



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2017-18**

Contact:

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:
<http://nireland.britishcouncil.org/about/equal-opportunities-diversity>

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S Brisbane", enclosed within a rectangular border.

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2017 and March 2018

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 1** In 2017-18, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

NOTE: BRITISH COUNCIL NORTHERN IRELAND IS PART OF A GLOBAL ORGANISATION. THROUGHOUT THE REPORT, WE REFER TO OUR GLOBAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) POLICIES WHICH ARE ADHERED TO BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE. SEVERAL SECTIONS OF THE REPORT ARE NORTHERN IRELAND SPECIFIC.

British Council overview:

The British Council's cultural relations work aims to develop trust and understanding between different nations and cultures, drawing on a hugely diverse workforce and set of contacts. It therefore needs strong alignment to principles and practices of equality, diversity and inclusion as well as our core values; these include valuing people, integrity, mutuality, professionalism and creativity.

British Council Northern Ireland Senior Management Structure:

Responsibility for the effective implementation of our equal opportunities and good relations lies with Director Northern Ireland. Director Northern Ireland is accountable to the British Council for the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the equality scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, including any good practice or guidance that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission.

The Director Northern Ireland works in partnership with the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee (NIAC) which meets three times a year with senior managers and this forum provides the opportunity to discuss and provide updates on our programmes which aim to build trust with a diverse range of people, including those from the 9 categories covered by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (the Act). Our activities in our programme areas ensure we comply with the requirements of the Act.

British Council Northern Ireland premises:

An independent disability access audit was carried out by Disability Action who made a number of recommendations which have been actioned. These include:

- More robust bollards in place outside the building (to protect against illegal parking on the footpath/pedestrian area adjacent to the building, thus also offering easier access and further protection to wheelchair users or those with disabilities)

- A bicycle store provided in the building basement for staff
- Promotion of Belfast Bicycle Scheme for visiting staff (bike rack adjacent to office)
- Cycle2Work is continuing. This government-backed scheme aims to encourage commuters to use bicycles for all or part of the journey to work. It enables employees to lease a bicycle and related equipment (up to a value of £1000) through a salary sacrifice agreement which is exempt from Income Tax and National Insurance during the lease period, affording a tax-free benefit to staff.
- - An Evacuation Chair lift has been fitted for use throughout the premises
- Personal Emergency Evacuation procedures are in place to facilitate safe egress for persons with restricted mobility
- Display screen equipment assessments have taken place to promote good ergonomics and healthy environment
- Telephones are fitted with inductive couplers to assist those with hearing difficulties. Additionally a text relay service/text phone is available upon request.
- The front door of the building has been fitted with automatic opening to enable ease of access for visitors with disabilities. A security officer has also been employed to reside in the main foyer area and can provide assistance to visitors.
- A defibrillator has been installed in the office. A 3 hour training session was delivered to 8 staff in the office to enable them to use the defibrillator.

British Council Northern Ireland Work

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. It promotes a "friendly knowledge and understanding" between the people of the UK and worldwide. Our work is divided into three main areas: Education & Society, English, and the Arts.

1) EDUCATION & SOCIETY

Education - Schools

We bring an international dimension to teaching and learning in schools with international links, professional development opportunities, curriculum resources, classroom support and awards.

Through our global network and portfolio of schools programmes, we connect our school sector to others throughout the world to achieve two outcomes:

- 'Enriched education' - Sustained collaboration between us and other countries on professional development, curricula and system reform, and policy dialogue, which provides improved educational outcomes for young people
- 'Global citizenship increased' – Young people and educators demonstrate an increased capacity in the skills, understanding and outlook required to work in a global economy and contribute responsibly to society, locally and globally.

Both of these outcomes contribute to a more prosperous and secure society.

These endeavours are supported by many of our programmes some of which are summarised below:-

Connecting Classrooms - a fully funded learning journey that includes face-to-face and online courses, international professional partnerships and visit funding opportunities based around the core skills.

eTwinning - a free and secure online network, creating an online community for schools across Europe, where teachers from more than 40 countries can find partners, share ideas, exchange best practice and work on projects to enable pupil collaboration.

SchoolsOnline - a one stop global portal for teachers around the world to find school partners, explore teaching resources and establish international links for professional development. In Northern Ireland we have a specific SchoolsOnline ezine with content more relevant to NI teachers.

Language Assistants - work in primary and secondary schools, including sixth form and further education colleges to support language learning and cultural knowledge.

HSBC Mandarin Speaking competition - an annual competition run in partnership with HSBC, which provides an opportunity to give secondary schools and students the chance to test their Mandarin speaking skills in front of a panel of judges and schools from all over the UK. For the first time we organised a NI heat of the HSBC Mandarin speaking competition in Northern Ireland at the end of 2017 and will have another one in November 2018.

Erasmus+ - see page 6

International School Award - a globally recognised accreditation which helps schools to enrich learning and improve teaching by guiding international learning activities, from introducing international education into the curriculum to embedding it within a school's culture.

Education - Higher/Further Education

As an international cultural relations organisation the British Council promotes and supports the exchange and mobility of students, scholars and academics around the world. We use our expertise in higher education to build trust and understanding with other countries by:

- supporting the development of policy and practice in the UK and internationally
- building partnerships between institutions
- promoting the mobility of academics and students

Supporting the development of policy and practice in the UK and internationally

We contribute to the development of a global academic community by providing platforms to discuss higher education globally and promoting innovative research.

We believe that engaging the UK sector in working with policy makers and practitioners and their counterparts in other countries strengthens both nations. Our activities include: We contribute to the development of a global academic

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[Going Global Conference](#): the world's largest open forum for education leaders to debate higher and further education issues and challenges, and to discuss collaborative solutions. The most recent conference took place in London from Monday 22 to Wednesday 24 May 2017.

Education Dialogues: is a series of events happening around the world which brings together policy-makers and influencers to debate the challenges and opportunities facing international higher education.

[Events](#): forums, inward missions, outward missions, study visits, roundtables, workshops, seminars. Our events aim to develop international collaborations and to be mutually beneficial.

[Research and publications](#): we publish research and analysis that is publicly available within our [knowledge centre](#).

Building partnerships between institutions

We focus on developing education partnerships with institutions between the UK and their counterparts in other countries. Partnerships are a powerful mechanism to engage the UK internationally and to build trust.

We help UK institutions to internationalise by providing market analysis and intelligence, developing research partnerships, and providing on the ground support for higher education partnerships.

We provide opportunities for higher education leaders to exchange knowledge and establish collaborations, and list them under the [events](#) and [opportunities](#) pages.

Our partnership programmes include:

[Newton Fund](#) - Aiming to strengthen science and innovation capacity and unlock further funding to support poverty alleviation in partnering countries.

[UK India Education and Research Initiative](#) (UKIERI) - Aiming to strengthen educational links between India and the UK.

[Research and Education Network for Knowledge Economy Initiatives](#) (RENKEI) - Platform for partnerships between the UK and Japan in industry and higher education.

Promoting the mobility of academics and students

We encourage international study and support the exchange and mobility of students, scholars and academics around the world because we believe that experiencing another country first hand provides an unparalleled opportunity for individuals to understand and engage with people from different cultures, share

ideas and work to solve global challenges.

We manage a number of mobility grants and scholarships aimed at UK academics, scholars and students, details of which can be found on our [Study UK page](#)

The Study UK web portal pulls together information on all the various programmes and study opportunities offered by the British Council in one place. This has resulted in considerable increase in enquiry level and driven traffic to the website up by 250% since its inception. As a result there is a significant increase in awareness of the broad range of programmes offered. To date there has been a 12% increase in participation in programmes targeted at the 16 to 25 year old groups (groups previously under-represented)

We market the UK as a study destination because we believe that international students and academics enrich our society and we are passionate about the long term impact that international higher education can have on individuals and their societies in the UK and beyond.

Our mobility schemes for international students, scholars and academics are listed on our [Education UK page](#).

Our work aims to support the capacity and capability of governments, institutions and individuals in the UK and other countries to take an active role in developing their country, their community and themselves.

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Some of the more popular mobility programmes open to higher education students in Northern Ireland are:

Study USA

The Study USA Programme offers undergraduate students an opportunity to study business and management for one academic year at universities and colleges in the USA with the purpose of producing graduates with an international, business-oriented perspective.

IAESTE

The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) provides paid, course-related work experience abroad to students of technical degrees (primarily Science, Engineering and the Applied Arts).

Erasmus+

The Erasmus+ programme provides opportunities for student and staff mobility in higher education and further education institutions as well as institutional partnerships. Erasmus+ is an integrated programme, based around key actions rather than sectors of education. The three key actions funded by the programme include: Learning mobility of individuals; co-operation for innovation and good practices; and support for policy reform.

Science

We work in partnership with the NI Science Festival to help internationalise the festival and enhance its global connections and reach.

Society

Our work in society helps citizens and institutions contribute to a more inclusive, open and prosperous world and connects local issues to global themes, ranging from social action to diversity and youth issues.

We work in the following key areas:

Social enterprise

Our social enterprise programme supports the development of social enterprise and social investment around the world drawing on UK expertise to share best practice and create opportunities.

Governance and civil society

Our work promotes social change and voice and accountability for all. Key areas include institutional development, justice and the rule of law, civil society and economic development.

Women's and girls' empowerment

We facilitate dialogues and networks to raise awareness and support initiatives that address the continuing inequalities that women face in society such as discrimination in the workplace.

Justice, security and conflict resolution

We seek to assist in the design, development and evaluation of justice and security initiatives that promote and protect universally agreed standards of human rights.

