

Arts Council England Disability Equality Scheme 2010-13



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Welcome from Chief Executive Alan Davey

Welcome to Arts Council England's second Disability Equality Scheme. The scheme sets out our approach to achieving disability equality in the arts, building on the achievements, knowledge and experience gained in initiating and delivering our first scheme, which ended in March 2010. The new scheme intends to drive up disability equality performance both within our organisation and in the arts organisations that we support.

Disability equality is vital in achieving our aim of Great Art for Everyone. Ensuring that the arts are inclusive of and accessible to disabled people will, in turn, make the arts more accessible and have wider benefits for everyone. It will also ensure that disabled artists achieve the prominence they deserve within the arts community. In adopting the theme of prominence, our second Disability Equality Scheme seeks to raise the profile of disabled people and disability equality issues in the arts.

We have worked with our Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group to ensure that the views and priorities of disabled people are valued and represented within this scheme. We know that this involvement has improved our work and will help us to have greater impact.

Central to the Disability Equality Scheme is the 'Creative Case for Diversity', our overarching strategy to ensure that diversity and equality become central to the arts.

We look forward to working with our clients, partners and stakeholders on the next phase of our disability equality journey.

Cover image (left to right): *Trip City Roundabout*, *Hidden Disabilities* and *No Patronising* by Caroline Cardus, *The Way Ahead* exhibition, Holton Lee gallery, 2004. Photo: Apex/Nick Gregory

1 Introduction

1.1 About Arts Council England

Arts Council England works to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives. As the national development agency for the arts, we support a range of artistic activities from theatre to music, literature to dance, photography to digital art, and carnival to crafts.

Between 2008 and 2011, the Arts Council will invest more than £1.6 billion of public money from the government and the National Lottery to create great arts experiences for as many people as possible across the country. We regularly fund around 880 arts organisations on a three-year basis, investing £350 million each year by 2010/11. Our support helps bring high-quality work to a wide range of people – as both audience and participants.

Through the Grants for the arts funding programme, we support arts activities in England that benefit people or that help artists and arts organisations. Through our managed funds, we identify new opportunities for the arts, take new initiatives, establish new partnerships and address particular ambitions for growth.

Our four development priorities for the period 2008–11 are:

- **digital opportunity**
- **visual arts**
- **children and young people**
- **London 2012**

Our outcomes are:

- **excellence** – high-quality arts and high-quality arts experience
- **reach** – more people attending and taking part in the arts
- **engagement** – more people feel there are opportunities to enjoy and become actively involved in arts activities that are relevant to them
- **diversity** – arts that reflect the diversity of contemporary England
- **innovation** – artists have the freedom and are challenged to innovate

1.2 The legislative framework

Arts Council England has general and specific duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (also known as the Disability Equality Duty).

The general duties require Arts Council England to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability-related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to meet disabled people's requirements, even if this means more favourable treatment

The specific duties require Arts Council England to:

- produce a Disability Equality Scheme
- involve disabled people and show how they are engaged in the process
- identify how we will gather and analyse evidence to inform our actions and track progress
- produce an action plan covering the next three years
- report on progress every year, reviewing and updating the scheme at least every three years

The statutory codes of practice define due regard as:

'Public authorities are expected to have "due regard" to the six parts of the general duty. "Due regard" comprises two linked elements: proportionality and relevance. In all their decisions and functions authorities should give due weight to the need to promote disability equality in proportion to its relevance. This requires more than simply giving consideration to disability equality.'

This requires Arts Council England to mainstream disability equality into all of our decisions and activities. The terms 'proportionality' and 'relevance' in this context are highlighted in the following ways:

'Proportionality requires greater consideration to be given to disability equality in relation to functions or policies that have the most effect on disabled people. Where changing a function or proposed policy would lead to significant benefits to disabled people, the need for such a change will carry added weight when balanced against other considerations.'

'Disability equality will be more relevant to some functions than others. Public authorities will need to take care when assessing relevance, as many areas of their functioning are likely to be of relevance to disabled people.'

In its guidance, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has requested that public authorities focus their attention on achieving the general duties, using the specific duties to help achieve those goals. The themes, priorities and actions presented within our Disability Equality Scheme have been designed specifically to address our general duties.

The single Equality Act

Within the lifespan of this Disability Equality Scheme the legal framework for all equality strands will change with the introduction of the single Equality Act. The single Equality Act will bring together the many different elements of equality legislation into a clearer, single unified approach. The single Equality Act will also broaden the equality strands to incorporate sexual orientation, faith and religion, age and socio-economic disadvantage in addition to race, gender and disability. In line with the EHRC guidance, we will review this Disability Equality Scheme after one year of implementation, incorporating our aims and priorities into a single equality scheme taking into account the new guidance issued by the EHRC.

1.3 Definitions of disability

Disability is often perceived as a complex area, and as an equality issue does not have as high a profile as do other equality issues. In order to be clear about our responsibilities and expectations in relation to disability equality, we need to be clear about what we

mean when we talk about disability and disability equality. The areas that we need to clarify are:

- who is disabled within the context of the Disability Discrimination Act
- what is disability
- what are the barriers that disabled people face and experience

The legal definition

The Disability Discrimination Act defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Disability and impairment

One of the most useful and progressive ways to help understand and effectively promote disability equality is to make a clear distinction between disability and impairment. In making this distinction, impairment and disability are defined in the following ways:

Impairment: a medical condition, illness or injury which will or is likely to impact on the way the body or mind works. When we talk about people with impairments we are talking about people with learning difficulties, mental health system survivors, people living with HIV/AIDS, people who have a heart condition, people who are blind and partially sighted, people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, people with physical impairments and people with other hidden impairments (this list is not exhaustive).

Disability: the limitation and exclusion of someone with an impairment to access opportunities and take part in society on an equal basis as the result of barriers.

Definition of Disability Arts

Disability Arts is a specific genre of work that explores and communicates lived experiences of disability. Disability Arts is specific and not (as many assume) any work created by disabled people. The following quote from Allan Sutherland from Disability Arts Online (dao) is a useful and succinct definition.

'The generally agreed definition of disability arts, the one that we in the disability arts movement have found most accurately reflects what we are doing, is that it is "art made by disabled people which reflects the experience of disability". Disability arts is Art. It is seriously intentioned creative work – poems or painting or music or comedy or theatre or whatever – made with some sort of aesthetic purpose. It is not a hobby to keep the cripples' hands busy. And it is not therapy.'

