

The British Museum's Gender Equality Scheme

Foreword

The British Museum places achieving Diversity as central to its purpose in the UK today at every level, in our staff and governance, curation, education and audiences

This Gender Equality Scheme sets out the Museum's aims to address issues of gender together with wider diversity issues for the Museum's staff and its audience. We are building on good practice, which is already in operation in the Museum, while identifying areas where there is more work to be done.

As we work towards developing The British Museum Valuing Diversity and Equality Policy, we continue to be focused on our aspiration to be a 'Museum of the World for the World' and will ensure that this is reflected in this scheme and those going forward.

Neil Macgregor
Director

Introduction

Founded in 1753, the British Museum houses one of the greatest collections of human cultural history for the benefit of all the world.

The Museum states as its core principles and purpose that it is:

- A museum of the World for the World
- A place for the 'curious and studious'
- A collection held for the benefit of all the world, present and future, free of charge

The British Museum holds a diverse collection for the benefit of all the world and values the diversity of all who use, support and work for it. Valuing Diversity at every level, in our audiences, staff and governance, curation and learning is central to the Museum's purpose.

Valuing Diversity

One of the five core values of the British Museum is 'Diversity'. It states that:

- we seek to contribute to an understanding of different identities
- we draw attention to connections between different cultures
- we value and respect every voice in working towards our objectives

The British Museum recognises the positive benefits of valuing diversity in relation to its collections, audience and staff and that it is essential in effectively achieving our objectives.¹

The Museum's Valuing Diversity Working Party was formed in 2006. On behalf of the Museum's Directorate, this committee examines a range of diversity issues and members of the committee have collaborated to work on different issues such as disability access and inclusion, gender equality, race equality and staff diversity. It develops and reviews policy for the Directorate.

The Working Party is developing The British Museum Valuing Diversity and Equality Policy. This can be viewed in its entirety at www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk later this year. This Policy sets out the principles which shall guide the development of the Museum's Annual Plans, Strategies and other Procedures for the discharge of its functions.

The British Museum's Valuing Diversity Objectives

The Valuing Diversity Working Party has identified the following objectives:

Audience

The British Museum will work with all its audiences, actual and potential, whether on site, in regions or through traditional and modern media, to make their Diversity integral to the Museum's purpose.

Staff

The British Museum seeks to ensure that it recruits, develops and engages a diverse staff, including trustees, contract staff, volunteers and interns, to meet the needs of its diverse audiences and collections.

Practice

The British Museum aims to embed within its organisation an understanding of the centrality of Diversity in its collections and work including management, curation, display, programme, education and marketing.

Context

¹ The British Museum: The Next Five Years, Principles and Purpose, April 2004

The British Museum makes sure that all who support and work with the Museum remain aware of and support Diversity as a core element of the Museum's purpose.

The Gender Equality Duty

The gender equality duty is a new legal requirement on all GB public authorities, when carrying out all their functions, to have due regard to the need:

- **To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex**
- **To promote equality of opportunity between women and men.**

Functions include policy-making, service provision, employment matters, and statutory discretion, as well as decision-making. 'Due regard' means that authorities should give due weight to the need to promote gender equality in proportion to its relevance.

The duty requires organisations to take action on the most important gender equality issues within their functions. The promotion of equal opportunities between women and men requires public authorities to recognise that the two groups are not starting from an equal footing and identical treatment will not always be appropriate. Under the duty authorities also have an obligation to eliminate discrimination and harassment towards current and potential transsexual staff.

General duty -

The duty applies in England, Scotland and Wales.

The duty is made up of two elements, the 'general' duty and the 'specific' duties. The general duty is the overall duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality.

The specific duties are not an objective in themselves, but a means of meeting the general duty. The specific duties for England, Scotland and Wales are different. Full details of the legal requirements of the duty are set out in the statutory Code of Practice for England and Wales and the separate Code for Scotland.

Specific duties -

For the British Museum, the specific duties require it to:

- Prepare and publish a **gender equality scheme**, showing how it will meet its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives.
- In formulating its overall objectives, consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any **gender pay gap**.
- **Gather and use information** on how its policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services.

- To **consult** stakeholders (i.e. employees, service users and others, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives.
- To **assess the impact** of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.
- To **implement** the actions set out in its scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- **To report** against the scheme every year and **review** the scheme at least every three years.