Sport

We build sport partnerships between the UK and countries around the world, enabling young people to fulfill their potential through the power of sport.

In Northern Ireland we are keen to explore the international dimensions of peace-building and share the experience of Northern Ireland with other post-conflict societies.

2) ARTS

Our work in arts aims to promote the UK's diverse culture, creativity and innovation overseas. We work across various art forms and with the best of UK talent to develop artistic programmes and opportunities for collaboration in Northern Ireland.

Working jointly with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland through international work, we support and promote Northern Ireland's creative output.

The Artists' International Development Fund is a £50,000 annual programme jointly funded by the British Council and Arts Council Northern Ireland. The aim

of the programme is to support individual international developmental opportunities for talent and artistic excellence from Northern Ireland and, thereby, enhance Northern Ireland's international artistic development, reputation and standing.

The Creative Europe Desk UK is run jointly by the British Council and the British Film Institute with partners across the UK including the Arts Council in Northern Ireland.

British Council is a major partner in a number of festivals that occur in Northern Ireland throughout the year. We aim to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic endeavours.

3) ENGLISH

English teaching has been at the heart of the British Council's cultural relations work since 1943. What we do in English creates opportunities for millions of people around the world through education, mobility and international engagement. In Northern Ireland there are seven British Council accredited English language centres.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2017-18 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

General:

- **JAM Card (Impact: Disability & Social awareness raising)**

British Council Northern Ireland became a JAM Card Friendly Organisation <https://jamcard.org/> in November 2017. The JAM Card is a new social innovation from the NOW Group (an organisation that supports people with learning difficulties and autism into employment). We are committed to showing people with learning difficulties and communication barriers that as a JAM Card friendly organisation we will give them a little extra time and patience in customer service situations. We used our website and social media channels to widely promote our membership of this initiative.

On **Thursday 7th December** a member of the NOW group delivered training to all staff on the JAM Card and all attending staff undertook the Customer Care Training course to ensure they are equipped to provide excellent customer service to people with learning difficulties and communication barriers.

The British Council's UK Director of Strategy and Engagement was in attendance for the Jam Card launch, helping to champion the initiative amongst NI staff.

- **EDI focused Staff Meeting**

On 7 December 2017, we invited Ruth McCarthy, Director of the Outburst Queer Arts Festival, to attend one of our monthly staff meetings (also attended by the British Council's Director of Strategy & Engagement) to provide an informal and interactive talk with Northern Ireland staff about the Outburst festival (see Arts section below for full details), the local and international context for EDI, Outburst's work with the British Council and future plans.

- **Time to Talk Day (1 February 2018)**

Drop in sessions were held across the UK for staff to take a bit of time to talk about mental health, involving themes and quizzes or just to talk, share and reflect. Staff were also sent links to the following resources: [Health and well-being](#) intranet page, Mental Health intranet page, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Time to Change Workplace Workshop [films](#). Feedback from staff was extremely positive. We talked about real experiences and pressure and expectations, periods of difficulty and the impact of mental health issues on ourselves and others. Family, bereavement and the lack of time to talk in the context of busy working lives were also themes. Most of us concluded that we should stop asking people how they are in the general way we do unless we are really interested in a genuine answer and/or have time for this.

Time to talk day forms part of the British Council's Keep Well Campaign which recognises that as an organisation, the British Council has a vital role to play in

encouraging staff wellbeing and health by:

- Making sure that colleagues have access to information and advice about the issues that affect their health
- Where possible providing practical support to enable and encourage colleagues to maintain good health
- Supporting colleagues suffering from ill health
- Expecting managers to take an interest in the health and well-being of their teams, take account of this in the way that they manage them, and make sure that colleagues receive the appropriate support.

The Keep Well Campaign incorporates four themes: Physical Health, Mental Health, Work/Life Balance and Healthy Work Environments.

- **Staff Engagement Working Group**

As a result of the British Council staff survey consultations that were held in each office in 2017 the Northern Ireland office has created a Staff Engagement Working Group. The purpose of the group is to:

- Value colleagues wellbeing
- Value different ways of thinking, opinions, working and ideas
- Provide colleagues with opportunities to contribute views and ideas to the leadership team
- Improve communication amongst colleagues

The group meets monthly and communicates outcomes to all Northern Ireland staff.

- **British Council Diversity Awards**

This award recognises teams or individuals who deliver innovative work in the area of equality, diversity and inclusion internally in the British Council or externally through our work in cultural relations.

- **Agile** – A team/individual that has led an innovative approach to challenging discrimination and marginalisation
- **Values** – A team/individual who has engaged, supported and inspired others to take action in support of inclusion that has achieved positive result
- **Impact-led** – A team/individual that has contributed to the British Council's aim of making a leading contribution to international aspects of diversity, as part of achieving cultural relations impact
- **Values** – A team that has incorporated the [British Council's values](#) in their work to promote inclusion

- **Launch of new Race Equality Guide**

In October 2017 the British Council launched a new Race Equality Guide. It is one of a series of British Council Guides to support the inclusion we aspire for in

our areas of focus and to help mainstream EDI into all areas of our cultural relations work.

- **Launch of new Promoting Inclusion Guide to Disability Equality**

The new guide explores the social model of disability, and the range of attitudinal and accessibility barriers that disabled people experience both in the workplace and in wider society. This guide offers an opportunity to reflect, encourage debate and draw colleagues' attention to the five principles that support our approach to promoting inclusion in our organisation, and that we wish to see mainstreamed in our internal operations as well as in our teaching materials and subjects, programme work, and wider cultural relations offer:

1. Awareness
2. Access
3. Adjustments
4. Inclusion
5. Individuals

- **Recruitment – Guaranteed Interview Scheme**

In 2017 an additional section has been added to the British Council application form for internal and external vacancies. This section states that the British Council operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for a vacancy. All disabled applicants are asked to confirm whether reasonable adjustments are required (and to specify the nature of those adjustments) at application stage.

- **Disability Advisory Panel**

The British Council Disability Advisory Panel is made up of people with significant personal and professional experience of disability and act as a 'critical friend' to the Diversity Unit and other teams on request.

Following a Northern Ireland wide call, we received 3 applications from Northern Ireland disability practitioners to become members of the panel, two of whom have now been recruited.

- **Disability Confident Employer**

In January 2018 the British Council received a badge and a certificate which qualify our organisation as a **Disability Confident Employer** for two years (up to January 2020).

The Disability Confident Employer Scheme is a government scheme which has taken over from the previous Two Ticks Positive About Disabled People Scheme, and is designed to help organisations recruit and retain disabled people and people with health conditions for their skills and talent.

- **Investors in People (Impact: Recognition for equality management)**

During 2017-18 the Northern Ireland office held the Investors in People Award. This is the highest accolade in people management and recognises that the British Council Northern Ireland supports its staff in all aspects of their working practices including equality management. The Northern Ireland office is currently the only British Council office in the UK to hold this accreditation.

- **EDI Toolkit (Impact: Training and Awareness raising – variety of protected characteristics)**

An EDI toolkit is located for all staff and visitors to access as and when necessary. The Toolkit contains all corporate and Northern Ireland specific EDI documents. There is also a range of documents on event management and ideas on how to mainstream EDI into everyday work. There is also a section on useful resources including accessibility guides for venues across Northern Ireland, links to interfaith calendars and international diversity days, lists of nearby places of worship for staff and visitors, and links to EDI training courses. Feedback from staff suggests this is a very useful tool and helps keep all important EDI documents in one accessible place. The Toolkit continues to be updated on an ad hoc basis.

- **Marking of International Days:**
 - **International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) - 17th May 2018** Staff were sent a quiz to match definitions to LGBT terms with answers shared at the end of the day. A 25 minute video documentary by [Unreported World](#) on China's Gay Shock Therapy, which revealed how some Chinese hospitals use nausea-inducing drugs and electric shock therapy to 'cure' gay people, while gay rights activists are closely monitored by the police. There are 2 mild short scenes which show undercover filming of shock therapy in this). Staff were also sent 4 [short interviews](#) on the Mind website and [BBC coverage](#) of the recent [statement](#) by the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) which condemns the conflation of homosexuality with a mental disorder. Staff were encouraged to talk to each other- share thoughts, feelings, experiences with their desk neighbours and fellow colleagues. They were also encouraged to discuss the Ashers' Bakery case and share their opinions.
 - **International Day of People with a Disability 2017 (3 December)** was marked by a disability quiz on acceptable/inacceptable use of language and etiquette and the meaning of disability symbols – the winner won a bottle of wine.
 - **World AIDS Day (1 December)** - to mark the day, the British Council launched its [HIV/AIDS policy](#). HIV/AIDS is recognised from the point of diagnosis as a disability under the GB Equality Act 2010 and therefore is covered as one of our six priority areas.
 - **International Womens' Day (8 March 2018)** - global celebrations took place to mark the day. The British Council produced a video which was widely shared on social media channels: <https://content.live.solas.britishcouncil.digital/global-campaigns/international-womens-day>. The British Council also partnered with UN Women this year to help

mark International Women's Day by joining the #HeForShe campaign through an arts focus exciting global arts social media campaign called #7Artists as part of the ArtsWeek strand of #HeForShe. The heart of #HeForShe is all about empowering female voices across the globe which is very much part of our global strategy and commitment to EDI as an organisation. #7Artists showcases seven influential artists at the very top of their disciplines, from all over our international network. The goal of #7Artists is to promote their talent through our networks and to stimulate social media engagement and conversation around breaking down barriers for women and girls across the world, whatever their talent, wherever they live.

