



## **EQUALITY SCHEME**

### **FIVE YEAR REVIEW REPORT**

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# **EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

## **PUBLIC AUTHORITY FIVE YEAR REVIEW REPORT**

### **Introduction**

This is the Five Year Review Report of Northern Ireland Screen, the national screen agency for Northern Ireland. Our aim is to accelerate the development of a dynamic and sustainable screen industry and culture in Northern Ireland. Our mission is to promote Northern Ireland as a major production location, to celebrate Northern Ireland product, talent and culture to the world and to ensure that a range of learning opportunities are delivered, so that growing numbers of people in Northern Ireland are motivated to enjoy, understand and explore the moving image.

The original equality scheme was adopted by the Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission (NIFTC) in 2004; the name of the organisation was changed in June 2007 to reflect the wider focus adopted. However, we continued to implement the approved equality scheme and completed all the planned actions.

The officer currently responsible for issues relating to the equality scheme is –

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## Executive summary

**(a) To what extent has your public authority's approved scheme provided a workable basis for mainstreaming the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations into policy-making over the past five years?**

From its inception, Northern Ireland Screen has successfully mainstreamed equality considerations into its operations – for example, by incorporating diversity into the criteria for various funds and by issuing equal opportunity monitoring forms with appropriate application forms. The film and television industry is highly tolerant of minority groups and there is rarely any indication that one group or another is participating in our initiatives to any greater or lesser extent. The subjects of the film and television productions which we support tend to be relevant to society in general and change as society changes. We therefore consider that our equality scheme has not had a major impact on our organisation or the people who benefit from our services.

Northern Ireland Screen does not develop a large number of policies and therefore there are elements of the equality scheme which are rarely used. In equality terms, our focus is on ensuring that all groups are aware of our activities and opportunities from which they might benefit and on monitoring uptake of the various funding opportunities. Particular attention has therefore been given to sections 4 and 8 below which include details of our work on monitoring uptake of our initiatives and how we have increased access to information about them.

**(b) What key lessons have been learnt over the past five years in terms of effectively implementing the approved equality scheme?**

We have encountered very little difficulty in implementing the equality scheme. Northern Ireland Screen is a small organisation with only 24 employees; it is therefore fairly easy for us to communicate with all staff and monitor the progress of action plans. Equality issues are regularly discussed by the senior management team and a quarterly report is made to the Board.

However, we are not an authority which regularly makes or revises policies and we have encountered some difficulties in applying the wide definition of 'policy' set out in the Commission's guidance. There have been occasions over the past five years when officers have interpreted 'policies' in a narrower

sense and have therefore not carried out formal screening, for example, when an existing funding opportunity has been extended to a new category. We are confident that the mainstreaming of equality issues within the organisation means that equality issues have been considered in every case. (For example, when funding has been extended, appropriate monitoring forms have been introduced.) However, as a result of the Five Year Review, we will put in place arrangements to ensure that this sort of initiative is formally screened and recorded in future.

***(c) What more needs to be done to achieve outcomes for individuals from the nine equality categories?***

Northern Ireland Screen is an economic development organisation and the large majority of those we work with are corporate entities which, by definition, cannot be ascribed to any of the nine equality categories. On a larger scale, the population of Northern Ireland as a whole benefits from our work, both in terms of access to high quality moving image product and from the economic benefits which attracting major production to the area brings; our strategic aims embrace all sectors of the community.

About one third of our work, including funding, education and training, is directed at individuals. Some of these activities are of greater interest to certain S75 groups and we therefore attract more applicants from those categories. For example we fund film clubs which are primarily of interest to younger people and our Digital Film Archive tends to be of greater interest to the older population. We monitor all initiatives targeted at individuals very closely and are aware of the take up by different S75 groups. From time to time we take steps to bring our work to the attention of people in groups which are under-represented, but figures fluctuate on an annual basis and the groups which are under-represented vary from year to year.

