strands. This scheme has 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

At the time of being launched in 2008 the Unified Scheme also recognised the different and separate areas of disability, race, and gender and that they may require

different approaches to achieve equality. For this initial scheme, to ensure that race equality is effectively embedded, the action plans, legislation and consultations are bespoke and specific to the strand and with a Race Action Group..

In developing our Unified Generic Equality 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.

The Library's strategy was explained in Part 1 Section 1.1 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 general strategic priorities 2008 -2011 are and have been, 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 all people in using our services and continuing to strengthen our reputation as an employer of choice.

We will be preparing for the new Public Sector Duty from 6 April 2011 which will apply to the other protected characteristics such as age, pregnancy and maternity, , religion or belief and sexual orientation.

## **Summary of Key Progress since November 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 Scheme, Duty and the Act which cover broad areas from employment, goods and services, to facilities and other provisions.

## Action Plan 2009-2010

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/c4raceequalstatrep.pdf>

On this plan there were 53 actions out of which there are:

- 15 actions where we have completed our targets
- 29 actions are business as usual activities
- 6 actions being implemented
- 3 planned actions yet to be completed

## Key Strategic Areas 2009-2010

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. These were;

- **Continued 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 race equality by ensuring our action plans are linked to our corporate business plan each year.
- **Engagement and communication across the Library and with our stakeholders**
- **Development and People Strategy –** Developing our people was a major driver of the race agenda for embedding equality and creating inclusion and diversity confidence.
- **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.

## Additional Areas Achieved

Alongside delivering the action plan, additional work has been undertaken throughout the year:

- **Book Conservators internship -** This is the fourth year of funded twelve month graduate book conservation internships. In early November 2009 Collection Care welcomed three new graduate interns, who were currently studying Book

- The joint British Library & British Museum travelling photographic exhibition, ***Lasting Impressions: Seals from the Islamic World*** opened at Toxteth Library, Liverpool, on 13 July, at the start of its nationwide tour. It had a preview at the St. Pancras site for staff in the summer of 2010.
- **Making Britain** - On 13 -14 September 2010, the Bharat Britain conference took place at the British Library and the “Making Britain” travelling panel exhibition was launched together with a database of sources for research. This was the culmination of the first phase of the Making Britain project which highlights the contribution of South Asians to Britain from the 19th century onwards. The Curator for India Office Records represented the British Library on the “Making Britain” Advisory Board and was involved in organising the conference and producing the travelling panel exhibition. The exhibition featured as part of the Library’s Black History Month 2010 events for staff.
- **Black History Month 2010** - Each year the Library organises and holds various public and staff events during Black History Month. This year’s public events in October and November celebrated Nigeria’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence and the life of and music of Fela Kuti, the King of Afrobeat. As part of the Evolving English exhibition, an event titled “The Art of Rap/ Voices of Hip Hop” explored how Rap and hip hop has become among the most influential cultural forms of music in recent times with guest speakers and a panel debate alongside a live concert in the piazza .In addition, a dedicated intranet page was updated with events for staff, an exhibition at the Boston Spa site, two Staff talks, and also multi-cultural food from around the world was offered during the month in the staff restaurants. The celebration was arranged and co-ordinated with trade union representatives and members of the Race Action Group.
- One of the members of the Race Action Group had the idea to look at more recent history for Black History Month which resulted in an event entitled “**Our memories of the uprisings: the 1980's revisited**”, . Frequently characterised as 'racial riots', the uprisings of the 1980s in Bristol, Brixton, Toxteth and Moss Side were significant reactions to the politics of late twentieth century Britain. The event brought together witnesses to offer memories of the uprisings and reflect on their context and legacy. Whilst, the audience had an opportunity to share their memories and discuss the socio-historical background to these events. The event was well attended and later publicised on the Library’s website as a podcast.

## **Overview and Main Outcomes on Progress from 2009**

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

➤ **Leadership and commitment from the top**

Our Race Champion is an executive director and leads the Race Action Group and is accountable for the delivery of the action plan. Race 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 Gender / Transgender and Sexual Orientation and Disability )

Budgets have been reviewed annually to ensure any planned application of race initiatives can be resourced.