- **Staff Training**

- Ongoing training from Equality Commission on NI equality legislation and Section 75 requirements
- **Gender Equality Training** – in January 2018 a session was delivered to staff (led by the British Council's Gender Advisor) to familiarise colleagues with the British Council's approach to gender and the importance of women and girls' empowerment as a means of promoting gender equality. It was also an opportunity to share understandings of gender in the Northern Ireland context. During the training we introduced gender analysis and encouraged colleagues to think about practical ways to take account of gender in their work. A social enterprise was used to provide catering for staff during the event. Time was also dedicated to delivering a presentation to staff on Section 75 in Northern Ireland and how we comply as an office.
- **JAM Card Training** – see above
- **Diversity Assessment Framework (DAF) webinars** have been delivered to all staff in May, July and October 2017 and 2 further sessions in Jan 2018.
- The following **additional training** sessions were also available to all UK staff throughout the period:
 - Disability and Inclusion (aligned to our organisational Equality Guide)
 - Race and ethnicity (aligned to our Equality Guide)
 - Discussing Religion and Belief in the British Council (aligned to our Equality Guide)
 - Unconscious Bias (face to face and webinar training)

- **External Monitoring**

Monitoring of customers from the protected characteristic groups taking active part in programmes and activities offered by the British Council Northern Ireland (*Language Assistants, eTwinning, IAESTE, Connecting Classrooms, Study USA, Mock Council of the European Union*)

A questionnaire covering all section 75 protected groups is sent to all external customers across a number of programmes on an annual basis.

Findings:

- Greater participation rate in our education programmes amongst grammar schools over secondary schools
- More female than male participants, and fewer males than national average.
- Mainly 16-25 single with no dependents (due to nature of programmes)
- Mainly white

We will continue to monitor our customers on an annual basis and take action to find ways to address any inequalities.

- **Wider Europe EDI team meeting**

For the first time, the Northern Ireland office hosted the British Council's Wider Europe EDI team meeting in June 2017.

We used the opportunity to make linkages with external NI EDI stakeholders who presented to the group. These included a representative from the Equality Commission who delivered a presentation to the group on EDI in the Northern Ireland context, an inspirational presentation from Roger Warnock from the Young Foundation on Inclusive Leadership, and a Diversity Tour of Belfast which incorporated a visit to Bryson House.

Our external EDI contacts also heard from the group about its vision and plans to ensure that its work in EDI reflects the aspirations and challenges of our organisation, and identifies necessary measures to further mainstream EDI through regional initiatives.

The four day long visit provided a mutual information sharing opportunity with site visits across Belfast and in-depth engagement during the visit. *(A full programme is available in the Annexes)*

Northern Ireland staff availed of the opportunity to learn about the group's EDI activity by popping in to various sessions throughout the 3 days.

- **Mobiloo**

A delegate got in touch with British Council Northern Ireland asking if we could provide a Mobiloo service to enable him to attend the international Peace and Beyond conference held in Belfast In April 2018. This service was provided, enabling the delegate, who is disabled, to participate fully in the conference across a number of sites in Belfast including Titanic Belfast and Belfast City Hall. Mobiloo then [tweetedus](#).

ARTS:

1) Inclusive Arts programme

In Arts our programmes on [inclusive Arts](#) aim to utilise world-leading innovation and creativity to make a positive contribution to society, institutions and government policy. Over the last two years, research has been undertaken in Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan to scope potential opportunities and development in the area of arts and disability and the results will inform and shape our programme direction in consultation with local partners.

Arts and Disability is embedded into our Arts Inclusion strategy where we are working with influential cultural leaders, urban local government and national government, to support a more inclusive approach to the arts through seminars, workshops, presentations and artistic collaborations:

- ✓ In South Korea, two Inclusive [Design Challenges developed by RCA's Helen Hamlyn Centre](#) and associated talks and exhibition have led to partnerships with the Seoul Design Foundation and the Korea Institution of Design Promotion, the most influential design organisations in the country. In March 2018, Samsung supported a major Arts and Disability Forum which featured collaborations between UK choreographer/dancer Marc Brew and his Korean counterpart, Bora Kim, and Candoco Dance Company (UK) and Eun Me Ahn, recognised as one of Asia's most sophisticated *dance* makers;
- ✓ In Hong Kong, the [11 Million Reason photographic Exhibition](#) attracted 12,844 visitors over 5 weeks in November 2017;
- ✓ Singapore artist Peter Sau and UK playwright and disability advocate, Kaite O'Reilly, are currently working on production, [And Suddenly I Disappear: The Singapore/UK 'd' Monologues](#) for 2018. This will be the first multilingual, intercultural, disability-led theatre project created between the UK and Singapore;
- ✓ [Claire Cunningham's "Give Me a Reason to Live"](#), was performed in the Dance in Autumn Festival at National Theatre & Concert Hall (NTCH) in Taiwan in October 2017 to two full-houses – made up of dance-performance goers, audiences with disabilities and disability right activists attending as well as Ministry of culture and legislators from the government.

Exclusion and inequality arise and are perpetuated due to institutional, attitudinal, structural, physical and legal barriers, as well as barriers of other nature, such as information and communication technology (ICT). Fostering the meaningful participation of disabled helps create sustainable growth and social inclusion, and enables people to fulfil their potential. Our ambition is to promote debate in our organisation around disability and actively seek to identify and remove the barriers that prevent full participation.

2) Arts and Social Transformation

As part of our arts and social transformation work, we are continuing to grow links

between Northern Ireland and Colombia. Beyond Skin and Arts Dialogue Futyoures, are making exchange visits discussing the transformational power of music in post-conflict environments.

During 2017-8 we have been working towards the publishing of Northern Ireland music journalist and broadcaster, Stuart Baillie's book *Trouble Songs* on music and conflict in Northern Ireland and also a new focus on street art exploring the role of Urban Arts in Northern Ireland and Colombia.

Kwa Daniels, Bounce Culture – we have been improving networks for Northern Ireland's BAME artists. Kwa travelled to take part in the networking symposium organised by British Council Sub Saharan Africa team and the Royal African Society in London. As a follow up to the symposium, Kwa is planning travel to Ghana with visual arts curator, Sara Greavu of the Centre for Contemporary Art in Derry-Londonderry exploring opportunities to network and build creative connections between Ghana, Northern Ireland and other parts of the UK.

3) IDA Scheme

Fourteen deaf and disabled artists from Northern Ireland have been announced as recipients of the iDA (Individual Disabled/Deaf Artists) scheme, a dedicated arts stream delivered through the Arts & Disability Forum (ADF) and funded by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, which allows them to develop their professional artistic careers.

Awards under the iDA scheme are made annually to Deaf and disabled artists working in a range of art forms. The bursaries, funded through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, will allow each artist to produce a new creative work or receive training or professional mentoring. The artists include eight visual artists, two theatre practitioners, one dance artist, a poet and two musicians. The artists have impairments ranging from physical disability, visual impairment, mental-ill health and learning difficulties.

British Council works strategically with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland under a joint MOU aiming to internationalise opportunities for the artists and arts organisations we jointly work with.

4) Outburst Queer Arts Festival (Impact: Sexual Orientation awareness raising and promoting diversity)

Now in its 11th year, the 2017 OUTBURST Queer Arts Festival took place in Belfast from 9th - 18th November with 10 days of exciting new LGBTQ+ theatre, film, music and visual art making OUTBURST one of the UK's leading festivals celebrating local and international LGBTQ+ art and performance. In partnership with Outburst, we welcomed 30 international LGBTQ+ practitioners, artists and creative programmers from Peru, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Canada, Australia, South Korea, Uganda, Kenya as well as the UK and Ireland, with events to build networks, support excellence in queer arts practice as well addressing homophobia and transphobia across the world.

Outburst Queer Arts Festival is Northern Ireland's only, and rapidly growing

LGBTQ+ arts festival and aims to support, encourage and inspire local LGBTQ+ creativity, in addition to bringing the best in international queer arts to the city of Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The British Council has also supported Outburst in terms of the Festival's role in highlighting and building awareness about suicide awareness and prevention in the LGBT+ community in Northern Ireland. In 2017, focusing on an exhibition and book by Northern Ireland illustrator, performer, artist, activist, clown doctor and one of the founding members of Outburst, Patrick Sanders who died by suicide earlier in the year. It was an emotional tribute to a talented Northern Ireland artist that the British Council's international delegates were able to be part of with Patrick's friends and family.

About Outburst

Outburst Queer Arts Festival started in 2007 as a grassroots LGBTQ community-led showcase for queer creativity. Since then it has grown into one of the most innovative and exciting small festivals in Ireland and the UK, with an eclectic programme unlike any other in Northern Ireland.

The overall vision for Outburst is simple: to create a bold, brave and innovative platform in Northern Ireland for new local and international queer arts, performance and brilliant creative ideas. From celebrated cutting-edge international artists to explosive new local talent, Outburst shines a spotlight on the best of LGBTQ creativity in theatre, performance, spoken word, film, music, dance and more.

While focusing on the creative voices and engagement of LGBTQ+ artists and community, they actively promote Outburst as a festival where everyone is welcome, making it one of the most inclusive, welcoming and diverse queer arts events in the world.

The British Council's work with Outburst supports international artists but also creates dialogue and profile for inequalities still felt by Northern Ireland's queer community.

5) Five Films for Freedom Campaign

#FiveFilms4Freedom is the world's widest-reaching LGBTQ+ digital campaign. The British Council in partnership with BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival made five LGBTQ+ themed short films available for the world to watch online for free, over a 12-day period.

The British Film Institute and the British Council promoted the programme through a digital campaign taking place on 21 March – 1 April 2018.