**1. A general introductory statement specifying the purpose of the scheme and the public authority's commitment to the statutory duties.**

**1a) Internal arrangements**

***To what extent were senior management involved in ensuring scheme compliance over the 5 year period and what further steps could be taken to ensure effective internal arrangements?***

As outlined above, responsibility for the equality schemes rests with a member of the senior management team and equality issues are regularly discussed by the team; we have therefore not found it difficult to oversee the implementation of the scheme. We have no plans to change our approach to ensuring scheme compliance.

**1b) Expenditure**

***Outline annual direct expenditure of resources to ensure that the statutory duties were complied with, in terms of staff and money over the past 5 years, and comment on the extent that all necessary resources were allocated.***

Northern Ireland Screen is a small organisation and does not have a dedicated equality officer or full time HR officer. Responsibility for implementing the equality scheme has been allocated to a member of the senior management team; at present this responsibility takes up approximately 5% of the officer's time. There is no specific budget allocation for implementation of the equality scheme; all costs are resourced from the operating budget. Additional resources have been bought in from specialist consultants as required at a cost of –

2004-05	£7750
2005-06	Nil
2006-07	£2500
2007-08	Nil
2008-09	£1750

These resources have proved sufficient to implement the equality scheme and comply with all S75 requirements.

**2. An outline of the how the public authority intends to assess its compliance with the Section 75 duties and for consulting on matters to which a duty under that section is likely to be relevant.**

**2a) Impacts and outcomes**

***Outline impacts and outcomes (for the public authority and/or individuals from the nine equality categories) over the past five years and what further steps could be undertaken to build on these or address underreporting?***

As outlined above, we consider that our equality scheme has not had a major impact on our organisation or the people who benefit from our services. We have a small number of funds which are available to individuals and our education and training work is directed at individuals. These funds are closely monitored through the use of equal opportunities monitoring forms. Further information on monitoring is set out in section 4 below. We believe that our system is sufficiently robust and we have no plans at present to extend it.

Annual progress reports have been submitted to the Commission on time every year since the equality scheme was approved. Progress reports, together with the annual analysis of monitoring, are considered by the senior management team.

**2b) Consultation exercises**

***Outline the number of equality scheme related consultation exercises undertaken by your authority over the past five years. Set out the number and percentage related to screening exercises and to EQIAs and indicate the extent that your scheme helped you to engage with external stakeholders.***

Over the last 5 years we have undertaken equality scheme related consultation exercises as follows –

- in the autumn of 2003, the draft equality scheme was circulated for consultation to 83 stakeholders and key members of staff;
- in September 2004, a consultation paper on the first stage of the screening process was issued to all organisations listed in appendix 2 of the equality scheme;

- in May 2005 a second stage screening report was circulated to the same organisations;
- during the autumn of 2004 we consulted affected organisations on the development of the Cinema Access Programme Equipment Fund; this consultation consisted of the circulation of written materials, telephone calls and meetings with representatives of the Blind Centre, RNIB and RNID;
- in 2006-07 we consulted and engaged with representative groups in relation to the EQIA of the Equal Opportunities and Harassment Policies.

Two consultations (40%) related to screening exercises and one (20%) to EQIAs.

Most of the consultations involved the circulation of written materials and follow up telephone calls to affected groups. A simple questionnaire was included in all written consultation to facilitate responses and one of the questions related to methods of consultation. All consultation papers were published on our website.

Responses to each consultation exercise were limited; we have found that Northern Ireland Screen does not enjoy a high profile with S75 organisations and they have limited interest in our initiatives. We have tried, on every occasion, to respond to comments received, but only the consultation on the Cinema Access Programme Equipment Fund was truly effective.

## **2c) List of consultees**

***Indicate if your list of consultees was amended during the 5 year period and what further steps could be taken to develop your level of engagement and consultation?***

In 2004 we established a database of equality scheme consultees (including names, addresses and e mail addresses) which could be easily updated. All responses are collated and held on a single file; as the number of consultations and responses to date has been small, it has not been necessary to adopt a more complex process. Apart from updates of contact details, we have not found it necessary to amend the list of consultees and we are confident that all key stakeholders are included. We have received no

requests from other organisations to be included on the list but we would be happy to do so should the situation arise.