(What is Disability Arts? Allan Sutherland, Dao)

Definition of Deaf Arts

'There is no consensus amongst deaf practitioners, deaf arts organisations or deaf arts consumers as to what constitutes Deaf Arts. It can be taken to represent a number of ideas according to varying views. Deaf arts practitioners have a plurality of experiences and Deaf Arts reflect that. Nonetheless, Deaf Arts can be summed up in one or more of the following terms:

- accessible art
- art about being deaf
- arts which involve deaf people
- arts which are initiated, controlled and created by deaf people.'

(Deaf Arts Audit Research into the provision of arts activities for deaf people in England carried out by Deafworks for The Arts Council of England)

1.4 The barriers experienced by disabled people

Disabled people experience a range of barriers including: negative attitudes and prejudice; assumptions about what they can and can't do; lack of access to the physical environment; inaccessible information; inflexible ways of working or organising the environment; lack of access to and exclusion from education, training and employment; and inaccessible transport.

These barriers are not the inevitable outcome of impairment but are socially created through society not taking into consideration the requirements of people with impairments. Because of the way

that these barriers have been created it is possible to remove them and ensure that disabled people are able to participate fully and be included within society. Arts Council England's approach is to continue to involve disabled people in our work to highlight the barriers experienced by a diverse range of disabled people, and for disabled people to assist us in identifying how to effectively remove those barriers.

1.5 Diversity within disability

Disabled people are diverse; they are never just disabled people. They are women and men, they come from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, they are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered. They are older people, children and young people. They have different faiths, come from different socio-economic backgrounds. They work, they volunteer and they participate in the world in many different ways. They shed light on a different aspect of human experience and contribute to the richness and diversity of society.

Within the context of this Disability Equality Scheme, disability is used as a positive term. It is not intended to marginalise or box anyone into a specific role or identity. It exists to help us identify the exclusion and discrimination experienced by a significant section of the population. Identifying the barriers experienced by disabled people will help us to focus so that we can create positive impacts for disabled people. By making the arts more accessible and inclusive for disabled people, we believe that the arts will be more inclusive and welcoming for everyone. By adopting this approach we believe we will improve the arts for everyone.

1.6 Cultural equality

Arts Council England recognises that for many deaf and disabled people the terms deaf and disabled are very much linked to a cultural identity and experience. This not only impacts on the way that deaf and disabled people create art, but also in the way that they consume the arts, some of which challenges traditional assumptions and

stereotypes. For example, there is a growing contingent of Deaf artists who make sonic arts; there are also a number of visually impaired artists who make visual art. Our role is not to prescribe how or what art disabled and deaf people should create or attend but to ensure that we build an environment within which they are welcome and included.

2 Arts Council England and disability equality: progress to date

The knowledge and experience gained, and the progress and achievements made, in our initial Disability Equality Scheme (2007–10) have been central to the process of developing the new scheme.

The initial Disability Equality Scheme had within its action plan 30 projects. Of these, the Public Service Agreement target almost immediately became obsolete and the ‘meetings policy’ and ‘presentations policy’ were amalgamated into one action, reducing the number to 28. Sixteen actions have been delivered and we are continuing to progress a further eight. Four projects within the 2007–10 action plan have not been initiated.

Work undertaken as a result of the Disability Equality Scheme 2007–10 has increased disability equality performance within the Arts Council and its funded community in the following ways:

Funding

- we have improved access to information and increased support for disabled people wishing to make an application through the Grants for the Arts programme
- our evidence base shows small increases in the number of grants awarded to disabled applicants

Development

- we established an Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group through a transparent and open recruitment process
- we extended the remit of the decibel Performing Arts Showcase to include disability; the work of disabled artists was included for the first time at the showcase in September 2009
- the Cultural Leadership Programme developed a number of high-profile disability and leadership initiatives
- the first piece of overarching research was commissioned to map the current national position of Deaf Arts

Advocacy

- we created a culture in which disability is more widely discussed and identified as an equality issue

Disability equality within the Arts Council

- the scheme raised the profile of, and increased debate about, disability equality within the Arts Council
- Arts Council England staff received equality impact assessment training, which had disability equality as a key element. Equality impact assessment has now become a mainstream activity in aspects of the Arts Council's work
- Arts Council England staff received disability equality training
- reception staff at all Arts Council England offices received disability equality training

Learning from the first scheme suggests that we still need to:

- increase the profile and presence of disabled people in all aspects of the arts as artists, audience members, participants and employees
- undertake more work with our regularly funded organisations, developing good practice across the arts as a whole

In order to achieve these ambitions, we need to:

- develop further disability equality training activities to deepen the understanding of disability within our organisation
- maintain a separate Disability Equality Scheme as a means of ensuring that disability equality issues continue to be given a high profile
- be more proactive in communicating the activities and outcomes of our Disability Equality Scheme externally.

3 Equality impact assessment

As mentioned above, Arts Council England has introduced an organisation-wide process for equality impact assessment, which currently covers race, disability, gender and sexual orientation.

All of our policies are screened in relation to their impact on equality, and a full equality impact assessment is undertaken where appropriate. The equality impact assessment process and progress is monitored at six-monthly intervals by Arts Council England's management committee.

We have undertaken the following actions to ensure that equality impact assessment is embedded within the core business of our organisation:

- approximately 120 key staff have been trained in our equality impact assessment process
- an equality impact assessment handbook/toolkit has been produced and is available to all staff
- a site has been created on the Arts Council intranet where materials relevant to equality impact assessment can be found, including evidence base materials, equality impact assessments undertaken by Arts Council England and examples of equality impact assessments undertaken by other public authorities

The equality impact assessment process itself has had a positive impact on the culture of the organisation and specifically in relation to how disability equality is perceived in the context of the other equality strands. It has created a greater understanding of the barriers disabled people experience within the organisation and also when accessing our services, and has provided a platform from which we can actively promote equality throughout our range of functions.

