



Northern Ireland Screen

Disability Action Plan

(Updated: November 2015)

**Drawn up in accordance with Sections 49A and 49B of
the Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

**as amended by the Disability Discrimination
(Northern Ireland) Order 2006**

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Access to information

As part of our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations, we want to ensure that everyone is able to access the documents we produce. We would therefore be happy to provide any of the information in this document in alternative formats on request.

Contact details

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1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The disability duties

- 1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and further amended by the Autism Act (NI) 2011, Northern Ireland Screen¹ is required, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to –
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
 - encourage participation by disabled people in public life (‘the disability duties’);
 - seeking advice from specialist disability groups/organisation with regard to the best ways of effectively engaging with disabled individuals.
- 1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, Northern Ireland Screen is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a disability action plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.
- 1.3 The initial disability action plan was submitted to the Equality Commission in June 2007 and the action measures were designed to be undertaken during the following 12 months. The disability action plan was updated in June 2015 and was the subject of consultation over a 12 week period concluding 11th September 2015. This final version of the updated action plan sets out the actions taken since the publication of the original plan and the new actions which will be undertaken over the next three years.

Functions of Northern Ireland Screen

- 1.4 Northern Ireland Screen is a company limited by guarantee, governed by a Board of fourteen directors. Northern Ireland Screen is the government-backed lead agency in Northern Ireland for the film, television and digital content industry, driving global growth through boosting our economy, celebrating our culture and enhancing our children’s education.

¹ The name “Northern Ireland Screen” was adopted in 2007 to replace “Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission”. The responsibilities of the organisation remained the same.

The organisation is funded by Invest NI and part financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure.

- 1.5 In support of our mission, to accelerate the development of a dynamic and sustainable screen industry and culture in Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Screen embarked on its new 4-year strategy, Opening Doors in 2014. Creating opportunities across the full range of the screen industries is the central theme of the Strategy and is the most effective means of ensuring that opportunities in the screen industries are open to the widest possible range of people.

Northern Ireland Screen's primary areas of activity are -

- Film development and production funding; production logistics support;
- Marketing to promote Northern Ireland as a base for production;
- Development support initiatives for local production companies;
- Irish language Broadcast Fund;
- Ulster Scots Broadcast Fund;
- Skills Development for the industry;
- Information services for producers and others;
- Moving image education policy development;
- Developing access to the audiovisual heritage of Northern Ireland; and
- Specialised film exhibition development.

Public life positions

- 1.6 Appointments to the Board of Northern Ireland Screen are made by the Department for Culture, Arts & Leisure (DCAL) through an open recruitment process. However, within the context of the duty to encourage disabled people to participate in public life, we acknowledge our role in ensuring that disabled people are aware of opportunities to join the Board, currently there are no Board members who have declared a disability. Northern Ireland Screen's offices are fully accessible and if requested, we will provide any of the information for Board meetings in alternative formats.

- 1.7 In addition, we acknowledge that the disability duties relate not only to formal public appointments but also to the way in which disabled people contribute to or are involved in policy decision making or decisions relating to the way in which public authorities carry out their functions. We will therefore, as a matter of course, consider ways to encourage disabled people to participate in any consultative, discussion or working groups we may establish in the course of our work. In support of achieving this goal, Northern Ireland Screen will consult with groups/organisations whose purpose is to change Government policy and attitudes in partnership with disabled people.

Statement of commitment

- 1.8 As Chairwoman and Chief Executive of Northern Ireland Screen, we are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will allocate all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement this plan effectively and, where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans.
- 1.9 We have already put in place appropriate internal arrangements to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and that the disability action plan is implemented effectively. We will ensure the effective communication of the updated plan to staff and provide all necessary training and guidance for staff on the disability duties and the implementation of the updated plan.
- 1.10 We are committed to engaging effectively with disabled people in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this disability action plan and to ensuring that consultation is inclusive and targeted. We will ensure that appropriate methods are used for all consultation (in line with the guiding principles set out in the Equality Commission guidance on Section 75) and that a period of at least 12 weeks is allowed.
- 1.11 The Northern Ireland Screen Board will be responsible for the effective implementation of this disability action plan. The Chief Executive will be accountable to the Board for the implementation, review and evaluation of the plan. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services

will be the point of contact in relation to the plan; her contact details are:

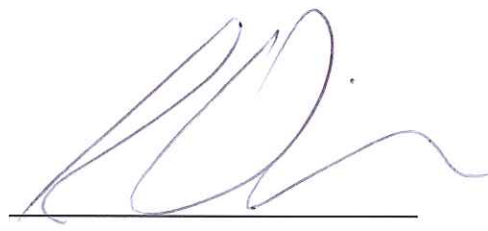
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1.12 We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual progress report on the implementation of this plan to the Equality Commission and carrying out a further review in three years time.