We have found that it is more expedient to approach those groups whom we consider might have a specific interest in a particular initiative, rather than undertake blanket consultation of the entire list of consultees. For example, when we were developing the Cinema Access Programme Equipment Fund, we approached organisations representing people with hearing and/or visual impairment and discussed our proposals with them in detail.

We would find it extremely useful if the Equality Commission were to facilitate consultation exercises, for example, by maintaining a database of consultees and their areas of interest and by encouraging timely responses on specific initiatives. We would be pleased to engage with S75 organisations and we are open to discussing ideas with them, but at present we find it very difficult to elicit a response and we often have to act quickly which limits our ability to offer a lengthy consultation period.

## **2d) Consultation with individuals**

***To what extent did your authority consult directly with directly affected individuals as well as with representative groups, particularly in relation to young people and those with learning disabilities, and was this sufficient?***

Given that the development of policies is not a major activity for Northern Ireland Screen, we have not focused on consultation processes. We tend to make direct contact with those organisations which we know are likely to be interested in our programmes as the opportunity arises. There are no examples over the past 5 years where we have consulted directly with individuals, other than through our monitoring system.

In terms of feedback to consultees, we have consistently acknowledged receipt of comments and then sent a further letter (or e mail) to let consultees know what action we have taken as a result of their comments. We have no plans at present to change this approach.



**3. The authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity.**

**3a) Screening**

**Outline and discuss the number of policies your authority subjected to screening over the past five years, setting out the number and percentage of 'policies screened in' on the basis of equality considerations and the percentage 'screened in' on the basis of the good relations duty.**

The initial screening of existing policies began in September 2004 when a consultation paper was issued to all organisations listed in appendix 2 of the equality scheme. A small number of responses were received and taken into account as the work on screening progressed. A report on the second stage of the screening process was issued for consultation in May 2005 and the final screening report was submitted to the Equality Commission in August 2005. This showed that, of the 27 policies screened, 3 (11%) were considered to have significant equality implications warranting full EQIA.

A further screening exercise was carried out when a new policy (Skills Focus) was introduced in 2007-08. Equality considerations were mainstreamed into the policy development process and the policy was 'screened out'.

We have encountered no difficulties applying the screening criteria as our monitoring information is fairly comprehensive and enables us to determine whether there is likely to be higher or lower participation by people in specific S75 groups.

Please see Appendix A for a list of policies screened out during scheme implementation.

**3b) Screening criteria**

**To what extent did your authority's consideration of the screening criteria not identify equal opportunity implications on any of S75 categories, but for which consultees then highlighted problems?**

There have been no examples over the last 5 years where the screening process did not identify equal opportunity implications but where consultees highlighted problems.

As stated above, our monitoring system provided quantitative information in respect of external policies and we consulted all staff in relation to internal policies. We were therefore able to assemble sufficient information to undertake screening without difficulty. However, we received only limited responses to consultations and none of these supplied additional data.

Please see the executive summary (paragraph b) above for comments on difficulties in identifying policies.

### **3c) Identifying EQIAs**

***Outline over the past five years how many EQIAs your authority commenced as a result of i) initial screening and ii) as a result of screening new/revised policies subsequently, and discuss the extent that your authority has become more effective at identifying equality of opportunity dimensions in its policies.***

As a result of the initial screening process, 3 policies were identified as requiring EQIA. Two of these commenced in 2005-06 and were completed in September 2006. The planned EQIA of the Digital Film Archive and Outreach Policy was due to commence in September 2006. However, the funding for the Outreach Programme (from the Heritage Lottery Fund) came to an end and we were unable to continue delivering workshops on the Digital Film Archive. With the agreement of the Equality Commission, in the light of the greatly diminished programme, it was decided not to conduct the EQIA. Instead the process for monitoring those who access the Digital Film Archive was reviewed and improved.