The programme, which featured work by emerging filmmakers from across the world, were selected from and coincided with BFI Flare.

In 2017, the films were viewed 1.8 million times by people in 202 countries and principalities, including parts of the world where homosexuality is criminalised, and in some cases, punishable by the death penalty.

In the Northern Ireland office, the five films ran on a loop throughout the day in our conference rooms and staff were invited to view the films at their

convenience.

Films can be viewed here: [#FiveFilms4Freedom](#)

6) Disability Arts International

Promoting increased access to the arts for disabled artists and audiences around the globe.

We are supporting the improved profile of artists with a disability by developing links with the Arts and Disability Forum and Bounce Festival Northern Ireland. Chris Ledger, Chief Executive ADF and Bounce Festival. We have been able to support the profiling of the partially blind dance artist Helen Hall who has been able to take part in the Unlimited Symposium and festival at the Southbank Centre in London. There is both a **video** and **blog**.

7) Unlimited

Working with the British Council Theatre & Dance Team we are also creating connections for Shannon Yee, a biracial Chinese/American disabled artist, based in Northern Ireland. Shannon's immersive audio show about her acquired brain injury, Reassembled, Slightly Askew (www.reassembled.co.uk) has been programmed for the Hong Kong Arts Festival in March 2019 and we are seeking new opportunities for Shannon's work to tour in Asia through access to **Unlimited** delegations including theatre, festivals and disability arts producers.

British Council annually supports the Unlimited project which is a groundbreaking three-year initiative that commissioned 29 new pieces of work by deaf and disabled artists from the UK. We supported five UK international collaborations with artists from seven countries which premiered in: Birmingham, Cambridge, Liverpool, Newcastle and Weymouth prior to a major showcase during the Paralympics, at the Southbank Centre, part of the London 2012 Festival.

The Unlimited Festival attracted live audiences of 20,000 people at ticketed and free events and engaged with an estimated 11,000 people through digital media. In addition, the international commissions we supported reached an audience of over 65,000 through websites, exhibitions and performances at venues across the UK. LOCOG has reported that the International Olympic Committee has recognised this as an extremely successful initiative.

Unlimited gave artists the opportunity to develop new skills and collaborate with international partners. It is anticipated that many of the artists, drawing on this experience, will develop new, exciting collaborations in the future. Feedback from participants showed that they had built confidence and connections, with over half saying they would like to initiate new international projects. Many artists who were involved have since accepted invitations to present their work as part of major festivals in South Africa, Brazil and Qatar, while five UK sector specialists will be

invited to speak or train at international events.

Unlimited is principally funded by the National Lottery through the Olympic Lottery Distributor, and delivered in partnership between London 2012, Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the British Council.

EDUCATION:

- **Inclusive Education Practices**

In the Education and Society team, the British Council is working together to mainstream principles of inclusive education in programmes and projects across our schools work and in our Continuous Professional Development Framework approach. Our aim in implementing inclusive practices in education is to contribute to supporting more inclusive education systems through transformational approaches that can make positive change based on a belief that every classroom and learning situation should be an inclusive one enabling and ensuring quality education for all.

We have a range of courses, resources and materials created for education projects for colleagues to use in supporting inclusive education. These include:

- A system level inclusion audit tool, completed by our recent publications: [Unlocking a World of Potential - Core Skills for All](#), and [Creating an inclusive learning experience for English language learners with specific needs](#);
- The [SEN \(Special Educational Needs\) Policy Toolkit](#), which outlines the British Council's key messaging around the education of children and young people with additional needs and includes a range of materials that facilitate understanding and discussion of access and engagement, enablement and empowerment, and the social versus medical model;
- [the inclusive pedagogies course](#);
- Our [TeachingEnglish Special Educational Needs modules](#), with self-access versions free for all British Council staff;
- The dedicated page on [inclusive practices](#) available on our TeachingEnglish website.

- **eTwinning Inclusion seminar (Impact: Inclusion and Diversity)**

This professional development seminar took place on 4th April 2017 entitled "How eTwinning and British Council school programmes support inclusion in Northern Ireland". This was part of a series of UK eTwinning policy-related seminars across the UK. All school education staff working in Northern Ireland were invited: Principals, vice principals, school governors, Education Authority advisers, teachers, classroom assistants and librarians.

Throughout 2017, the eTwinning programme dealt with a range of topics on inclusion. The scope of work involved included promotion of activities and projects that help all young people develop with appropriate knowledge,

understanding and skills for life.

This seminar showed audiences how eTwinning and British Council school programmes promote learning experiences which are relevant, enjoyable, cross-curricular, enquiry based and diverse for all pupils. Participants gained opportunities to join a highly diverse professional development network, learn about online and onsite CPD opportunities around the globe and learn how to use innovative ICT across the curriculum. They all also had the opportunity to interact with award winning practitioners and hear their stories.

- **China Day (Impact: Ethnic minorities language learning)**

On 31st May 2017, we hosted a China Day at the MAC, in partnership with the Confucius Institute at Ulster University. Through a range of presentations and workshops, 35 post-primary school leaders and practitioners learned about opportunities available through both partners to bring Mandarin language and Chinese culture to life in the classroom. Participants learned about Language Assistant opportunities and funding, heard from a past participant of our China Bridge professional development initiative, and took part in Chinese Knot and Calligraphy workshops, facilitated by the Confucius Institute.

The centrepiece of the event was the launch of the first ever Northern Ireland heat of the annual HSBC Mandarin Speaking Competition. Now in its 15th year, the competition has previously run in England and Scotland and offers a trip to Beijing for the overall winner. This first-time NI heat took place in Belfast in November, with schools invited to offer both individual and group entries. This provided a great, fun opportunity for students to practise and improve their Mandarin Chinese language skills. The competition helps to increase students' motivation for learning the language, develop vocabulary and improve pronunciation, raise confidence for oral examinations, encourage students to interact with their classmates and inspire students to discover more about Chinese culture.

The winning prize was a week in Beijing where students visit historical sites, interact with Chinese students and experience Chinese culture with the British Council, who have over twenty years' experience in running cultural exchanges with China.

- **Irish Language Assistants (Impact: Good relations)**

Irish Language Assistants (ILAs) has been on the decline for a number of years due to funding and other issues. We had set a target of ILAs in the International Education Programme contract for 2017/18 with none appointed in 2016/2017.

The British Council was very keen to increase numbers of schools applying for an ILA as well as the number of candidates applying. We ensured that the information on the programme was translated into Irish by working with a native Irish speaker and developed with the Communication Manager a marketing plan to promote the initiative using social media.

As a result, 10 applications were received and 3 requests from schools with 1

withdrawing at a later stage due to funding issues. Two ILAs have now been appointed to schools in 2017/2018.

- **Study USA Programme (Impact: Inclusion and Diversity)**

For the 2018-19 Study USA Cohort who travelled to the US over the period of August 2017-May 2018, we have the following declarations:

- 2 students indicated that they had dyslexia. Extra support whilst attending the US campus was requested and provided.
- 1 student indicated type 1 diabetes. We were not required to make any adjustments for this as the student was able to self-manage this.
- 1 student indicated they are a LGBT community member. We were not required to make any adjustments for this student.

PART A

3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes X No (go to Q.4) Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

Other *(please specify and give details):*

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- X No, has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The job descriptions and person specifications for advertised vacancies contain a statement of British Council Northern Ireland's commitment to its equal opportunity and good relations obligations under Section 75.

The following text appears in the role profile of all advertised vacancies:-

OUR EQUALITY COMMITMENT:

Valuing diversity is essential to the British Council's work. We aim to abide by and promote equality legislation by following both the letter and the spirit of it to try and avoid unjustified discrimination, recognising discrimination as a barrier to equality of opportunity, inclusion and human rights.

As an Equal Opportunities Employer, all job applicants are required to complete an Equal Opportunity and Diversity Monitoring Form. Provision of this information is voluntary and assists the British Council in its commitment to a policy of equal opportunity and the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunity in employment. The British Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community as we believe that a diverse workforce gives added depth to our work. We aim to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the basis of gender including transgender, marital status or civil partnership, sexual identity, religion and belief, political opinion, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, work pattern, age, disability or HIV/AIDS status, socio-economic background, spent convictions, trade union activity or membership, on the basis of having or not having dependants, or any other irrelevant grounds.

The British Council monitors all stages of our recruitment and selection process to ensure there is no potential for unjustified discrimination on irrelevant grounds. Our monitoring data is externally analysed each year, and recommendations are published and acted upon. All information supplied is treated in strict confidence and no identifying details are attached to it. It helps us to monitor and evaluate the success and application of our equal opportunity policy and diversity strategy and to compile anonymised statistics which are included within our formal reporting structures.

A specific requirement relating to Community Background is requested within the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Monitoring Form for applicants applying for posts that have the potential to be based in the Northern Ireland office whereby applicants are encouraged to declare their Community Background, regardless of which location they are applying from.

In 2017 an additional section has been added to the British Council application form for internal and external vacancies. This section states that the British Council operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for a vacancy. All disabled applicants are asked to confirm whether reasonable adjustments are required (and to specify the nature of those adjustments) at application stage.

We monitor the Community Background of our job applicants and employees in order to demonstrate our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity in employment and to comply with our duties under the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998.

The British Council has a Core Skills dictionary which sets out the skills which are required most often in roles throughout the British Council. They include a requirement for team leaders to coordinate a diverse team with awareness of equality and diversity impact as part of project specifications. The Dictionary also specifies that in all communications with internal and external audiences staff must demonstrate an awareness of a diverse audience in speaking and writing.