Positive outcomes for disabled and Deaf people as a result of equality impact assessment include:

- greater emphasis on reducing the barriers experienced by disabled and Deaf people in relation to the Arts Council's consultation and involvement activities
- changes in the way personal access costs are considered within the Grants for the arts application process, ensuring there is no disadvantage to disabled and Deaf people when deciding how long it will take to assess an application
- identification of gaps in availability of accessible information and provision of centralised budgets for accessible formats
- involvement of disabled people in the equality impact assessments of some policies, for example the Disabled Workers' Group was involved in formulating the reasonable adjustments policy
- usability and accessibility testing of website and internal IT systems
- highlighting of equality impact within the context of funding decisions in relation to regularly funded organisations. For instance, where funding has been removed from an organisation that is focused on disability issues, that funding has been reserved to fund disability work
- identification of the need for additional disability equality training in relation to reception staff

4 Secretary of State's report on disability equality

The Secretary of State Report on Disability Equality is a welcome opportunity to understand how our work aligns with the wider achievements and aspirations of our sponsor department, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It also provides an overview of the good practice that exists within the sector. The report provides an excellent platform to identify how we can work together with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and other non-departmental public bodies to maximise positive outcomes for disabled people. On the basis of the most recent Secretary of State report, focusing our efforts on the engagement and participation of disabled people in the arts will have most impact and will complement the work of other non-departmental public bodies. We will continue to work with our partners across the sector to achieve disability equality in the arts.

5 Involvement of disabled people

Involvement is an important element of our disability equality work. It is essential for gaining an understanding of the specific barriers that disabled people experience in accessing our services. By involving disabled people in our work we can also identify the appropriate strategies for removing those barriers.

We have involved disabled and Deaf people in key aspects of our Disability Equality Scheme, using Deaf and disabled consultants to deliver disability equality training, equality impact assessment training and specialist advice and consultancy. We have worked with Deaf and disabled artists and companies to assist in the delivery of specific projects.

As mentioned above, Arts Council England ran a national campaign to recruit 10 members to our Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group. The advertisements attracted a lot of interest and over 120 applications from disabled people. A group of 10 diverse disabled people has been appointed. The Group has shaped and informed the direction of this scheme's priorities, ensuring that the work we undertake in the next three years remains live and relevant. (See Appendix 1 for the group's terms of reference.)

Our regional offices have also carried out a number of involvement exercises. The issues highlighted in those exercises have been included in the development of this scheme.

As part of our involvement strategy, we want to engage more widely with disabled people on a regular basis. In order to inform our priorities and approach, we will therefore establish annual processes to capture the views of a much wider constituency of disabled people.

Arts Council England also ensures that disabled people are involved and represented within the wider consultations and discussions we undertake with the arts and creative sector; the involvement of disabled people is not confined to disability issues.

6 Monitoring and reporting

On 1st April 2009 Arts Council England became a provider of official statistics under the extended scope of the Statistics and Registration Act 2008. This means that when the Arts Council produces, manages and disseminates official statistics we strive to abide by the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics* published by the UK Statistics Authority in January 2009. The Code sets out a number of important principles and practices to ensure that official statistics meet the needs of government and society and are both trustworthy and trusted.

The Arts Council has a duty to:

- be clear about who our official statistics are for, how they are used and how they inform decision-making
- produce official statistics according to scientific principles and to a level of quality that meets users' needs
- manage and present official statistics impartially and objectively
- make reports on official statistics available to all and easy to access

Statutory responsibility for implementing the Disability Equality Scheme lies with National Council (the governing body of Arts Council England). The Chief Operating Officer, Arts Planning and Investment, through the Chief Executive, will be accountable to Council for developing, maintaining and reviewing the scheme in line with legislation.

There is an established process of annually reporting against progress in delivering the Arts Council's equality schemes' action plans to Management Committee, Executive Board and Council. The Disability Equality Scheme will continue to feed into that reporting cycle, with the annual report being made available on the website.

The Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group will continue to act as a critical friend and adviser to Arts Council England, providing advice, guidance and additional expertise specifically in relation to the monitoring and delivery of the Disability Equality Scheme. The Group will also assist in ensuring that the knowledge, skills and expertise of disabled people remain part of the delivery of the Disability Equality Scheme itself. They will also feed into the process of monitoring and evaluating the progress of the Scheme.

Reports are given every six months to Management Committee on the progress, quality and other issues pertaining to the progress of equality impact assessments within the organisation.

7 The current picture – evidence base

Arts Council England regularly monitors and collects information about our organisation and our services to the public. The data presented relies heavily on people disclosing their disability status to us. We do know that not everyone declares their disability status; we acknowledge, therefore, that the data presented may not be entirely accurate in representing the current picture in relation to disability equality. The following section highlights the data we currently have in relation to disability equality.

7.1 Taking Part survey

The Taking Part survey explores how people in England engage with the arts today. It is based on findings from 'Taking Part', a continuous survey of cultural engagement among adults. The definition of disability within the survey is the definition used by the Office for National Statistics.

Arts attendance and disability

The Taking Part survey shows that adults with a limiting disability/illness have significantly lower rates of arts attendance than adults with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness. In 2008/09, 52.7% of those with a limiting disability/illness attended at least one arts event. This is significantly lower than attendance among adults with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness (70.1%).

Arts participation and disability

Adults with a limiting disability/illness have significantly lower rates of arts participation than those with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness. In 2008/09, 41.7% of adults with a limiting disability/illness participated in at least one type of arts activity. This is significantly lower than the participation rate of adults with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness (45.8%).

Although it is statistically significant, the difference between rates of participation for those with a limiting disability/illness and those with

a non-limiting or no disability is much less marked than the difference in rates of arts attendance.

Barriers to arts attendance and participation

The questions regarding barriers to attendance and participation were changed in 2008/09. Respondents who had not attended any arts events were asked if they would like to attend. If they specified at least one artform they would like to attend, they were asked about the barriers to them attending and to select their main reason for not attending. Similarly, those who had not participated in the arts were asked if there were any participatory activities they would like to do and if so, what were the barriers to them participating. They were also asked to select their main reason for not participating.

Barriers to arts attendance

Of the adults with a limiting disability/illness who were not current attenders, 31.2% would like to attend the arts. This is compared with 40.2% of adults with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness that do not currently attend but would like to do so. This difference is statistically significant.

Among adults with a limiting disability/illness who would like to attend the arts, poor health was most often cited as their main reason for not doing so (in 34.1% of cases). For adults with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness who did not attend but wanted to do so, lack of time was the main reason given most often (in 37.6% of cases). Poor health was stated as the main reason for not attending in 1.5% of cases among adults with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness.

Barriers to arts participation

Of the adults with a limiting disability/illness who do not currently participate in the arts, 23.6% would like to do so. This is compared with 29.3% of adults with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness that do not currently participate but would like to do so. This difference is statistically significant.