With regard to identifying equality of opportunity dimensions in policies, we consider that equality considerations have been effectively mainstreamed into our processes for a number of years, prior to the adoption of the equality scheme. For example, issues regarding access to information and services are routinely addressed in policy development and we place considerable emphasis on effective monitoring. We are confident that equality considerations have been addressed in all policies.

### **3d) Completing EQIAs**

***Outline over the past five year period the percentage of your authority's initial EQIA timetable that reached i) stage 6 of the EQIA process i.e. decision making, and ii) stage 7 of the EQIA process i.e. annual***

***monitoring & publication of results, and indicate the extent that your authority has become more effective at progressing EQIAs.***

As mentioned above, the two EQIAs included in the initial EQIA timetable were completed to Stage 6 in September 2006. In December 2008 we sought feedback from new members of staff on the recruitment process by asking them to complete the questionnaire undertaken by existing staff as part of Stage 2 of the EQIA. The results showed that –

- awareness of the Equal Opportunities and Harassment Policies was much higher than in the original survey;
- 72% of new staff found the information pack to be very useful; and
- 76% of new staff found the application form very easy to complete.

These results, together with an update on the progress made in respect of the EQIA actions plans, were included in our annual report to the Commission and published on our website. We are satisfied that our Stage 7 monitoring process was sufficient to identify any additional equality implications.

We consider that we progressed both EQIAs efficiently and effectively. There was some slippage in that the EQIA process began in September 2005 rather than May 2005 as planned, but we do not consider that this had any significant effect. We noted the slippage in our annual report to the Commission in June 2005 and this report was made available on our website; we received no comments regarding the slippage from our consultees or other organisations. The EQIA process was completed (to Stage 6) within 12 months of commencement.

***4. The authority's arrangements for monitoring any adverse impacts of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.***

**4a) Monitoring arrangements**

***To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to collect data relating to the nine equality categories to monitor the impact of policies and what could your authority do in future to develop monitoring arrangements?***

Prior to the adoption of the equality scheme, we had processes in place to ensure that all available quantitative and qualitative data was used to inform

policy development and that additional data was obtained where necessary. A fairly extensive system of data collection and analysis was already in place, including the use of equal opportunity monitoring forms. In most cases, as a result of the adoption of the equality scheme, we decided simply to extend the number of Section 75 categories about which information was requested. We also asked all staff to provide information about themselves under 8 of the 9 equality categories. In view of the sensitivity of the subject matter we do not include requests for political opinion on our monitoring forms.

As noted above, most of our work is with limited companies and only about one third of our initiatives are aimed at individuals; we analyse the S75 profiles of individuals involved in each of these programmes. We are confident that this process provides robust information and that each programme is operated in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity and good relations and that there are no barriers to applicants in any of the S75 categories. The annual monitoring report is published on our website and referenced in our annual report to the Equality Commission.

The monitoring data collected to date shows that we are attracting a good range of applicants from most of the S75 categories for training and funding initiatives. Many of the schemes are aimed at people wishing to pursue a career in creative and technical disciplines and so there tends to be a high percentage of young applicants, although a reasonable number of older people apply. In some years the percentage of disabled applicants and applicants from BME communities has been low and we are continuing to explore ways of promoting schemes to people in these groups.

In 2007-08, particular attention was paid to the monitoring of the usage of the Digital Film Archive. It is difficult to monitor usage in quantitative terms; although questionnaires are provided at all venues, very few are completed by visitors, mainly because most people access the archive for entertainment and prefer not to complete them. We therefore worked with the venues to find other ways to assess usage and introduced a new monitoring questionnaire which was shorter but included more S75 categories. We also funded two qualitative studies on audiences of programmes funded under the Irish Language Broadcast Fund.

**5. The authority's arrangements for publishing the results of equality impact assessments and of monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.**

**5a) EQIA reports published**

**Indicate the number of reports published outlining the results of EQIAs and monitoring over the past five years, and outline what your authority could do in future in relation to improve the publication of EQIA results and monitoring.**

Our equality scheme indicates that the result of EQIAs and monitoring exercises will be made publicly available and that we will inform bodies listed in appendix 2 of the scheme (our list of consultees) and the general public about the availability of these reports through press releases and other media coverage.