Likewise, our British Council behaviours were designed in consultation with staff and based on the attributes identified as essential to the Council's ongoing success. The Behaviours are intended to be used as an integral part of all recruitment and selection across the British Council. There are 6 behaviours, each with three requirement levels used to identify the degree of knowledge, skills and experience that is necessary to enable effective performance in the role. The 6 Behaviours are: Creating Shared Purpose, Connecting with Others, Working Together, Being Accountable, Making it Happen and Shaping the Future. Within the Connecting with Others Behaviour, applicants must demonstrate how they achieve understanding and trust in a culturally sensitive way, showing how they take steps to learn about other people, cultures and organisations and adjust their behaviour to respond to how other people think and behave in different cultures or environments.

All staff worldwide are required to ensure their behaviour is consistent with our policies.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this has already been done

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The British Council Behaviours form a core part of the formal performance planning and evaluation cycle. Within the Connecting with Others Behaviour, applicants must demonstrate how they achieve understanding and trust in a culturally sensitive way, showing how they take steps to learn about other people, cultures and organisations and adjust their behaviour to respond to how other people think and behave in different cultures or environments.

Staff are encouraged to dedicate a performance management deliverable to Equality Diversity and Inclusion and spend time thinking about what EDI means to them, their experiences and how they can improve their knowledge of EDI as well as how to put this into practice in the workplace. Staff are also encouraged to commit time to looking in detail on the intranet at our EDI Policy, Diversity Strategy and the British Council's approach to equality and diversity as well as discrimination legislation.

Marketing and Communications staff play a pivotal role in communicating our EDI commitment to our audiences by ensuring all images used in communications reflect diversity. They also must ensure access to our communications for disabled people and speakers of minority languages and implement changes to address inequalities.

Facilities staff must create the environment in which all customers and colleagues can feel safe and secure by ensuring all refurbishment projects incorporate communication of a clear message of inclusion and accessibility to a wide range of people, for example, disabled people and people with young children. In the Northern Ireland office, we took advice from Disability Action to support us in addressing access issues and ensuring personal evacuation plans are in place for anyone who might need additional support in the event of an emergency.

A member of the Northern Ireland staff is an active participant in our internal Disability Working Group. The group comprises of seven staff from across the UK who give 5% of their time to the group. They meet about six times a year and help us to take forward the disability related action points in our Integrated Equality Scheme and to generally keep disability on the corporate agenda.

Programme staff ensure that every participant attending our events feel welcomed and valued by checking all venues for accessibility issues. We also ensure that equality monitoring data (as a minimum in the areas of gender and age) for customers is carried out to identify under- and over-represented groups and results are discussed and acted upon in relation to the local context and local demographics. Programme staff also provide catering at all events that meets the diversity of participants.

Senior Managers' leadership role is critical to embedding our EDI principles by becoming involved in diversity initiatives and projects. They ensure that Equality Impact Assessments of key policies, programmes and services are carried out as required. Senior Managers ensure staff have EDI deliverables and undertake mandatory EDI training during the year. In general, senior managers champion EDI, promote the merits of a good work-life balance and initiate activities to back this up.

For all Northern Ireland staff, if they have a particular examples of how they have promoted equal opportunities and good relations in an aspect of their work, this is

championed throughout the Northern Ireland office and fed to our UK Diversity Team.

6 In the 2017-18 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan

Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning

Yes, in some departments/jobs

No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan

No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2017-18 report

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The British Council's five corporate values are at the heart of what we do and how we work. They are: Valuing People (specifically how we value diversity and respect), Integrity, Mutuality, Creativity and Professionalism.

The British Council's Corporate Plan outlines the organisation's intention to continue to enable the people of the UK to share their culture and way of life with over 600 million people and partners throughout the world, through the programme areas of Arts, Education and Society, and English. Promoting equality of opportunity and good relations is integrated into this intention. We set diversity targets in our Corporate Plan through the Diversity Assessment Framework (DAF). The UK target for 2019 is eight out of ten (an increase from our 2018 score of four out of ten).

We have developed mentoring programmes for women and have taken first steps towards more flexible deployment to help colleagues appointed locally to develop and progress into more senior roles.

We plan to adopt more flexible deployment to broaden opportunities for locally appointed staff and maximise the diversity of our workforce. This includes an intention to transition all staff at senior management level to a single SMT payband. The reason for this is to give greater flexibility to redeploy senior management staff at any time across all geographical locations without the barrier of grade and payband.

EDI is also mainstreamed into our Northern Ireland Country Plan. The Annual Corporate Plan outlines targets, successes to date and proposed outcomes against targets. Part of the remit to 'inspire, educate and teach is to be achieved by;-

- Continuing to develop the professional expertise of our staff across all areas
- Investing to develop our staff and attract talented new people to work with us globally.
- Continuing to be a diverse organisation that strives to reflect our society today – is

skilled in engaging with different cultures and follows best practice in equal opportunities and diversity

- Upholding the British Council values of valuing people, integrity, mutuality, creativity and professionalism.

We contribute to the UK government’s commitment to international development support for stability, economic development, reduced inequalities and good governance in developing, fragile and conflict-affected countries around the world, including those vital to the UK’s strategic interests. Our work will continue to align with the emerging post 2015 Development Agenda, in particular around poverty eradication, quality education, gender equality and sustainable development.

We are aware that globalisation is now affecting every part of the UK touching the lives of citizens, changing communities and shaping our economic futures. At the same time, the UK context is changing, with an increasing focus on the diversity of the UK and embracing the cultural strengths and involving people from across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, their regions and major cities. In order to make the greatest impact, we plan to tailor our programmes to contribute to the policy objectives of the UK as a whole and to meet the priorities of the four nations of the UK. We value the opportunity to make greater use of the diversity of the contemporary UK as an asset in itself.

In arts we plan to promote and scale up our innovative digital offer including the continued development of unique digital projects using our disability arts and diversity expertise.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2017-18 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Actions completed: | <input type="text"/> | Actions ongoing: | <input type="text" value="13"/> | Actions to commence: | <input type="text"/> |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

1) Ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is mainstreamed into our current practices (ongoing)

- Celebration of key diversity days throughout the year
- A document entitled “Building EDI into your work” has been circulated amongst staff which provides ideas on how to integrate EDI into everyday work, split by job type.
- A “Guide to Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity in Project Development and Delivery” has been circulated to all staff. This is a checklist for staff to use as guidance about how to mainstream equality and diversity principles and issues into the development, delivery and review of programme work in a more systematic and comprehensive way.
- EDI is mainstreamed into event management using guidance and accessibility checklist. Brand guidelines ensure documents and formats are fully accessible.

There is still more work to do to ensure that EDI is considered at all stages of programme delivery and to encourage an EDI deliverable to be inserted into all staff performance portfolios. Further EDI training is also planned in 2018-19.

2) Monitor data and data accuracy across all protected characteristics for staff within British Council Northern Ireland (ongoing)

The British Council's new global people data system **MyHR** was launched in the UK and Kenya on 6 December 2017. It is a centralised, global database for all of our HR information and includes instant access to accurate and up-to-date information supported by simplified and standardised processes. MyHR will also give us a clear picture of our global workforce and ensure all our HR work is delivered in a secure, compliant and risk-controlled manner. The new system enables users to:

- access, update and manage personal data securely
- book and manage leave easily
- search for colleagues, see the organisational structure and access accurate, up-to-date data in real time
- access the Employee Service Centre (AskHR) for HR advice and system issues
- receive timely automated reminders and guidance relating to specific global processes
- any time access via the MyHR mobile app

The MyHR platform will be up and running for all staff globally by the end of 2018.

Steps were taken to encourage staff to complete their personal data on the myHR system via a series of email reminders. Improvements were made to the system as a whole for assessing equality monitoring data for staff across all job bands. This has ensured that equality monitoring data is appropriately collected, kept up to date with as much consistency as possible, held as confidential sensitive data, and easily retrieved in a format for reporting purposes. We will continue to encourage staff to update this data on an ongoing basis.

3) Continue communication with HR team to improve system for obtaining external and internal job applicant data – to be obtained for full analysis and inclusion in annual and periodic monitoring reports (ongoing)

We have been working closely with our central HR department to clarify our specific monitoring requirements for Northern Ireland. All recruited posts which are (or have the potential to be) based in Northern Ireland are encouraged to complete an Equality Monitoring form which contains a specific question on community background.

Our central HR department must now retain all HR records for a minimum of 3 years of appointment date to ensure data is available for the 3 yearly periodic review.

Monitoring data is requested from HR for new starts or promotees twice yearly and is recorded locally on a protected spreadsheet. We have applied the residuary method to 5 staff this year using a formalised approach and again this data is recorded locally.

4) Improve communication on EDI updates, news and best practice to all British

Council Northern Ireland staff (ongoing)

A dedicated Equality Manager in the Northern Ireland office communicates with staff to increase awareness of EDI issues. Staff are kept up to date with key EDI issues and dates on an ongoing basis. Colleagues subscribing to the global diversity mailbase are kept informed of ongoing issues and there have been Staff Bulletin notices and global staff talks around International Women's Day, International Day of Disabled People, Black History Month, International Day of Older People, etc. Further communication and training schedules are planned in 2018-19.

An EDI toolkit is being used on a regular basis and is located for all staff and visitors to access as and when necessary. The Toolkit contains all corporate and Northern Ireland specific EDI documents. There is also a range of documents on event management and ideas on how to mainstream EDI into everyday work. There is also a section on useful resources including accessibility guides for venues across Northern Ireland, links to interfaith calendars and international diversity days, lists of nearby places of worship for staff and visitors, and links to EDI training courses. Feedback from staff suggests this is a very useful tool and helps keep all important EDI documents in one accessible place. The Toolkit will continue to be updated on an ad hoc basis.