1.13 A copy of this plan, our annual progress reports to the Equality Commission and related equality documents are available on our website: www.northernirelandscreen.co.uk



Rotha Johnston
Chairwoman



Richard Williams
Chief Executive

2. PREVIOUS MEASURES TAKEN

2.1 Prior to the publication of the second disability action plan, we had already taken a number of actions to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life, including –

- ***Communication***

We reviewed the accessibility of our website and explored opportunities to increase accessibility for disabled people; this included simplifying the layout and search function of our Digital Film Archive website so that it was more accessible for disabled people. We reviewed the application of Plain English in our public documents and corporate standards and concluded that these were 100% compliant. We also had an obligation to provide documents in alternative formats on request, none were requested. We did not consider provision of easy read documents but this option will be offered in the future on request. We undertook to notify organisations representing disabled people of impending training courses, employment opportunities, etc. We also raised awareness among staff of the need to increase the number of relevant positive images of disabled people in future publications and ensure that such images are gathered and held on file.

- ***Access***

We undertook to review the locations where our public events are held and ensure that they are fully accessible to disabled people and where appropriate ensure that a signer is available at public events. We raised awareness among staff of the need to provide information on parking for disabled people when planning public events and included emergency evacuation procedures in relation to disabled people in Health and Safety training and equality / disability training.

- ***Training and awareness raising***

We provided refresher training for all staff to promote awareness and commitment to disability equality and one member of staff completed a course in British Sign Language. We would have been supportive of any staff member expressing an interest in completing a course in Irish Sign Language, but no request was received in the period. A small number of participants on Northern Ireland Screen programmes have

declared a disability and increased awareness amongst staff has resulted in adjustments being made to accommodate their disability.

- ***Employment***

We undertook to ensure all reasonable adjustments for staff were completed in a timely manner and appropriately monitored and we considered how to establish a work experience placement for a disabled person. In the period we successfully placed three disabled individuals on a Feature Film and a high profile Television production.

- ***Consultation and engagement***

The list of consultees with whom we consult on disability issues was reviewed and updated.

- ***Monitoring***

Continued review of all monitoring procedures to ensure that information about disabled people is captured accurately and in sufficient detail.

3. ACTION MEASURES

- 3.1 As part of the development of this update to the disability action plan, we undertook desk research into action measures adopted by other similar organisations. As a result of this process, we have developed 19 action measures which we propose to take over the next three years, together with timescales and performance indicators and/or targets. These are described below and summaries in the table on page 13.

Communication

- 3.2 We consider that, in order to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, we must consider what appropriate and effective measures we can take as regards our external and internal communication policies, practices and procedures. Over the next 3 years we will:
- Consult with Disability Action to review the accessibility of our website and we will also explore what funding options, if any, are

available to the organisation which will allow us to further develop the website to improve accessibility;

- Support the “Vision 2020” UK initiative which seeks to address the needs of blind and partially sighted people;
- Increase engagement with organisations representing disabled people to increase awareness of impending training courses, employment opportunities, etc
- Through feedback from applicants/participants in Northern Ireland Screen’s programmes we will continually review and make adjustments to the delivery of our programmes so that people with disabilities can fully engage with the culture & arts sector.

Access

3.3 We consider that, in order to promote positive attitudes to disabled people, we should ensure that their needs are taken into account, as a matter of course, wherever our work is carried out. Over the next three years we will:

- ensure that the locations where our public events are held continue to be fully accessible to disabled people and any new venues will be assessed to ensure they are also fully accessible;
- ensure that a signer (either BSL or ISL) is available at public events, where requested by an invitee;
- continue to raise awareness among staff of the need to provide information on parking for disabled people when planning public events
- include emergency evacuation procedures in relation to disabled people, including individuals with ASD in Health and Safety training and equality / disability training.