➤ **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 Race Action Group members (circa 18 from across the Library) are accountable for cascading information between the group and their directorates / departments. Their roles are clearly defined in the 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 race equality in our directorates and delivering on our action plan.

**Delivering on the Action Plan – Finance, Funding & Disability Equality Being High Profile**

Leadership and commitment comes from the top and cascades down the organisation. It is not just the work of the 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 race equality and inclusion, embedding the duty and ensuring participation and commitment.

**Internally** – We have continued 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.

There have been several initiatives in this area such as:

- The Library continues to promote initiatives to staff using internal communications to promote race equality ;
- Action Groups supported the 3 Equality and Learning at Work Days, members from all the action groups set up a stand and highlighted the work of the action groups to members of staff. This was an excellent forum for members to speak to staff and promote the work of the Race Action Group.
- An event for staff entitled “Asian, Pacific and African Collections Acquisitions Open Day”, on 9<sup>th</sup> July was organised. Staff members dropped in throughout the afternoon to see a selection of books, manuscripts, paintings, newspapers and photographs acquired over the past year, and to meet the curators who selected them - or secured their donation.

The Race Action Group invited a representative from the Home Office to talk about how they have implemented race equality at the Home Office as a way of sharing information and networking. Members of the Group found the presentation informative.



- As an employer member of Race for Opportunity and other Equality networks, new developments relevant to race equality are discussed and shared at the quarterly meetings.

**Externally** – as reported in our action plan staff continue to engage with a wide range of diverse stakeholders in promoting the work of the library and engaging new audiences; For example;

- Aquiles Alencar-Brayner, the Library’s Latin American curator, was awarded the Medal Jose Mindlin for Cultural Achievement in recognition of his work on raising the profile of Brazilian culture. This prestigious award is granted every year to a person elected by the Association of Brazilian Bibliophiles who has stood out for representing and disseminating Brazilian Culture and literature abroad.
- The Library organised a tour and seminar for a group of international students from Kings College London's Summer School, focusing on the contribution of Caribbean authors to London's literary history.
- The Library provides monthly family history training days in Asian, Pacific and African Collections for the public which have been successful so far.

- The Library was represented at the opening of the Jewish Museum in Camden and attended a meeting of the *Open Jewish Culture*, an initiative supported by the Mayor of London aimed at promoting Jewish art and culture. The Library's participation in this scheme included an annual visit to the BL Hebrew collections, as part of the European Day of Jewish Culture. We are exploring other ways of making the collections better known to audiences.
- The Business and Intellectual Property Centre BIPC has ongoing engagement with the BAME community in a regular programme of events as well as key partners. BIPC successfully hosted the Annual Precious Award 2010 on 8 November which was founded to celebrate the achievements of inspirational entrepreneurial women of colour who are running businesses in the UK. .
- The BIPC website also hosts a number of success stories of entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds including BAME. For Black History Month, La Diosa was showcased as monthly success story. Many of the BIPC users are based in the inner-city areas closest to the Library, although our outreach work and ever-expanding network of partners aims to redress this balance. We have been effective in reaching out to minority groups, with 45% of businesses considering themselves to be minority-led.
- The Learning Team work with Primary and Secondary schools and families across London as part of its outreach programme. Workshops and programmes attract a high percentage of participants from a BAME community background in Camden, Tower Hamlets, Islington, Haringey, Lambeth and Westminster. As an example of the community programme undertaken for the Points of View Exhibition, three local community groups were invited to a series of workshops with the Library. The groups were ESOL students from Somers Town Community Centre, elders from Marchmount Street and mental health service users and volunteers. Each group was given a tour of the exhibition, and after a quick introduction to modern digital photography used their camera to capture Kings Cross. The work produced was displayed in an exhibition at the German Gym near St Pancras Stations as part of the Reveal King's Cross Festival alongside photographs taken by members of the public at a linked BL public event.
- The Library has begun work on contributing to the Cultural Olympiad for 2012 and working with the Olympic bodies. The project will be focused on young people and they will be organising a "community curator" project for the exhibition space.
- Our general reader bulletin circulation has increased from 11,000 in December 2006, to 58,329 service users and reports on all activities;

- Activities and events that have occurred across the Library directorates and departments (are included in the Race Equality Action Plan 2009-2010)

**Development and People Strategy** – Developing our people was a major driver of the race agenda for embedding equality, creating inclusion and promoting good relations between people.