Poor health was also the most often cited main reason that adults with a limiting disability/illness who wanted to participate in the arts

did not do so (in 32.3% of cases). Difficulty finding the time was the main reason given in 29.4% of cases. For adults with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness, difficulty finding the time was the most frequent main reason for not participating, cited in 59.9% of cases.

Trends over time

Because of changes in the structure of the questionnaire and the categories of artforms used, data from 2008/09 cannot be directly compared with previous years.

7.2 Regularly funded organisations

Every year we send our regularly funded organisations a questionnaire. We use this information to find out how well the organisations are doing. We ask many questions about diversity and equality, so that we can see what kind of support or training is needed to help them get better at equality issues.

This data is based on the constant sample (this means that we have only used the answers given to us from the same organisations for 2007/08 and 2008/09).

Employment and Board membership

Percentage of permanent staff reported as being disabled

2008/09

Total permanent	all	15,700
Permanent men	disabled	174
Permanent women	disabled	224
Permanent men and women	disabled	398

3% of permanent staff reported as being disabled in the 2008/09 constant sample

2007/08

Total permanent staff	15,036
Total disabled permanent staff	361

2% of permanent staff reported as being disabled in the 2007/08 constant sample

Percentage of contractual staff reported as disabled**2008/09**

Total contractual	all	45,422
Contract/freelance men	disabled	291
Contract/freelance women	disabled	336
Contractual men plus contractual women	disabled	627

1% of contractual staff reported as being disabled in the 2008/09 constant sample

2007/08

Total contractual staff	39,830
Total disabled contractual staff	643

2% of contractual staff reported as being disabled in the 2007/08 constant sample

Percentage of Board members reported as being disabled**2008/09**

Total Board	All	6,535
Number of disabled Board members		243

4% of Board members reported as being disabled

Percentage of Board members reported as being disabled**2007/08**

Number of Board members	6,683
Number of disabled Board members	264

4% of Board members reported as being disabled

Organisations 2008/09**Number of organisations that consider themselves to be disabled led**

Nine organisations are considered by Arts Council England to be disabled led, according to the following criteria:

Self-definition – an organisation must define itself as disabled led

Representation – 51% or more of an organisation's board and senior management tier must define themselves as being disabled.

In addition to these nine organisations, a further 30 answered 'yes' to the question, 'Do you consider your organisation to be disabled led?'

Number of organisations that consider a part of their programme to be disability focused

In addition to the nine organisations defined by Arts Council England as disabled led, a further 359 organisations reported that a percentage of their programme was disability focused. Of these 359 organisations, 27 reported that 100% of their programme was disability focused.

Total value of Arts Council England subsidy to disabled-led regularly funded organisations in 2008/09

The total value of Arts Council England subsidy that went to the nine regularly funded organisations defined as disability led was £888,180.

Organisations 2007/08

Number of organisations that consider themselves to be disabled led

Six organisations are considered by Arts Council England to be disability led, according to the Arts Council's definition.

Number of organisations that consider a part of their programme to be disability focused

In addition to the six organisations defined by Arts Council England as disabled led, a further 115 organisations answered 'yes' to the question, 'Is your organisation's programme disability focused?' A further 123 organisations provided a percentage representing the proportion of their programme that was disability focused. Some organisations provided a percentage while answering 'no' to having a disability-focused programme. Of the 123 organisations providing a percentage, 23 reported that the disability focus of their programme was 100%.

Total value of Arts Council England subsidy to disabled-led regularly funded organisations in 2007/08

The total value of Arts Council England subsidy that went to the six regularly funded organisations defined by Arts Council England as disabled led was £755,827.

7.3 Grants for the arts

There has been a gradual increase in the number of disabled people applying to Grants for the arts, rising from 0.4% of all applications in 2005/06 (the year our disability scheme was launched) to 4.3% in 2008/09. The proportion of awards to successful disabled applicants (in value) has also increased from 0.4% in 2005/06 to 2.3% in 2008/09

This minor increase, however, is not representative of the wider disabled population in England. More work needs to be undertaken to explore identifying and reducing the barriers to Grants for the arts.

7.4 Employment

7.4.1 Disabled people within Arts Council England

Efforts have been made to improve the data on the number of disabled staff disclosing their disability status. The actual number of staff who have indicated they are disabled remains unchanged at 24 since 2008, despite a fall in staff numbers of 164. The number of staff who have declined to provide information on disability status is 31. There are 219 staff who have provided no information. This suggests that many staff may be reluctant to declare themselves as disabled. There is evidence to suggest that more staff respond positively when asked if they consider themselves to have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Staff who declare themselves as disabled are employed in a wide range of roles throughout the organisation, across all grades. Unsurprisingly, 12.5% of staff declaring themselves as disabled are employed within disability specialist roles and a further 8% are employed in broader diversity roles.

There is no evidence to suggest staff who declare themselves as disabled are more likely to be involved in a disciplinary or grievance.

7.4.2 Recruitment and selection

Arts Council England is committed to the 'Positive about disabled people' scheme. All disabled candidates who meet the essential job

criteria are guaranteed an interview. The percentage of interviewed candidates who considered themselves to be disabled is higher than the percentage at application stage, which indicates that we are actively demonstrating commitment to the scheme in our recruitment practices.

The following data relates to the monitoring period April 2008 to 31 March 2009:

- of the 7,520 applications received, 2.2% applicants (168) considered themselves to be disabled. At interview stage, 2.8% of candidates invited to interview considered themselves to be disabled
- out of 176 appointments, only five candidates (2.8%) were appointed who considered themselves to be disabled. This represents a decrease from the previous review period, where 4.1% of appointed candidates were disabled
- at application stage, the disability status of 28.5% candidates was unknown. This is broadly consistent with the unknown Black and minority ethnic data, which was 28.2%

7.4.3 Summary of evidence base

The evidence base shows that our performance in disability equality is steadily improving. The number of Grants for the arts awards to disabled artists and disability organisations is gradually rising. However, we acknowledge that we could do more to improve the accessibility of Grants for the arts, as well as ensuring that more disabled and deaf people know about the programme and about the access support we provide for disabled and deaf applicants.

Funding to disabled-led organisations remains static and disabled people have highlighted the need for more clarity on the Arts Council's definition of 'disabled led'.

The evidence base consistently points to a lack of representation and presence of disabled people in the take-up and delivery of our services. This is also evident in the data relating to employment, Board members and participants.