Disability/Equality Training

3.4 We consider that one of the key methods of promoting positive attitudes to disabled people is to improve understanding among staff so that they can ensure that disability issues are taken into account in every aspect of our work and can influence other organisations with which they come into contact to do the same. Over the next three years we will:

- Provide refresher training for all staff to promote a better understanding and commitment to disability equality and include

information on the social and communication barriers faced by people with ASD in accessing public services and facilities. Training will take place in 2015 and will be repeated every two years.

- engage where appropriate with specialist disability organisations to determine the range of training and support the organisations can provide to Northern Ireland Screen when specific training is required for either an individual with a disability or the colleagues of the individual with the disability;

Employment

3.5 We acknowledge that in order to effectively implement the disability duties, we must ensure disability equality in the way we employ disabled people. Over the next three years we will:

- ensure that where needed, all reasonable adjustments for staff are completed in a timely manner and are appropriately monitored;
- Explore further opportunities for work experience placement(s) for a disabled person (s).

Consultation and engagement

3.6 As stated above, we are committed to engaging effectively with disabled people in the implementation, monitoring and review of this disability action plan. In order to ensure the appropriate levels of engagement, we will:

- review and update the list of consultees with whom we consult on disability issues;
- engage with specialist disability groups/organisations to determine effective ways to engage with disabled individuals
- review feedback from participants in our programmes and schemes and take action for improvement where needed.

Monitoring

3.7 We acknowledge that this disability action plan will only be effective if we continually evaluate the impact of the measures listed above and keep the action plan under review so that we can respond to changing situations. Over the next three years we will:

- review all monitoring procedures to ensure that information about disabled people is captured accurately and in sufficient detail.

Summary

3.8 The table overleaf summarises the action measures, timescale and performance indicators and/or targets we will employ over the next three years in order to fulfil the disability duties in relation to our functions. All performance indicators will be collected and evaluated on an annual basis in June of each year.

Theme	Measures	Timescale	Performance targets	indicators/
1. Communication	1.1 Continue to review the accessibility of the Northern Ireland Screen website and consult with Disability Action to explore what actions can be taken to improve access.	Initial contact with Disability Action by January 2016. Annually	Funding secured to further develop Northern Ireland Screen website. Complaints/feedback from users.	
	1.2 Consider converting public documents into Easy Read format on request	As and when requested	Number of documents produced	
	1.3 Support the "Vision 2020" UK initiative which seeks to address the needs of blind and partially sighted people;	Immediate	Continue to engage with DCAL and seek opportunities where possible, to end exclusion for blind and partially sighted people	
	1.4 Increase engagement with organisations representing disabled people to increase awareness of impending training courses, employment opportunities, etc.	As opportunities arise	Increase in numbers accessing training & employment opportunities	
	1.5 Engage with Autism NI to explore ways to improve communication with individuals with ASD .	Initial contact to be made before January 2016	Increased knowledge amongst Northern Ireland Screen staff. Follow recommendations from Autism NI.	

Theme	Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/ targets
2. Access	2.1 Ensure that the locations where our public events are held continue to be fully accessible to disabled people.	As and when events are organised, access to new venues to be considered as they arise.	External public events are inclusive and accessible
	2.2 Ensure that a signer (BSL and/or ISL) is available at public events, where requested by an invitee.	As and when required.	Number of occasions when signer is used.
	2.3 Continued awareness among staff of the need to provide information on parking for disabled people when planning public events.	Awareness raising as part of refresher training 2015.	Number of occasions when information is provided.
	2.4 Include emergency evacuation procedures in relation to disabled people in Health and Safety training and via disability equality training.	Immediate	Health & Safety policy amended and number of staff trained.
	2.5 Engage with Autism NI regarding improving access for individuals with ASD	Initial contact to be made before January 2016	Improvements as recommended by Autism NI

Theme	Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/ targets
3. Disability/Equality Training	3.1 Provide refresher training for all staff to increase knowledge and commitment to disability equality and include information on the social and communication barriers faced by people with ASD in accessing public services and facilities.	Refresher training to be completed by December 2015 and repeated every two years.	Number of staff trained.
	3.2 Engage with specialist disability organisations to determine the range of training and support the organisations can provide to Northern Ireland Screen when specific training is required for either an individual with a disability or the colleagues of the individual with the disability.	Avail of support as required.	Number of organisations contacted & number of training events.