When the two EQIAs were completed in September 2006, we wrote to all the consultees in appendix 2 to let them know that the final reports were available on our website. We published the full reports and a summary version on our website and sent a copy of the summary report to those organisations which had responded to the EQIA consultation. In addition, we contacted the editors of 15 publications targeted at specific S75 groups (e.g. DA News, RNIB Youthscene, RNID One in Seven) and briefly outlined the results of the EQIAs. We also sent a memo to all staff letting them know what actions had been taken.

With regard to monitoring, we have prepared a separate report each year setting out an analysis of responses to monitoring questionnaires for all of our initiatives which apply to individuals. This report is published on our website and referenced in our annual report to the Equality Commission. It would, of course, be possible to publish monitoring reports more widely, but we consider that the primary purpose of monitoring is to identify groups which are under-represented on schemes and bring this information to the attention of senior staff who can take appropriate action. We therefore regard these as primarily internal reports, although we are happy to make them publicly available.

In line with the requirements of the equality scheme, in January 2007 we conducted a review of our process for disseminating information about

activities arising from the implementation of the scheme. We concluded that arrangements appeared to be adequate. We included the results of the review in our annual report to the Commission and published them on our website.

We have had no requests for EQIA or monitoring reports in alternative formats, although all reports have included a statement drawing attention to their availability.

***6. A commitment that in making any decisions with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, that the public authority shall take into account any equality impact assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.***

**6a) Mitigation measures and alternative policies**

***In terms of the number of EQIAs that reached stage 6 i.e. decision making, to what extent were mitigation measures and alternative policies adopted?***

The EQIA of the Equal Opportunities Policy (which was completed in September 2006) resulted in the following mitigation measures and changes to the policy –

- The policy was revised to bring it more closely into line with the model policy published by the Equality Commission.
- A process was put in place to ensure that each personnel specification is reviewed as a vacancy arises to ensure the requirements do not directly discriminate against any group.
- The terms and conditions statement was revised to make it clear that changes to working hours may be possible.
- It was agreed that, as opportunities arise, consideration should be given to outreach work to encourage more applicants from under represented communities.
- The wording of advertisements was changed to make it clear that alternative formats of documents are available on request.

- Steps were taken to make information about job vacancies, including information packs, available on our website.
- The information pack was revised to include an outline of the selection process.
- The application form was revised to ask candidates to identify any particular needs which might require attention during the selection process.
- The application form was revised to make it more structured with questions geared to the specific skills sought.
- Staff training was revised to place appropriate emphasis on equal opportunity issues and to broaden perspectives.
- A process was put in place to ensure that members of recruitment panels are updated on equal opportunity issues.

The EQIA of the Harassment Policy (which was completed in September 2006) resulted in the following mitigation measures and changes to the policy –

- The policy was revised to bring it more closely into line with the model policy published by the Equality Commission.
- Staff training was revised to place appropriate emphasis on equal opportunity issues and to broaden perspectives.

These changes were made as a result of our analysis of available data and research and engagement with a small number of representative groups; approximately 50% of the actions arose from the comments of consultees.

#### **6b) Changes in policy**

***To what extent did consideration of EQIAs and consultations contribute to a change in policy, as opposed to policy decisions which would probably have been made in any event by your authority?***

The EQIAs led to a number of changes in policy as outlined above. It is difficult to estimate whether these changes would have been made in the



absence of the EQIA; we do, from time to time, review and update internal policies to take account of best practice and so it is likely that these changes would have been made at some stage. The EQIA raised the profile of the policies and therefore accelerated the changes.