5) Revise EDI training plan for all British Council Northern Ireland staff (ongoing)

Aside from the various EDI related webinars throughout the year, four face to face training sessions took place in the Northern Ireland office this year (see Q2 for more details):

- Gender Equality Training (Jan 2018)
- JAM Card Training (Dec 2017)
- Session on EDI in Northern Ireland and the work of Outburst (LGBTQ+) (Dec 2017)
- Access to the WE EDI Team meeting sessions (June 2017)

This training was well attended and feedback was extremely positive. The most important outcome of the training was that staff are still unsure about the correct terminology and etiquette to use when dealing with gender and disability issues. Each training session created a meaningful debate among staff on all aspects of gender and disability and to raise awareness of how often unacceptable terms are used in ignorance.

The training plan is being revised for 2018-19, with the intention of an indepth Equality and Section 75 training session to be delivered by a representative from the Equality Commission.

6) Reasonable Adjustments - record and monitor annual data on number of reasonable adjustment requests received and actioned (internally and externally). Remain vigilant of issues affecting disabled staff and customers and ensure an accessible environment (ongoing)

We have designed an Access Sheet for use when planning events. There is a template form attached to our Global Reasonable Adjustments Policy and a good practice form linked to our Disability Assessment Framework that is used in various

offices to record reasonable adjustments requests.

The Disability Working Group is looking at ways to log these requests centrally and keep a record of how they are addressed in order to help deal with future requests.

We have a contact with a senior member of staff at Disability Action whom we use as a reference point and we also receive Disability Action's monthly Ezine which helps us keep abreast of issues affecting disabled people across Northern Ireland.

7) Action to help make progress towards the protected characteristics targets, particularly in senior management (ongoing)

We have developed mentoring programmes for women and have taken first steps towards more flexible deployment to help colleagues appointed locally to develop and progress into more senior roles.

We plan to adopt more flexible deployment to broaden opportunities for locally appointed staff and maximise the diversity of our workforce. We have transitioned all staff at senior management level to a single SMT payband. The reason for this was to give greater flexibility to redeploy senior management staff at any time across all geographical locations without the barrier of grade and payband.

As a means of increasing the number of disabled staff across the organisation, recruitment teams have specifically addressed the issue of broadening access to those with disability by establishing contracts with specialist diversity recruiters (such as Employability, Equal Approach, Diversity Jobs) using accredited diverse talent specialists, working across a range of diverse strands including; Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion, Generational, Transgender, Obesity, Education, Class, Working Parents and Carers. This has broadened access not only to those with disability but groups across the range of protected characteristics. In line with the British Council EDI strategy these efforts shall continue until targets have been met to address areas of under representation and remove any possible barriers to equality of opportunity. By respecting and valuing diversity we are more likely to attract talent and fresh perspectives, nurture creativity, innovation and flexibility and new opportunities and sources of support, so we remain relevant and dynamic and achieve greater reach and impact.

All staff are encouraged to declare their disability on the online HR portal and as a result there has been an increase in the response rate.

When advertising for vacancies, British Council recruitment processes ensure reasonable adjustment is actioned for candidates with disability or special needs. We also display the 'positive about disabled people' logo on all recruitment advertisements and our web pages, and offer a guaranteed interview to all disabled applicants meeting our recruitment criteria.

Across the organisation, although there have been increases in progress towards the disability and gender targets there has been little progress towards the ethnicity targets despite concerted efforts. Research was conducted that led to focus groups and then a series of 'master-classes' targeted at minority ethnic colleagues with an aim to increase professional confidence.

Within the Northern Ireland office specifically, we seek ways to increase the percentage of ethnic minority staff which is currently low (although this most likely

reflect the low percentage in the local population) but this is a group which we could target when recruiting.

The age profile of staff will continue to be regularly monitored to ensure there are no barriers to staff in the 51+ age group. We also will consider opportunities for disabled people to work for the British Council Northern Ireland for example through work experience or internship programmes.

8) External Monitoring – monitoring of customers from the protected characteristic groups taking active part in programmes and activities offered by the British Council Northern Ireland (ongoing)

A questionnaire covering all section 75 protected groups is sent to all external customers across a number of programmes. The data has been recorded on a central spreadsheet and patterns and trends identified. Underrepresentation has not been identified in any category, although we have seen a greater participation rate in our education programmes amongst grammar schools over secondary schools which we will find ways to address. We will continue to monitor our customers throughout 2018 and will address any underrepresentation as it arises.

9) Recruitment and induction – encourage job applications from a diverse audience and an understanding of EDI from the outset (ongoing)

The Disability Advisory Forum offers a recruitment audit service that will assess the accessibility recruitment processes and procedures offering support and guidance where needs have been identified. This is also an avenue which should be further explored and disseminated to staff. As part of the general HR process, all line managers are required to perform exit interviews on all staff who leave the organisation. This highlights any EDI related issues that may be raised and action taken.

All new staff- both permanent and temporary receive comprehensive induction training which includes an explanation of duties/responsibilities as they apply under Section 75. All new staff are given a copy of our Equality Scheme and EDI training is carried out during induction process as part of the general HR procedures. All new staff are also given a copy of the booklet "[Welcome to the British Council](#)" which contains full information on our EDI Policy.

We will seek to establish contacts with specialist diversity recruiters in Northern Ireland using accredited diverse talent specialists, working across a range of diverse strands including; Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion, Generational, Transgender, Obesity, Education, Class, Working Parents and Carers. This will broaden access not only to those with disability but groups across the range of protected characteristics.

10) Support the British Council global society agenda work (ongoing)

The British Council will continue to strengthen our support for growth in developing countries by promoting the rule of law and through programmes which deliver access to justice, equality and a reduction in violence against women and girls. We aim to develop the skills, confidence and life chances of women and girls through personal

development opportunities and training for female community leaders. We will provide access to skills in social entrepreneurship, the creative economy and the English language, support professional skills and career development for female scientists and amplify women and girls' voices and engagement through creative experiences. Build the UK's global reputation as a world leader in social enterprise, engaging with governments around the world to influence policy and embed the teaching of social enterprise into education systems. We will seek to support social and creative enterprises to grow and access social investment in order to enhance impact and demonstrate the UK's leadership in this area.

11) Ensure all suppliers are aware of our EDI policy and they too have similar policies. Ensure the diversity clause appears in the main body of contracts. (ongoing)

In addition to building in reference to diversity to the supply of contracted goods and services across the reporting period, the British Council's standard contract template has been commissioned and overseen by the Legal team. The team has ensured that the contract includes specific reference to Equality Legislation and the British Council's own policies - including a link to our Policies website, which includes the Equality Policy. This template is used by colleagues across the organisation for procurement of goods and services. The template itself can be found on the contracts portal, with a copy uploaded to the departmental EDI SharePoint site for ease of reference.

The two specific clauses are:

"British Council Requirements" means the instructions, requirements, policies, codes of conduct, guidelines, forms and other documents notified to the Partner in writing or set out on the British Council's website at [Policies for Consultants](#) or such other web address as may be notified to the Partner from time to time (as such documents may be amended, updated or supplemented from time to time during the Term);"

"Equality Legislation" means any and all legislation, applicable guidance and statutory codes of practice relating to diversity, equality, non-discrimination and human rights as may be in force from time to time in England and Wales or in any other territory in which, or in respect of which, the Partner performs its obligations in this Agreement;"

12) Promote British Council EDI strategy externally to stakeholders (customers, audiences, students, candidates, alumni, partners, programme participants, etc) (ongoing)

The British Council published a case study in CIPD's publication on "Addressing Barriers on employee career progression to the top". This included research into barriers to career progression facing staff from ethnic minority backgrounds and ran masterclasses to provide information on how to help address them. **See Appendix for full report.**

13) Monitoring of Selection Panels, Working Groups and Monitoring Committees to ensure representation of as many S75 categories as possible (ongoing)

- An annual review of the Board of Trustees is carried out every year, including a request for feedback put to all Board and Executive members on "The mix of skills, experience, knowledge and diversity on the Board and the use made of those skills".

PART A

- Equality monitoring reports are run on the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee which provide valuable insight into the profiles of our committees and country offices.
- A review of the diversity of the Boards of Directors of the British Council's subsidiary companies was conducted by an external consultant, which led to a change in advertised role profiles
- A review of recruitment to Country Committees and Sector Advisory Groups was carried out by the Governance team, resulting in standardised recruitment for all roles, making recruitment fairer and more transparent and creating the opportunity for these groups to become more diverse.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2017-18 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

None

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2017-18 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (*tick one box only*)

- All the time Sometimes Never

11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2017-18 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

In accordance with the commitments made in our Equality Scheme we recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. We consult as a matter of form on our equality scheme, equality impact assessments action measures and any other matters deemed relevant to Section 75 Statutory duties.

We carry out our consultation in accordance with the principles contained in the

Equality Commissions' guidance Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (2010). All consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our staff and such other groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest. We consider the accessibility and format of consultation we use in order to remove barriers to the consultation process.

Specific consideration is given to how best to communicate with people with disabilities, including people with learning disabilities and minority ethnic communities. Information is made available, on request, in alternative formats in a timely manner. We ensure that such consultees have equal time to respond.

We provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report is prepared which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of consultees' comments and a summary of our consideration of and response to consultees' input. The feedback is provided in formats suitable to consultees.

Internally, HR visit each region and conduct climate surveys on staff 'wellbeing'. This provides a forum for staff to meet face-to-face with a HR colleague, share viewpoints and outline what 'wellbeing' in its broadest context meant to them as a British Council employee. Follow up communication was circulated to staff outlining next steps and action measures.