Lack of data relating to diversity among disabled people is a gap in our evidence base. We will establish a programme of activities to help us understand diversity across the equality strands. This work will link strongly with the aims and objectives of the Race Equality Scheme and the Gender Equality Scheme, developing further connections between the equality strands as we move towards a single equality scheme.

Significant improvements have been made in relation to the monitoring of evidence in relation to the recruitment and selection process. Disclosure of disability status within the organisation is low; we know there are more disabled people within the organisation than formally declare themselves as disabled. More work needs to be undertaken to explore perceptions of disabled and deaf people within the organisation and how that may impact on individuals disclosing their disability status.

8 Arts Council England's approach to disability equality

8.1 Vision: prominence

Prominence has emerged as the aspirational vision for disability equality. As highlighted in the Section 7, the profile and presence of disabled people in the arts remains low; framing the Disability Equality Scheme within the aspiration of prominence provides a platform from which to develop all aspects of disability equality. As a public funding body, it is essential that Arts Council England works to ensure that everyone has equal access to our services and to the services of the organisations we support and fund.

Therefore, a key part of our role is to ensure that the right conditions exist for disabled people, not only to access the arts and the opportunities therein, but also to ensure that quality of experience is integral to delivering access effectively.

It is essential that all of our staff understand our general duties to promote disability equality, are clear about their individual roles and how they can contribute towards removing barriers that may exist for disabled people in the arts.

We want to support the organisations we fund to feel confident in making their services inclusive of disabled people, and to ensure they can access the tools, information and opportunities necessary to do this effectively.

Using the theme of prominence in relation to disability equality prioritises our approach, which creates greater visibility of disability issues. It profiles and promotes the work of disabled artists and increases disabled audience members and the audiences of work created by disabled people.

Leadership is central to promoting prominence in terms of:

- increasing disabled people's leadership roles within the arts sector
- promoting Arts Council England's role as a leader in encouraging good practice and role-modelling disability equality

We want to ensure that disabled people are no longer on the edge of the arts sector but are a key part of developments in all aspects of the arts. We also want to ensure that disabled audience members and participants have access to the same opportunities and quality of experiences as their non-disabled counterparts.

This theme will create a platform from which we can:

- highlight the value and importance of disability equality and the inclusion of disabled people in the arts, and how this approach benefits the arts
- raise the profile of disabled people throughout the arts
- promote disabled people's participation in public life
- creatively engage the arts sector in understanding and promoting disability equality
- build the confidence of the arts sector to improve the inclusivity and quality of their services to disabled people

8.2 Themes

Creating the conditions for disabled people to thrive in the arts

As a publicly funded organisation, it is vital that Arts Council England promotes equal access to the organisations, projects, venues and other services we provide to the arts sector. In order to achieve greater prominence of disabled people in the arts, a number of building blocks need to be put in place that will create the conditions for disabled people to thrive in the arts. We want all disabled and deaf people (artists, audience members, participants and employees) to access the arts and to have greater choices and more opportunities to attend, create, engage and develop. We not only want disabled and deaf people to participate more fully, we also want to ensure that their experiences are of a high quality.

It is important that disabled artists are not pigeon-holed purely as creators of disability or Deaf arts, nor pushed to participate in mainstream arts if they define their work within the disability or Deaf arts genre. Equally important, disabled audience members should have access to the broadest possible range of arts events in addition to disability-specific work. It is therefore Arts Council England's

responsibility to help create the conditions in which disabled people will have the same access to opportunities and the same choices that non-disabled people have, and that those experiences are of equal quality. One of the main threads that will run through all of our priorities is partnership working – ensuring that wherever possible our work towards disability equality is undertaken in partnership, utilising the expertise of our regularly funded organisations and other stakeholders to maximise impact in promoting disability equality. To clarify the journey and to align our efforts, the three years of the action plan will be focused on the following themes:

Year one: illuminate

The emphasis in year one will be on highlighting the broad range of disability issues within our main priorities, focusing on profiling and discussion, deepening knowledge and understanding, and communicating disability equality issues within the arts sector.

Year two: facilitate

Having created a deeper understanding of disability equality in year one, year two will focus on ensuring that the right support, resources and information is available for regularly funded organisations and Arts Council England staff.

Year three: delegate

Having established an effective framework within the first two years of the scheme, year three will focus on supporting and monitoring actions made throughout the scheme.

8.3 Priorities

The involvement process has led to the following areas being prioritised. They are designed to help us to focus efforts so that we achieve the greatest impact:

1. Access: Access remains significant in ensuring that disabled people are not excluded from participating in the arts. Access is a broad term made up of many different elements; there is a strong need to be clear about what standards are expected from regularly

funded organisations and other organisations who receive funding from us. We will instigate a strategic programme that will support regularly funded organisations in delivering disability equality. We will also work strategically across the sector with disability development organisations to ensure that support, information, advice and guidance in relation to access has maximum impact.

2. Cultural change: It is essential that we create a culture where the benefits of disability equality are clearly understood and valued. In order to do this, it is vital that we create an environment in which learning and the sharing of knowledge on disability issues can take place. As part of this process, we need to provide opportunities for learning and clearly identify pathways for support. We recognise that this will require a range of approaches that are inclusive of staff, our regularly funded organisations and our partners across the sector.

The following three areas are key in establishing cultural change:

- an ongoing programme of support for regularly funded organisations is central to providing the necessary resources to ensure everyone has a base level of knowledge and access to the appropriate expertise
- an ongoing programme of disability equality training for Arts Council England staff will ensure that disability equality is embedded within the organisation
- profiling the work of disabled artists through seminars and debates will provide new opportunities for discussion about disability equality within the arts and will provide much-needed dialogue about the diversity of disabled artists practice

3. Audiences and participation: Evidence from the Taking Part survey shows that disabled people are less likely to be audience members or participants of an arts event than non-disabled people. While much work has already been done to explore and address some of the barriers experienced by disabled audience members, there is still significant work to be undertaken. This programme of work links very closely to some of the activities that will be undertaken under 'access', although this specific strand aims to align and embed disability equality within Arts Council England's participation and engagement activities.

4. Talent development: One of the areas where disabled and deaf people frequently report barriers is access to professional development, training, leadership opportunities and opportunities to network and profile their work. We will continue to work with our regularly funded organisations to re-position the work of disabled and deaf artists, generating new and wider audiences for their work.