The purpose of this document is to show the British Museum intends to meet the general and specific duties and set out its gender equality objectives.

Information

The British Museum collects and will seek to collect further information that will allow it to understand its impact of its work on women and on men.

The gender of employees is monitored by job family and grades. The overall proportions in 2006 were:

Male = 54%

Female = 46%

Communication – This scheme will be communicated to all employees via our normal Internal Communications route. It will also be available on the Diversity pages on the Intranet. It will also be freely accessible on the British Museum's website. We will offer and respond to those whose access needs require the scheme to be communicated in different forms.

Recruitment and Selection -

The British Museum aims to recruit and select a high calibre and highly motivated workforce who will focus upon achieving the aims and objectives of The British Museum.

Everyone who is eligible to join the British Museum whatever their gender, sexual preference, marital status, religious grouping, race, colour, ethnic or national origins, disability or age will receive equal treatment when applying for jobs.

We want to find out whether this policy is working and to take steps to ensure further progress is made to achieving equal opportunities. We monitor the success of this policy through the collection of data from all applicants at the recruitment stage.

Equal Pay -

An Equal Pay Review is required every two years under the Terms and Conditions of The British Museum Pay and Grading agreement.

This is conducted by an external Consultancy.

Training and Development-

The British Museum is committed to identifying and supporting our employees' training and development needs. The Career Review process allows employees to identify those training and development needs.

The British Museum provides practical support for Young Graduates for Museums and Galleries, a programme sponsored by a group of national museums and galleries to promote interest in careers in the sector for young people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. The programme is

designed to enable the sector to recruit future staff from the full range of society. As part of the programme, the partners are seeking to increase the number of young men considering entering the museum professions, as there is a growing gender imbalance in recruitment.

Career Progression/Promotion -

Vacancies are advertised internally and externally so that existing employees who have the necessary skills and competencies may apply and progress. The competencies needed to advance an employees career are identified as part of the Career Review.

The Collections Career Review provides a mechanism for recognising the contribution and performance of Museum Curators, Conservators and Scientists. This process aims to provide individuals with an opportunity to grow and develop within the organisation through applying for roles within a higher collections cluster. Their application will be reviewed by a panel and assessed according to performance and capability criteria.

Family Friendly Policies -

The British Museum is committed to providing opportunities for employees to balance their home and working life. This includes:

Maternity leave – Over and above its legal obligations, the Museum offers 18 weeks of full paid maternity leave (Museum Leave) to employees who meet the specified conditions, inclusive of the Statutory Maternity Payments (SMP), and a further 21 weeks of SMP payments only.

Paternity leave – Over and above its legal obligations, the Museum offers 2 weeks of full paid paternity leave to employees who meet the specified conditions, inclusive of Statutory Paternity Payment (SPP).

Adoptive parents leave - The person who applies for Adoption Leave can be of either sex but must be the person who has, or expects to have, main responsibility for the upbringing of the child – a “child” being defined as a young person aged 18 years and under. Over and above its legal obligations, the Museum offers 18 weeks of full paid adoption leave (Museum Leave) to employees who meet the specified conditions, inclusive of the Statutory Adoption Payments (SAP), and a further 21 weeks of SAP payments only.

Parental leave - Parental Leave provides working parents with the right to unpaid leave to look after their child or children or to make arrangements for the good of the child/children. Employees who meet the specified conditions are entitled to 13 weeks leave per child to be taken before their fifth birthday.

Special leave to deal with incidents involving dependents – Special Leave can be paid or unpaid. Its purpose is to allow a short amount of time for staff to deal with an emergency involving a dependant - a ‘dependant’ being defined as a spouse, partner, child, parent or someone else in the household.

Flexible working opportunities – Parents of children under the age of six, or of disabled children under the age of eighteen, or carers of certain adults have the right to apply for flexible working. The Museum will consider such requests seriously and will decline applications only when there are clear and justifiable grounds for doing so.

Facilities to work from home – These facilities can be provided where appropriate to allow employees to manage their work/life balance.

Childcare Vouchers – The Museum offers a salary sacrifice childcare voucher scheme to all British Museum employees so as to provide additional support for working parents or guardians.