**7. *The authority's arrangements for training staff on issues relevant to the duties.***

**7a) Training programme**

***To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to develop and deliver a training programme in accordance with scheme commitments?***

Awareness training relating to the equality scheme was provided to the majority of staff in June 2004. Four members of staff were not able to attend the session and were made aware of S75 and the equality scheme on an individual basis. At the end of the awareness training session, staff were asked to identify their likely involvement in the implementation of the equality scheme and to identify their individual training needs. This information was used to assist with the development of a training plan.

The training plan has been delivered by external consultants and we are satisfied that they are making good use of best practice examples.

**7b) Awareness training**

***Have all staff received awareness training and what could your authority do in future to deliver an effective training programme?***

Refresher training for existing staff and awareness training for new employees has been provided approximately on an annual basis since the initial training session. The latest course included a session on the new disability duties as well as an update on equal opportunities legislation and progress on implementing the equality scheme.

Specialist training on the conduct of EQIA was provided to those involved in the EQIA process.

As set out in section 3d) above, we conducted staff surveys as part of Stage 2 of the EQIA of the Equal Opportunities and Harassment Policies and repeated the survey for new staff as part of the Stage 7 monitoring process. A comparison of the responses showed that awareness of the two policies and



equality issues had more than doubled over an 18 month period. It is likely that the training programme contributed significantly to this increase in awareness. As part of the Five Year Review, a workshop was held for senior staff and this provided additional anecdotal evidence that awareness of equality issues has increased significantly since the adoption of the equality scheme.

We consider that the training programme would be more effective if it could be made more relevant to our operational work. However, as we have received no complaints and very little response to consultations, it is difficult to highlight current issues. Whilst we found the Commission's publication 'Key Inequalities in Northern Ireland' very interesting, there was nothing in it which was at all relevant to our industry.

## ***8. The authority's arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and to services provided by the authority.***

### **8a) Arrangements for access**

#### ***To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to ensure and assess public access to information and to services provided by the authority?***

Arrangements to source information in different formats on a timely basis were put in place in 2004-05. In 2006-07, in line with the commitment in the equality scheme, we undertook an audit of these arrangements. The conclusions of the audit were that –

- the arrangements in place were fully sufficient to meet any demand;
- however, no requests had been received to date and there was no reason to believe that the demand would increase significantly;
- there was a continuing programme to review and improve the website to increase access;
- the possibility of accessing funding application forms and codes of practice on the website would be reviewed; and
- access to the digital film archive to people with sight loss would be reviewed.

In line with the equality scheme, the findings of the review were communicated to appropriate groups on our list of consultees.

In 2004-05 we assumed responsibility for the Irish Language Broadcast Fund. We gave detailed consideration to the provision of information in Irish, including on which occasions it would be necessary to provide information in English as well as Irish. We also considered which newspapers and periodicals would be used to advertise the availability of grants under the Fund.

As a result of the EQIA of the Equal Opportunities Policy, all job advertisements and application forms make it clear that alternative formats are available and that assistance on completing the forms can be provided on request. There has only been one request to date for a form in an alternative format from an applicant who preferred to use the Irish language.

We make extensive use of our website as a communication tool and publish an e-zine, which is distributed to those who sign up to it. (For data protection reasons we cannot circulate the e-zine to people who have not signed up to receive it.) A full Publication Scheme has recently been introduced enabling the public to access a wide range of documents through the website, including all documents relating to S75 duties.

In 2010 we plan to redesign and update our website to present a clearer, more user-friendly home page highlighting our main areas of activity, to ensure that it is easily navigable and to allow more interactive content, such as the completion of funding applications on line. We will ensure that the new website is fully accessible to disabled people.

## ***9. The authority's timetable for measures proposed in the scheme.***

### **9a) Timetable**

***Outline the extent to which measures set out in the original timetable have been implemented.***

All the measures set out in the original timetable have been implemented. There was some slippage on a number of items (up to a maximum of 6 months) but all actions have been achieved.

**9b) Reconstitution of the authority**

***If your authority were to be reconstituted in the next five years what would be the main scheme actions/equality considerations that an incoming authority should address?***

At present there are no plans to reconstitute Northern Ireland Screen as part of the Review of Public Administration and so this question is not relevant. In a hypothetical situation, the incoming authority would be expected to continue the work programme outlined for the future (see section 12 below).