5. Diversity within disability: Disabled people are diverse, and many disabled people experience discrimination and barriers because they are included in more than one equality group. As we progress towards a single equality scheme, it is essential that the broader context of equality is understood in relation to deaf and disabled people. The Disability Equality Scheme will establish a programme of work that will creatively profile diversity within disability, exploring where barriers occur and how we can adopt a more sophisticated approach to address those barriers.

6. Leadership and governance: Leadership is important in relation to disability equality on many levels internally and externally.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission code of practice states:

'Change starts at the top. Strong, clear and consistent leadership is the key to achieving change in the public sector. Senior management and governing bodies need to take visible ownership of the disability equality duty, for example by requiring reports on its implementation and delivering clear messages to staff about its importance. People feel permitted to do the right thing when the person at the top is saying that they want them to do that. Articulating outcomes for disability equality, setting appropriate targets, running awards schemes and other incentives can practically demonstrate the importance attached by an authority to successful implementation of the duty.'

Arts Council England has a clear role in leading and role-modelling standards and expectations in relation to disability equality. As an organisation, we will continue to develop learning and best practice to ensure that we effectively deliver and promote our public sector duties.

We want to support initiatives that develop leadership in relation to disability equality within the organisations we fund. This will be an important factor in supporting them to develop ownership and confidence in relation to disability equality. Driving up the participation of disabled people within the boards of our regularly funded organisations will be significant in achieving this aim. It will be important to establish a framework through which disabled people can access new opportunities to be on the boards of our regularly funded organisations not purely because they are disabled. We will also identify equality champions in our regularly funded organisations who will provide contact and leadership on equality and diversity issues.

7. Innovation and excellence: Within our Race Equality Scheme we have established a programme of work called the creative case for diversity. The rationale for this work is as follows:

‘Underpinning the Race Equality Scheme and our wider diversity work will be a project to envisage and develop a creative and artistic case for equality and diversity, which recognises that any art consigned to the margins through outdated thinking, structural or institutional barriers, and outmoded and exclusive approaches needs to be brought to the centre of England’s arts and wider culture.

‘This approach will be designed to lift diversity and equality out of the perceived ‘deficit model’ that many perceive it to be stuck in. It will complement and refresh our other approaches – moral, legal and economic – and move beyond them. It is intended that the creative case for the arts can re-cast the way people perceive the value of diversity into one that puts the arts and arts practice at its core. This allows equality and diversity issues to be successfully integrated into work on our mission to get great art to everyone, our development priorities, our work around excellence, world-class arts and the National Arts Strategy, and our long-term vision for the arts in this country. It allows both staff and our other stakeholders to understand diversity on an artistic level and engage with it in concepts familiar to them. Preliminary consultation has shown that the creative case has real potential to re-engage and revitalise the whole debate around equality and diversity in a very positive fashion.

The potential for such an approach was laid out in the McMaster review:

'The diverse nature of 21st century Britain is the perfect catalyst for ever greater innovation in culture and I would like to see diversity put at the heart of everything cultural. We live in one of the most diverse societies the world has ever seen, yet this is not reflected in the culture we produce, or in who is producing it. Out of this society, the greatest culture could grow. As I have said, it is my belief that culture can only be excellent when it is relevant, and thus nothing can be excellent without reflecting the society which produces and experiences it.'

(McMaster Review, *Supporting excellence in the arts – from measurement to judgement* 2007, Department for Culture, Media and Sport)

'The creative case takes advantage of the widespread acceptance that equality and diversity in the arts is of benefit to all art lovers, and to allow inequality to exist is to deny England's people a right to benefit from art created by the cosmopolitan commonwealth that is modern British and English society. Diversity is intrinsic to art, to arts practice and culture, yet this viewpoint is often obscured to the detriment of us all.

'The creative case has the potential to encompass a common approach to all the equality areas and integrate them into a common narrative. As such, it can provide the theoretical underpinning to a future single equality approach, lifting the separate equality strands out of any tendency to compartmentalise them, eliminating any notions of competing equalities or perceived hierarchies.

'The creative case approach consists of three interlocking progressions:

Equality: The continued drive for equality – to remove barriers in the arts world, releasing and realising potential and help to transform the arts so that they truly reflect the diversity of this country. This falls under our continued compliance work and the

Race Equality Scheme work to develop the Black and minority ethnic arts sector.

Recognition: A new conversation that attempts, through various means, to re-situate diverse artists, both historically and theoretically, within the history and contemporary view of the nature of art in this country, and from the periphery and exotic to the centre and mainstream.

A new vision: The construction and dissemination of a new framework for viewing diversity, one that takes it out of a negative or 'deficit' model and places it in an artistic context. Diversity is no longer regarded as a separate entity, but part of the fabric of the discussions and decisions about how we encourage an energetic, relevant, fearless and challenging artistic culture in England and internationally.'

(Arts Council England Race Equality Scheme 2009–11)

A key element of the Disability Equality Scheme will be to establish disability equality as a key component of the creative case for diversity, highlighting the rich innovative contribution that disabled and deaf artists make to the cultural life of England.

8. London 2012 Cultural Olympiad: This presents an unprecedented opportunity to promote disability equality both nationally and internationally. We want to ensure that the Cultural Olympiad and all of the opportunities presented therein are accessible and inclusive of disabled people.

We have been working in partnership with London 2012 to develop 'Unlimited'. This is a funding programme aimed at supporting disabled artists and disabled-led organisations to create new work that will contribute to the Cultural Olympiad, celebrating disability, arts, culture and sport on an unprecedented scale.

To deliver the Unlimited programme, Arts Council England is working in partnership with the Scottish Arts Council, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Arts Council of Wales on behalf of London 2012 and the Olympic Lottery Distributor.

The programme has four pillars:

- **Unlimited Commissions:** a £1.5m commission fund to support the production of quality work by disabled and Deaf artists, and disabled and Deaf-led arts organisations
- **Unlimited Talent:** a bespoke training and mentoring programme for successful applicants to support the realisation of their commission. Training will be specifically created for the needs of each artist or partnership
- **Unlimited Presents:** work created through Unlimited Commissions will have the opportunity to be showcased in London and across the UK up to and including the dates of the Games
- **Unlimited International:** this will support collaboration between artists in the UK and other countries and showcase new work around the world. It will also promote a global debate among young people about disability rights. This will maximise the opportunities presented by London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, ensuring that all the programmes we support are accessible and inclusive of disabled people.

Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan 2010-13

Draft Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan 2010-13

Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Excellence: high-quality art and high-quality arts experience				
decibel Performing Arts Showcase	Senior Officer, Disability Equality/Senior Officer decibel Performing Arts Showcase	To support and advise on decibel Performing Arts Showcase 2011 and maximise its impact in furthering disability equality	2011	<p>Output decibel Performing Arts Showcase, September 2011</p> <p>Outcome A successful and more diverse decibel Performing Arts Showcase, with disabled artists having prominence throughout the Showcase</p>
Reach: more people attending and taking part in the arts				
Disability Equality Support for regularly funded organisations	Senior Officer, Disability Equality	To provide disability equality support to our regularly funded organisations, ensuring they are disability confident and able to promote disability equality	2011	<p>Output: Disability equality advice and guidance is provided to regularly funded organisations</p> <p>Outcome: Regularly funded organisations are disability equality trained and confident</p> <p>Disabled people have improved access to the facilities and services provided by regularly funded organisations</p>

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Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Engagement: more people feel they have opportunities to enjoy and be actively involved in arts activities that are relevant to them				
New audiences, participation and engagement	Senior Officer, Disability Equality/ Senior Officer, Engagement & Participation	Support and integrate disability equality/diversity work into corporate initiatives on engagement, participation and involvement	Ongoing	<p>Output: There are identifiable disability equality measures in the areas of engagement and participation</p> <p>Outcome: Disabled and deaf people are more engaged in the arts</p>
Access Strategy	Senior Officer, Disability Equality	<p>To work with key disability organisations that deliver access support, advice, guidance and training within regularly funded organisations.</p> <p>To support the infrastructure to deliver access information support and guidance</p>	Ongoing	<p>Output: 1. Develop a working group of disability organisations delivering access information and support 2. Identify and deliver strategies that will support the infrastructure for providing access to the arts for disabled and deaf people</p> <p>Outcome: 1. A strategic approach to delivering access in the arts where all organisations are supported to effectively deliver disability equality 2. A strong partnership between Arts Council England and disability organisations</p>
London 2012 Cultural Olympiad	2012 Project Manager Senior Officer, Disability	To ensure that all cultural programmes initiated by Olympiad/Arts Council promote disability equality	Ongoing	<p>Output: Close relationship with Unlimited</p> <p>Outcome: Higher profile for disabled artists in the national and international arenas. An increased portfolio of work by disabled artists</p>

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Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Diversity: arts that reflects the diversity of contemporary England				
Diversity within disability	Senior Officer, Disability Equality	To explore the diversity of barriers experienced by disabled people in relation to gender, race and sexual orientation	Ongoing	<p>Output: Research exploring the diverse experiences of disabled people</p> <p>Outcome: Greater equality in relation to diversity of disabled people and linking of all Arts Council England equality schemes</p>
Board development / leadership	Senior Officer Disability Equality	To develop a framework to support disabled people to participate in the boards of our regularly funded organisation, increasing the number of disabled people	2012	<p>Output: Building a board development programme, to develop The diversification of boards in relation to disability</p> <p>Outcome: There will be more disabled people on arts organisation boards, gaining leadership positions within the arts. There will be recognised equality champions within regularly funded organisations</p>

Draft Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan 2010-13

Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Innovation: artists have the freedom and are challenged to innovate				
The creative case for diversity – ensure that disability equality forms part of the creative case for diversity	Senior Officer, Race Equality and Director, Diversity	1. In partnership with Third Text (a regularly funded organisation), produce a special edition publication with a series of essays devoted to the creative case for diversity in the arts	July 2010	Output: 1. Prestigious publication by a significant regularly funded organisation partner which raises the creative case debate in the heart of the arts sector
	Senior Officer, Disability Equality	2. Organise a high-level conference to explore further the debates raised in the publication	November 2010	2. The conference will be a forum for Arts Council England staff, key policy makers and influencers in the arts, diverse artists and practitioners
		3. Organise a programme of work including a communications strategy, staff learning facilities on One Place and regional discussion groups to bring the Arts Council to the point where the creative case for diversity is the key driver of our diversity work	Ongoing	3. A series of tools and opportunities for staff to engage with the creative case debate delivered through One Place and regional seminars Outcome: There is wide acceptance that the creative case is fundamentally beneficial to the arts sector and this is as strong as the moral, legal and business case for diversity
Disability Arts Strategy	Senior Officer, Disability Equality	1. To map the current national provision of Disability Arts 2. To identify additional ways of supporting national disability arts activity	April 2011	Output: 1. Report on current status of disability arts activity 2. Development of an action plan as the result of the report Outcome: 1. Clear strategy of support for disability arts activity 2. Development of a new dialogue with the disability arts sector 3. Better positioned disability arts sector

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Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Innovation: artists have the freedom and are challenged to innovate (continued)				
Deaf Arts Strategy	Senior Officer, Disability Equality	To implement the findings of the Deaf Arts Snapshot Report (September 2009)	April 2011	<p>Output: To develop an action plan to implement the recommendations of the report</p> <p>Outcome: Greater connection with deaf artists and deaf arts organisations and a better infrastructure for deaf artists and deaf arts organisations to thrive and develop.</p>
Talent development	Senior Officer Disability Equality	To work in partnership with regularly funded organisations to support the talent development of disabled artists	April 2012	<p>Output: Development of a programme of activity that identifies how we can best support the development of disabled and deaf artists' talents.</p> <p>Outcome:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selection of organisations to initiate the talent development programme 2. Engagement with disabled and deaf artists exploring effective ways of talent development.

Draft Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan 2010-13

Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Disability equality in Arts Council England				
1. Developing a single equality approach	Director, Diversity Senior Officers, Race, Disability and Gender Equality	1. To draw the various strands together into a unified approach, using the opportunity provided by the diversity strategy, the national arts strategy and the creative case work 2. If the Equality Bill is enacted, to prepare Arts Council England for seven public duties instead of three	July 2010 Effective date of enactment	Output: Arts Council England's diversity and equality work are unified and articulated as three strands under one programme with one objective Outcome: Staff understand the joined-up diversity agenda and can apply it to their new roles after the organisational review. This is then shared with and promoted to our clients and potential clients
2. Key functions	Director, Diversity	To draw up a timetable to review each of the key functions as they affect all three equality schemes, according to legal duties	Ongoing to 2011	Output: There will be an audit of Arts Council England's key functions as they affect legal duties under race, disability and gender equality legislation Outcome: Due regard will have been demonstrated on all three duties and in the course of this work gaps will be identified, requiring corrective action and therefore improving that service/function
3. Disability Equality Scheme communications and advocacy	Director, Diversity	Timely production of Disability Equality Scheme annual report and supporting quantitative and qualitative evidence of progress. Disability Equality Scheme communications plan	June 2010, and every year	Output: Disability Equality Scheme annual report to be published on the Arts Council England's website as per legal duty Disability Equality Scheme communications plan will include staff learning resources on One Place and used to advocate the Scheme to clients and other agencies Outcome: A clear confident organisation that understands the legal duties and the desire for disability equality in the arts