Grievance and Appeals Procedure - All Museum staff have the right to raise legitimate grievances relating to their employment and to have them heard and settled fairly and promptly without fear of recrimination. The Procedure applies if employees have a grievance about any of the following: Their work, working conditions, working relationships with and behaviour of their supervisor/manager or their colleagues, the employee's health and safety or their statutory employment rights.

Learning and Audiences –

The British Museum gathers data to understand the audience of its exhibitions and programmes. The Visitor figures for 2006 show the following divide in the gender of its audience:

Male = 47%

Female = 53%

The Museum is committed to engaging the widest possible range of visitors through its exhibition and event programmes. An expanding range of community programmes are supported by advice from programme-specific advisory panels and by a long-term and widely representative Community Liaison Group. The Museum is also keen to involve diverse audiences in the interpretation of the collection, an area where gender equality can result in exciting re-interpretations of material.

The Museum has a strong resource and event offer for families. All programmes and resources are devised to make single parent facilitation possible. Specific events also support gender equality; for example, a series of events run in partnership with Lambeth and Wandsworth encouraged fathers to bring their children to the Museum and to become involved with Early Years reading.

Related Policies, Procedures and Documentation -

Valuing Diversity and Equality Policy
Disability Equality Scheme

Family Friendly Policy
Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
Grievance and Appeals Procedure
Whistle blowing Procedure
Valuing Diversity Action Plan

Consultation

The British Museum will consult with groups inside and outside the organisation to ensure that we are meeting the objectives of the Gender Equality Duty.

Internal –

The Valuing Diversity Working Party will seek feedback from employees and volunteers on this scheme through the British Museum's Intranet Diversity pages, office notices and focus groups, where appropriate.

This committee will also assess progress and impact of policies during the first year and against objectives annually.

The Valuing Diversity Working Party will consult with senior management and the British Museum Consultative Committee (Joint Consultative Committee) to ensure the Museum has procedures and resources to deliver the objectives of this scheme.

External –

The Valuing Diversity Working Party will seek input and advice from voluntary organisations and through its links with Camden Council via the Camden Strategy Group.

We will also ask for feedback and participation from the public through our website to contribute to our focus groups as well as sharing their ideas and experiences with us.

Third Parties

In line with EC Public Procurement Directives and Communications, the British Museum reserves the right to exclude UK suppliers who breach UK social legislation, including those relevant to the promotion of equality of opportunities, provided that non-compliance with such legislation constitutes grave misconduct.

Gender Equality Duty Action Plan

Aim	Facilitator	Audience	Measurable	Date
To report on the scheme's progress via the VDWP	HR, L&A and VDWP	All interested parties via internet and intranet	Report produced on the progress	September 2008 and yearly
To review the scheme's impact via the VDWP	HR, L&A and VDWP	All interested parties via internet and intranet	Updated scheme produced for next three years	September 2010 and every 3 years going forward
To assess the impact of programming and gender issues relating to Audience	L&A and VDWP	L&A and VDWP	Report produced on the assessment	September 2008
To assess grievance and complaints made from both internal and external sources in relation to gender issues	HR	VDWP	Statistics produced on number of grievances and complaints	September 2008
To Review the British Museum's Recruitment and Selection procedure and processes to ensure that discriminatory barriers to those that wish to apply to work at the Museum are removed.	HR	HR and all Recruiting Managers	Updated Recruitment and Selection procedure published on the intranet	March 2008 and continuous
To provide training on Recruitment and Selection procedure	HR	Recruiting Managers	Training provided	May 2008 and continuous
To consult with our employees as to the nature of information that we collect for monitoring purposes.	VDWP	All employees	Methods of consultation provided	December 2007 and continuous
To provide management training in Valuing Diversity and its impact on existing HR policies and procedures.	Training and Development (assisted by VDWP)	All managers	Training provided	From April 2008 and continuous
To provide training for all employees on Valuing Diversity.	Training and Development (assisted by VDWP)	All employees	Training provided	From April 2008 and continuous
To assess and review the Gender Representation in Job Families, and consider future actions to achieve balance.	HR	All employees	Report produced	By July 2008 and yearly thereafter
To assess and review the	HR	All employees	Report	By July

Gender Representation in Museum Management and future Museum Management, and consider future actions to achieve balance.			produced	2008 and yearly thereafter
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Scheme Ownership:

Ownership of the Gender Equality Scheme is with Human Resources Department.

For further information, please email humanresources@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

The policy has been supported and informed by the work of the Valuing Diversity Working Party.