**10. Details of how the scheme will be published.****10a) Publication of the Equality Scheme**

***Were scheme commitments in this section delivered and what evidence supports this view?***

A plain English summary of the equality scheme was prepared in March 2004 and circulated to all the organisations listed in appendix 2 of the scheme. The summary and the full version of the scheme were published on the NIFTC website and the summary version was provided to all staff at the awareness training session held in June 2004. All members of staff were able to access the website and could therefore access the full version of the scheme. A covering letter from the Chief Executive was circulated with the summary version setting out his own and the Board's commitment to the scheme.

Staff are kept up to date on S75 issues through team meetings, e mails and workshops as well as formal training sessions. The staff survey undertaken as part of the monitoring of the EQIA of the Equal Opportunities and Harassment Policies in 2007-08 showed that awareness of equality issues has more than doubled since the completion of the EQIA.

**11. The authority's arrangements for dealing with complaints arising from a failure to comply with the scheme.****11a) Complaints**

***Outline the number and nature of complaints received by your authority, and what your authority could do in future to develop its complaints handling process and learn from complaints.***

Northern Ireland Screen has not received any complaints relating to the equality scheme. We consider that the complaints handling process which has been put in place is sufficient and do not intend to make any changes to it at this stage.

***12. A commitment to conducting a review of the scheme within five years of its submission to the Equality Commission and to forwarding a report of this review to the Equality Commission.***

**12a) Experience of conducting this review**

***What has been your authority's experience of conducting this review? To what extent has the Commission's guidance been useful in undertaking the review?***

The Five Year Review was due to be completed by March 2009. However, the Commission had indicated their intention to publish new guidance requiring changes to equality schemes; we therefore delayed the review so that we could combine it with a review of the scheme. When the new guidance had not been published by September 2009, we decided to go ahead with the review and use it to establish a baseline position from which to develop a new equality scheme at the appropriate time.

All senior managers, who are the people responsible for policies, were involved in the Five Year Review. They completed a questionnaire seeking information and their views on policy development, access to information, monitoring and screening. The responses were analysed to identify gaps in the implementation of our scheme. A workshop was then held (facilitated by an external consultant) to discuss the gaps and give further consideration to what needs to be done to achieve more positive outcomes for individuals from the nine equality categories.

As a result of this process, we have agreed the following actions –

- when the re-design of the website has been completed, we will publicise the availability of our e-zine (and other electronic information) to organisations representing people in specific S75 groups (with particular attention to those representing children and young people and people with learning difficulties) urging them to encourage their constituents to sign up;

- we will work with the organisations whom we fund (particularly those in the exhibition sector) to explore the availability of more extensive equality monitoring information, for example on audience figures;
- we will ensure that all publications carry a note to the effect that alternative formats can be made available on request; and
- we will review the documentation accompanying funding decisions and ensure that a screening process is applied to changes in policy and that a record is kept of the consideration given to equality issues in the development of new and revised policies.

The Commission's Guidance has been useful during the Five Year Review but tends to assume that an authority is developing new policies on a regular basis which is not the case for Northern Ireland Screen. We have answered the questions as thoroughly as possible but it should be noted that there are elements of our equality scheme which are rarely used.

## Appendix A

### 3A) SCREENING - LIST OF POLICIES SCREENED OUT

1. NI Film Production Fund
2. Lottery Film Finance Schemes
3. Markets and Festivals Fund
4. Company Development Fund
5. Product Development Fund
6. Skills Development and Training
7. Locations Service
8. Information Service
9. Exhibition Programmes
10. Cinema Access Programme
11. Staff Members' Code of Conduct
12. Business ethics, fraud and irregularity
13. Conflicts of interest
14. Expenses
15. Computer users' procedure
16. Obligations during and after employment
17. Health and safety at work
18. Management of stress in the workplace
19. Staff appraisal
20. Complaints procedure
21. Procurement
22. UTV Skills Focus