- **Recruitment research** – As covered in last year’s report with regard to the Staff Survey results, the Library, conducted external research into our attraction methods and how we can maximise applications from diverse candidates to senior roles within the Library as this was identified as an area to investigate further. The research undertaken examined recruitment/hire statistics, staff survey information, internal career development initiatives and the local labour markets for our London and Boston Spa sites in order to establish baseline data by ethnic groups. In addition, qualitative data was obtained by a Talent Mapping exercise in the way of focus groups with participants from particular ethnic communities to find out applicants perceptions of the Library.

The research provided meaningful information on how the Library is perceived by potential job applicants from different ethnic communities and how this could be improved by way of employer branding, improved communication channels and publicising internal career studies. At the time of the research being conducted changes to the Public Sector funding were being announced and as such the Library’s funding from Central Government was reduced. This did affect our ability to resource and take forward the recommendations resulting from this piece of research. In addition, the Library has had a recruitment freeze in place since July 2010 which has also affected our ability to recruit talent/diversity for the immediate future. At present this project has been postponed until resources are available to take it forward.

- **Staff Survey 2008** –The Race Action Group analysed the results of the Staff survey by ethnic group and made three recommendations to take forward (1) Raise the profile of the Race Action Group (2) Career development talk for staff (3) Engage staff and increase satisfaction. Throughout 2010 the profile of group was raised through the Equality and Learning at Work days for staff and the events for Black History Month helped to promote the group and increase staff satisfaction. The career development talk for staff was postponed and will be reviewed in 2011.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility** - The Library’s strategy is divided into three main areas: Economic, Environmental and Social. The Social agenda focuses on initiatives to improve the quality of life for our workforce, families and local community. Our CSR agenda supports the work of the race action group by

<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/csr/csrbooklet1.pdf>

- **Partnering Internally** - There has been increased partnering of HR and trade union staff side at quarterly Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG) meetings which discuss, consult and share progress on Race Equality. Service leads continue to liaise over diversity requirements and initiatives with increased networking and sharing of information to improve inclusion.
- **Monitoring statistics** - We monitor workforce statistics annually by race, using the findings to measure our performance: (e.g. staff in post; job applicants, promotion, training, performance appraisals, grievances, disciplinary action and leavers).

#### **As at 30 September 2010,**

13.5% of staff come from a BAME background (See Appendix B for ethnic origin breakdown of staff)

- **Equality Impact Assessment** - Our Equality Impact assessment policy has been agreed and published. The Equality Impact Assessment programme for Human Resource policies has commenced and is making good progress. EIAs are now conducted for internal restructuring or changes to service to ensure the effects of any proposed changes to services or policies are reviewed for any adverse impacts on equality groups.

#### **Final 3 year actions**

The new Equality Act 2010, main provisions came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October. The new legislation introduces nine protected characteristics which are sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnerships, sexual orientation and age. The Library has already reviewed its Equality and Diversity Policy to ensure it is compliant with the new legislation and will

be reviewing its current Generic Unified Scheme and action plans to meet the New Public Sector Duty which comes into force on 6 April 2011.

The Library will also be undertaking the Race for Opportunity benchmarking exercise on race equality in order to benchmark the Library's progress in this area.

As this is the final year of the current 3 year plan, this is a good time to review the progress and to plan ahead for the next 3 years. The Library is mindful of the economic climate and reduced Public Sector funding and this may affect the delivery of our current actions when allocating resources.