Externally, feedback is sought from service users on all our programmes many of which are schools or college programs. The views of participants (children, teenagers and young adults) are taken into consideration directly and indirectly via teachers and program directors and help shape development and direction of future programmes and services.

The British Council Northern Ireland offers a number of internships each year to enable a group of interns to see and experience the work of the British Council at first hand and champion the value of cultural relations.

The objectives of the internship scheme is as follows:

- To offer structured work experience placements within a specific business area to a group of interns
- To give a real introduction to the field of cultural relations to a group of interns
- To enable British Council departments to get support and benefit from a different perspective on their work

As part of the Internship programme, interns attend a three day corporate induction before joining a specific department for twelve weeks. They have a line manager and are set specific deliverables during their stay. In addition, they also undertake a group project which they present to staff and stakeholders at the end of the programme.

Work experience programmes are also managed for approximately ten school students a year and approximately five for higher education students. This scheme is co-ordinated by a local manager affording students the opportunity to gain insights into the broad remit of learning and development opportunities available according to their interests.

PART A

12 In the 2017-18 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- Face to face meetings
- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other *(please specify)*:

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

We have an extensive list of consultees from across a wide range of organisations across all the Section 75 groups. See Appendix for full list.

We ensure accessibility of all documentation by making all documents available in alternative formats on request. All documentation is also accessible on our website.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

We informed the general public about the availability of this material through press releases where appropriate

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

PART A

[<https://nireland.britishcouncil.org/about/equal-opportunities-diversity>]

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

| |
|---|
| 9 |
|---|

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2017-18:

| | |
|---|--|
| 9 | Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented. |
| | Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented. |
| | Consultations for an EQIA alone. |

17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

[ESIA: HR Mediation Policy](#)

[ESIA: Future Leaders Connect](#)

[ESIA: Refreshed EDI Strategy](#)

[ESIA: Work shadowing in Chief Exec's office](#)

[ESIA: Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)

[ESIA: Modern Language Assistant Application form](#)

[ESIA: Adults at Risk Policy](#)

[ESIA: Managing redundancy and organisational restructuring](#)

[ESIA: Science Research Programme](#)

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (*tick one box only*)

action measures and current progress.

- 23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

None

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2017-18, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

See Q2 for training undertaken in 2017-18.

We have in place a communication and training programme for all staff and continued to ensure that our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties was made clear in all relevant publications.

We ensure that staff are informed of interesting and relevant stories or case study examples of particular issues affecting people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme.

Our training plan for staff achieved the following objectives:

- raised awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our equality scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme
- provided those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and Equality Impact Assessment) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
- provided those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively
- provided those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
- provided those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the British Council Northern Ireland's equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

All British Council Northern Ireland staff and the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee have a copy of the Equality Scheme and were invited to comment on it. All new staff- both permanent and temporary has received comprehensive induction training which included explanation of duties/responsibilities as they apply under Section 75.

A document 'Mainstreaming Disability and Accessibility Awareness into Event Management' is circulated to all programme teams to support and facilitate participation of those with special needs in all British Council open programmes and events.

An Accessibility Access form has been devised and circulated to all staff which contains important issues to consider to ensure support for participants with disabilities. All venues for British Council events are checked for accessibility and related services. The British Council policy clearly mandates they will react to specific needs which includes those requiring or requesting Personal Readers, Infra red or induction loops, Guiders, Braille, Lip Speakers, Temporary wheelchair access lifts, and Sign Language Interpreters.

Additionally there is an anticipatory duty across the following categories: Mobility, Hearing impairment, Visual impairment, Learning disabilities and difficulties, mental health and severe disfigurement. Consideration is made for religious or cultural request such as the availability of rooms for prayer and special dietary needs.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training is incorporated into local Induction Training programmes which covers all legal requirements under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Section 75 statutory duties.

EDI is an inherent component of regular British Council online training which is a mandatory requirement and all staff must complete on an annual basis.

The Diversity Unit has created a document which includes tips to help anyone that designs or modifies websites to have web accessibility in mind. When designing a website it is important to realise how people with disabilities use the Web, what difficulties they may face and how to assist them in overcoming those difficulties.

In an attempt to raise office awareness of Diversity, we marked and celebrated some key international diversity days throughout the year and organised regional diversity weeks across our global network that have helped staff and external audiences engage with diversity issues in a new way.

Also, as the British Council offer so many courses and programmes via web links, they are constantly growing and being updated. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) is available for those designing a website which outlined advice on making the site more easily accessible to older people. Included also is a template for accessibility evaluation reports to assess if needs are being met.

We have produced a document with information for Intranet users who are visually impaired and/or who would prefer to change the appearance of the intranet pages to make them more accessible.

The Northern Ireland office has a dedicated Equality Manager who is specifically responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of their obligations in meeting the requirements of/developments within Section 75 and the commitments of our equality scheme. The Equality Manager is our direct

link to other parts of the UK to ensure that our legislative requirements specific to Northern Ireland are incorporated into all policies and processes.

As a means of raising awareness of LGBT issues the British Council created the Five Films For Freedom Campaign. This was the world's first global, digital LGBT film festival initiated by the British Council and the British Film Institute and runs annually in March. The campaign seeks to promote freedom, equality and LGBT rights in 135 countries across the social media network and all staff are invited to a screening of the films annually.

Our Global Diversity Network is made up of two or more representatives from each region, who work with the Diversity Unit in a formalised way. They support their management teams in each region to mainstream equality and diversity in all our practices. They have expertise and understanding of the different cultures and contexts in which they work, so they can ensure our corporate diversity initiatives are meaningful and relevant and can be applied in each region. The GDN share ideas and good practice using a GDN mailbase. This is a mailing list that all staff interested in finding out more about equality and diversity can subscribe to. It is a place for sharing good practice, asking for advice from other colleagues and joining in debates and discussions about topical issues related to global equality and diversity so that we can all learn from each other around equality and diversity.

- 25** Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

Feedback from staff showed that the online mandatory Equal Opportunities and Diversity training is clear and informative.

The Gender Equality Training (Jan 2018) was very well received by staff and sparked an interesting debate about gender issues which are pertinent in the news at present.

The involvement of case studies is also extremely beneficial in helping staff understand EDI issues. We invited Ruth McCarthy (Outburst) to speak at an all staff meeting this year (also including our Director of Strategy & Engagement) to reinforce understanding of LGBTQ+ issues. This approach was extremely informative for staff and therefore is something we will replicate in the future.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2017-18, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

The Communications team on an ongoing basis prioritise links to specific platforms to meet identified demand thus increasing accessibility to relevant programmes and information eg a 'Frontier room' link existed for the C2K teachers online platform to ensure relevant British Council programme information is more easily accessible to all primary and secondary teachers across Northern Ireland.

An alerts communication is emailed to schools outlining upcoming events or programme opportunities, thus capturing a broader audience and increasing participation levels

We measure how people view the quality of our work in three main ways:

- Scores from a customer satisfaction survey distributed both at face-to-face events and online.
- Responses to a question asked mainly of teaching centre students and examinations candidates to find out the extent to which they feel they have acquired new knowledge or skills
- A net recommendation score, which is a measure of the willingness of participants to recommend others to work with us or use our services. The net percentage is calculated from advocates minus detractors, in line with standard international practice.

This year we had feedback on levels of satisfaction from nearly 250,000 people involved in a wide range of our programmes. Our customer satisfaction score in 2014-15 increased from 82 to 83, meaning that the significant majority of our customers fall within the range where they agree or strongly agree that our programmes are of high quality. The net recommendation score of customers who would recommend the British Council increased from 52 to 54 (threshold -100 to +100) which compares well with external benchmarks. Current Annual Report :

www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/reports-documents

While programmes are open to all sections of the community, the uptake and participation rates are monitored to determine if positive action can be taken to increase participation amongst those from disadvantaged areas or those from minority groups. We plan to formalise this process in more detail in 2018 (see Question 29).

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2015-16?

Insert number here:

| |
|---|
| 0 |
|---|

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

No complaints were raised this year.

As part of our response to the Triennial Review, the Executive Board decided to procure the services of an independent company to investigate and review complaints about British Council services, and make recommendations to us for remedial action and/or product and service improvements. After a public procurement exercise, we have now selected a company called Verita to run this service for us. Verita has a strong track record of carrying out independent complaints services in the public sector, and they run a similar service for Arts Council England and the Lottery Forum – so we are pleased to have them on board.

The service will cover complaints in all areas of our operational work, including related issues such as fair competition, service delivery and product content. Verita will interview relevant parties, including British Council staff who have been most closely involved with the case, to assess whether we have acted in accordance with our Corporate Plan, policy statements and guidance.

Most complaints are resolved at working contact level, but where they're not satisfactorily concluded, our process for escalation will vary around our network of offices. Teams have been working on refining our escalation process to make it clear what should happen at each stage of a complainant's journey, and who will be responsible at each level. Where a complainant is dissatisfied with our internal conclusions following the escalation process, we will offer, in fact encouraging, the option of a final independent review via Verita.

The aim is to hear what people are saying and learn lessons from it. This could potentially give us a lot of management information that we are not currently accessing; help us to improve our products and services, as well as build confidence in our stakeholders and customers that their concerns are properly taken into account.