Theme	Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/ targets
4. Employment	4.1 Ensure all reasonable adjustments for staff, if needed, are completed in a timely manner and are appropriately monitored.	As required.	Review appropriateness of adjustments in accordance with schedule agreed with staff member.
	4.2 Explore further opportunities for work experience placement(s) for a disabled person (s).	Annually	Number of work placements in each year.

Theme	Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/ targets
5. Consultation and engagement	5.1 Review and update the list of consultees who are consulted on disability issues.	Annually	Number of consultees contacted and number who respond.
	5.2 Consult with Disability Action on the best way to involve people with disabilities in the implementation and review of Northern Ireland Screen's DAP.	Initial contact to be made by January 2016	Increase in the number of consultees and increased awareness of the needs of people with disabilities in public life.
	5.3 Engage with Special Education Schools to increase awareness of Northern Ireland Screen's After School INTO FILM Clubs' programme	Immediate	Number of schools participating in scheme. Number of pupils with special educational needs participating in film club
	5.4 Tailor the delivery of Digital Film Archive presentations to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not disadvantaged during the presentation	Immediate	Feedback from participants. Number of occasions when adjustments have been made.

Theme	Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/ targets
6. Monitoring	6.1 Review all monitoring procedures to ensure that information about disabled people is captured accurately and in sufficient detail.	Annually	Number of changes, if any, to monitoring procedures.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The draft disability action plan was the subject of consultation over a period of 12 weeks, ending on 11th September 2015.
- 4.2 During this period we drew attention to the consultation process by contacting organisations who may have an interest in the issues contained within the plan and by publicising the availability of the document on our website.
- 4.3 Arrangements were in place to ensure that the consultation document and any associated reports could be made available in hard copy and alternative formats on request on a time basis.
- 4.4 At the end of the consultation period, we had received comments from two organisations (Autism NI and Disability Action).
- 4.5 Autism NI drew attention to the fact that the Autism Act (NI) 2011 successfully amended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and requested an amendment to Section 1.1 of this statement, which we have made.
- 4.6 Autism NI suggested that Northern Ireland Screen participate in the mandated roll out of equality and awareness work underway across the NI Executive Departments and that it should raise awareness of the needs of people with ASD (autism spectrum disorders), especially in relation to communication and accessibility barriers they face.
- 4.7 As a result of these comments, the most recent disability awareness training included a section dealing specifically with individuals with ASD. We have added to the action measures set out in the table above a commitment to engage further with Autism NI with regards to improving communication and access.
- 4.8 Disability Action requested information on the number of disabled people represented on the Board. DCAL is responsible for the recruitment of Board members through an open process and they have advised that no applicants for Board positions declared a disability.

- 4.9 Disability Action asked for further information on the where and how Northern Ireland Screen consults with disabled people. Like many organisations, Northern Ireland Screen has a comprehensive list of consultees which it reviews and updates annually. We engage with a number of groups/organisations in the delivery of some of our programmes e.g. After School INTO FILM clubs for children in Special Education schools and schools in areas of social deprivation who have pupils with special educational needs. Feedback from the schools is invaluable as it allows us to work with them to ensure that each pupil is able to enjoy the full experience that these clubs provide.

Outreach work of our Digital Film Archive managed by staff but we also work with partner organisations in the delivery of presentations. Again feedback from the partner organisations and the individuals who participate is a constructive method of ensuring that we make adjustments to the presentations for individuals with a disability so that they get the very best experience they can from the activity.

However, we have also added to the action measures set out in the table above a commitment to engage further with Disability Action to seek their advice on the best way to improve consultation with disabled individuals.

- 4.10 There were a number of comments with regard to communication and access issues especially in relation to action measures which have been carried forward from the previous Disability Action Plan. There were also comments regarding the use of vague language in the revised Disability Action Plan.

Northern Ireland Screen has monitored and evaluated previous action measures but feels that further work can be undertaken, which is why they have been included in the revised Disability Action Plan; we have also reviewed the document and strengthened the language used particularly in relation to the action measures table.

- 4.10 As a result of the comments received from both organisations, we have made amendments to this Disability Action Plan and have included additional actions in the table above.

5. PUBLICATION

- 5.1 The updated disability action plan will be published on our website www.northernirelandscreen.co.uk . We will notify consultees, stakeholders and staff of the availability of the updated action plan.

- 5.2 The updated disability action plan and any associated reports will be made available in hard copy and alternative formats, including Easy Read, on request in a timely manner (usually within 4-6 weeks).