Section 3: Looking Forward

28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

Dec 2019

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (*please provide details*)

- Monitoring

1) External: In 2017-18 we conducted a formal equality audit of our beneficiaries through the use of a Monitoring Questionnaire based around the nine Section 75 groups. This allowed us to gain a better insight into what groups taking active part in all programmes and activities offered by the British Council. The results were collated and analysed we identified that there was a slight underrepresentation of customers throughout our programmes from the protestant community. We also established that there was an overrepresentation of grammar schools participating in our programmes over secondary schools. We will continue to monitor our beneficiaries in 2018-19 to see if and how the pattern changes and will work with relevant programme managers to seek opportunities to promote greater equality of opportunity and will look at our current policies.

2) Internal: UK wide we are making efforts to reach a target of 100% response rate on online HR portal for staff as well as Northern Ireland Advisory Committee (NIAC) and Board of Trustees to record their personal monitoring data.

With regards to global staff monitoring, there are several areas in our organisation where there is diversity and good representation. There is a wide age range of staff and good diversity in relation to religion or belief, with staff from the six main religions or beliefs and of no religion or belief.

Although the percentage of LGB staff is lower than last year, it is slightly higher than for UK-contracted staff overall. There are staff with a variety of dependants and also with no dependants. There is also a higher percentage of staff taking up the option for reduced hours (part-time) than last year (15.6%, an increase from 10.2%) and it is positive that they are working in paybands 7 to senior level. There has been a decrease of staff on fixed term contracts.”

Areas for action relate to gender (we are very female dominated), ethnicity, disability, contract status and improving our disclosure rates.

The Equality Monitoring intranet site has been revised. The site contains a new animation about how and why we carry out equality monitoring at the British Council, plus guidance on carrying out equality monitoring, our 12 top tips to consider before embarking on equality monitoring, and links to the latest UK equality monitoring reports and some of the good examples of equality monitoring carried out in different country offices. See all guides here: www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/how-we-work/equality-diversity-inclusion/resources

- **Underrepresentation**

We will continue to seek to find ways to further increase the underrepresented groups in senior management (women, ethnic minorities and disabled staff). We will seek to establish contacts with specialist diversity recruiters in Northern Ireland using accredited diverse talent specialists, working across a range of diverse strands including; Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion, Generational, Transgender, Obesity, Education, Class, Working Parents and Carers. This will broaden access not only to those with disability but groups across the range of protected characteristics. The Disability Advisory Forum offers a recruitment audit service that will assess the accessibility recruitment processes and procedures offering

support and guidance where needs have been identified. This is also an avenue which should be further explored and disseminated to staff.

We have developed mentoring programmes for women and have taken first steps towards more flexible deployment to help colleagues appointed locally to develop and progress into more senior roles.

We plan to adopt more flexible deployment to broaden opportunities for locally appointed staff and maximise the diversity of our workforce. This includes an intention to transition all staff at senior management level to a single SMT payband. The reason for this is to give greater flexibility to redeploy senior management staff at any time across all geographical locations without the barrier of grade and payband.

Within the Northern Ireland office specifically, we will seek ways to increase the percentage of ethnic minority staff which is currently low (although this most likely reflect the low percentage in the local population) but this is a group which we could target when recruiting. The age profile of staff should continue to be regularly monitored and ensuring there are no barriers to staff in the 51+ age group. We also will consider opportunities for disabled people to work for the British Council Northern Ireland for example through work experience or internship programmes. Across the global network, there are plans in place to roll out the minority ethnic masterclass model beyond the London office.

- **Gender Research**

In 2018-19 the British Council is conducting research on [Womens Power and Politics](#) to mark the centenary of women achieving the vote in the UK, and as such our research team will be gathering evidence and case studies, conducting interviews and hoping to host a number of roundtables, including one in each of the four nations of the UK. A roundtable for Northern Ireland will convene in Belfast on 30 April 2018. The list of invitees aims to be as representative and diverse as possible, covering Combines Authorities, Local Government and NGOs working in the political participation and representation sector.

This piece of research will consider the advances that have been made for women's political participation, power and leadership in the UK as well as considering the persisting challenges and contrasting and comparing this with the situation in other countries. The British Council will use its unique platform for dialogue, mutual exchange and learning between UK and international stakeholders to acknowledge how progress has been achieved and the actions needed to delivery gender equality in political power and representation.

- **Reasonable Adjustments**

We will record and monitor annual data on number of reasonable adjustment requests actioned (internally and externally) and in 2018 will look to find the most efficient way of achieving this in collaboration with the British Council Disability Working Group. We will also assess the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments made using a formalised approach.

- **Diversity Strategy**

- 1) We will focus our efforts on increasing the Diversity Assessment Framework score target from 4 out of 10 indicators to 8 out of 10. The next deadline for submissions is February 2019.
- 2) In British Council Northern Ireland we plan to support the British Council global society agenda work by identifying opportunities from the Northern Ireland equality sector expertise and knowledge which could be of interest to an international audience.

- **Training & Communications**

- 1) Further staff training has been planned throughout 2018-19 throughout the UK.
- 2) We will encourage all staff to create an EDI deliverable in their performance portfolio for 2018-19 find ways to ensure EDI is mainstreamed across the office.
- 3) We will seek ways of further improving communications with staff on EDI updates. As well as the Annual Report, Corporate Plan, dedicated EDI web pages, we intend to meet more regularly with leaders of all SBUs in the Northern Ireland office regarding the impact of EDI on their work programmes in order to re-affirm our commitment to and awareness of EDI responsibilities and Section 75 duties.

- **Consultation**

We will consider a more focussed consultation strategy through the use of press releases, direct mail shots and possibly focus groups to groups representing the various categories in Section 75 and will continue to revise our consultation list on a regular basis.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2018-19) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

PART B

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

Fully achieved

Partially achieved

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

| Level | Public Life Action Measures | Outputs ⁱ | Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| National ⁱⁱⁱ | Ensure the Disability Symbol is displayed on all job advertisements to show commitment to employment and retention of those with disability. | | As evidenced in recruitment records, this has been achieved. |
| Regional ^{iv} | | | |
| Local ^v | Identify a local 'diversity champion' who can co-ordinate with an established diversity working group to facilitate training, communication, and adherence to EDI principles providing feedback | A dedicated Equality Manager acts as a link between local staff and EDI staff in other offices. | This has enhanced existing support and enabled more regular communication and training for NI staff. This has also enabled tighter monitoring of desired outcomes against |

PART B

| | | | |
|--|---|--|----------|
| | to teams locally on disability and EDI organisational and local issues. | | targets. |
|--|---|--|----------|

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

| | Training Action Measures | Outputs | Outcome / Impact |
|---|---|---------|--|
| 1 | Disability Action Plan to be included in disability awareness training and equal opportunity diversity training | | Increased awareness of issues facing those with disability |
| 2 | Ensure EDI Disability Issues are covered with permanent and temporary staff, completing e-learning modules at the initial induction process. Locally, automatically incorporated into permanent and temporary staff induction and currently covered in Induction Health and Safety Training. Extend to all contractors, consultants and interns also. | | Raised awareness by incorporating into short term temporary staff and intern/student placement inductions and communication to business partners |

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

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| | Communications Action Measures | Outputs | Outcome / Impact |
|---|--|---------|---|
| 1 | Mainstreaming Disability and Accessibility Awareness into Event Management - guidelines are circulated to all event management teams. | | Increased awareness of measures which can be taken to facilitate participation in events by those with disability. |
| 2 | Shared Action Plans with all recruitment managers and teams to help make progress towards achieving disability targets for both new positions, moves or promotions | | Monitored progress percentages and target achievement |
| 3 | Ensure appropriate and accurate collation of monitoring data UK wide and provide in an appropriate format for reporting and monitoring purposes. | | Significant progress has been made in improving the retention and output of data by central HR on an ad hoc basis. |
| 4 | Development of more robust systems for maintaining equality monitoring data on internal and external job applicants facilitating easy and accurate retrieval via hub UK systems. | | All NI Specific jobs or jobs where there is any potential to be based in Northern Ireland have community background assigned. Production of data by central teams is still much improved and can be retrieved much more easily. |

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to 'encourage others' to promote the two duties:

PART B

| | Encourage others Action Measures | Outputs | Outcome / Impact |
|---|----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| | | | |

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

| | Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures) | Outputs | Outcomes / Impact |
|---|---|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| | | | |

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

| | Action Measures partly achieved | Milestonesvi / Outputs | Outcomes/Impacts | Reasons not fully achieved |
|---|--|------------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | As members of the Business Disability Forum communicate more broadly to staff members what this means and what they offer i.e. membership provides; an evaluation of the Disability Standard, consultative advice, tailored training | | | Members will feed back current issues to the Global Diversity Network who will disseminate this in order to broaden scope for participation by those with disability – job |

PART B

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| | and master classes and a content license for our full range of toolkits available for member distribution. | | | applicants, staff members, programme users and business partners. |
| 2 | Sharing of affirmative recruitment measures/action taken to increase job applications from disabled people by use of specialist recruitment partners. | | | Limited opportunities to do so due to so few externally placed ads, however we did advertise the post for Chair Northern Ireland Advisory Committee role was placed on the WIPNI and Women on Boards UK websites in an attempt to encourage applications from females in senior positions. |

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

| | Action Measures not met | Reasons |
|---|-------------------------|---------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| | | |

PART B

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Feedback from staff, Business Disability Forum, recruiting managers, Diversity Unit and HR department.

(b) Quantitative

Feedback from customers using event evaluation forms.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

No

If yes please outline below:

| | Revised/Additional Action Measures | Performance Indicator | Timescale |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |

PART B

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation’s annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

No changes to the Disability Action Plan will be made until the existing actions are fully complete

-
- ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.
 - ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.
 - ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments
 - ^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level
 - ^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.
 - ^{vi} **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.