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Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Disability equality in Arts Council England (continued)				
4. Secretary of State's report on disability equality	Director, Diversity Senior Officer, Disability Equality	To provide quantitative and qualitative evidence of progress of disability equality in the arts	2011	<p>Output: Arts Council England's contribution is published within the Secretary of State's report, as per the legal duty</p> <p>Outcome: A clearer understanding of the progress made towards disability in the sector sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sports, providing a strategic understanding of how the sector can work to maximise disability equality</p>
5. Disability Equality Scheme training	Head of Talent and Development	Ensure that disability equality features in HR training calendar (either as stand alone or part of diversity suite of training)	Ongoing to 2011	<p>Output: Access to learning in relation to disability equality is available to staff through various HR training programmes, pathways and events</p> <p>Outcome: Greater understanding of disability equality issues in the organisation and how this affects our service delivery requirements and relationships</p>
6. Disabled Workers' Group	Director, Diversity and Senior Officer, Disability Equality	<p>To provide advice, support and guidance to meet the needs of the Disabled Workers' Group in order to empower the Group to be an effective representative of its members and their needs.</p> <p>To create a partnership approach to meeting the concerns of disabled and deaf staff and ensuring equality of opportunity</p>	Ongoing	<p>Output: Support to Disabled Workers' Group to help develop a work plan and priorities for the Group</p> <p>Outcome: A confident and effective Disabled Workers' Group that can take an active part in Arts Council England 's work as it affects staffing issues</p>

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Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Disability equality in Arts Council England (continued)				
7. Disability equality and staffing	Head of Employee Engagement and Senior Officer, Disability Equality	<p>1. Maintain HR data on disability status of staff to support requirements to publish information in annual report</p> <p>2. To ensure that all HR policies (some identified for the back catalogue of equality impact assessment retrospective work) are equality-impact assessed for race, disability and gender equality impact</p> <p>3. To support HR colleagues in initiatives centred on greater staff satisfaction of Black and minority ethnic staff and of extending equality of opportunity for all staff</p>	Ongoing	<p>Output: This work is already underway</p> <p>Outcome: Our HR policies and initiatives continue to be inclusive and applied evenly across all staff profiles, roles and remuneration</p>
8. Involvement of disabled people in the Disability Equality Scheme	Director, Diversity Senior Officer, Disability Equality	<p>1. To continue to work with Arts Council England's Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group in the monitoring and delivery and review of the Disability Equality Scheme</p> <p>2. To establish a focus event every year to include the perspectives of a greater number of disabled people in Arts Council England's Disability Equality Scheme</p>	Ongoing	<p>Output: Effective delivery of the Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group work plan and, in turn, the Disability Equality Scheme Annual focus-group events bringing together a diverse range of disabled and deaf people</p> <p>Outcome: Arts Council England is compliant in its legal duty and the views and experiences of disabled people are taken fully into account in the delivery of our Disability Equality Scheme and equality impact assessments</p>
9. Seminar programme exploring the work of disabled and deaf artists	Senior Officer, Disability Equality	1. To initiate a series of artists' talks exploring the work of disabled and Deaf artists	2011	<p>Output: Two seminars each year</p> <p>Outcome: Greater knowledge of the working experiences of disabled artists</p>

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Area of work	Responsibility	Task	Date of delivery	Measures of success
Disability equality in Arts Council England (continued)				
10. Review the Disability Equality Scheme	Director, Diversity Senior Officer, Disability Equality	1. To review the Disability Equality Scheme after one year, following the guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission	February 2011	<p>Output: Review of Disability Equality Scheme and action plan</p> <p>Outcome: Disability priorities and objectives are reviewed and appropriately aligned within a single equality scheme</p>

Appendix 1: Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group Terms of reference

The Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance states that:

'...involvement in the Disability Equality Scheme is, by its nature, involvement in a high-level strategic process. By this, it is meant that organisations are asking people to contribute to something, which will have a significant impact on the organisation. The involvement should therefore be planned, structured, resourced and significant.'

Furthermore:

'It is important to constantly remember that involvement is not the same as consultation. The involvement required is a deeper process than simply consulting people on their opinions or needs. The involvement required will, for example, be more than just asking a group of disabled people their opinion of the Disability Equality Scheme.'

To this end, Arts Council England will create and recruit an Independent Disability Advisory Group, along the principles outlined below, to support the delivery of our national Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan. Each region will mirror this and create regional Independent Disability Advisory Groups for the same, but local purposes.

9 Overview and key principles

Arts Council England will involve disabled people to:

- assist in the identification of barriers faced by disabled people in the arts as artists, audience members, participants and employees
- assess and influence Arts Council England's priorities on promoting disability equality within the arts
- assess and influence Arts Council England's action plan promoting disability equality
- evaluate the effectiveness of Arts Council England's outcomes on promoting disability equality

In order to achieve the above, Arts Council England will ensure that the involvement is:

- **Focused** – around specific objectives, activities, outputs and outcomes
- **Accessible** – to all in a way that allows genuine participation, involvement and freedom of expression
- **Proportionate** – to allow involvement to be real, meaningful and representative
- **Influential** – to allow disabled people's voices to make a difference and genuinely inform and shape the action plans
- **Transparent** – to ensure accountability and openness.

10 Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group

Arts Council England's Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group will:

- inspire, and act as a key partner to Arts Council England, to achieve consistent disability equality and tackle disablism within the arts
- ensure disability equality is embedded throughout the culture of Arts Council England
- monitor the impact of the Arts Council England's Disability Equality Scheme
- review the relevance and effectiveness of the national and regional Disability Equality Scheme Action Plans
- act as 'critical friends' and, on behalf of disabled stakeholders, scrutinise Arts Council England on its performance in promoting disability equality and will provide advice and recommendations as appropriate

In order to ensure the maximum possible benefit to both Arts Council England and the Disability Equality Scheme Action Plans, nationally and regionally, the Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group will be recruited rather than appointed. This will guarantee disabled people's independence and freedom of expression, and has the additional benefit of exposing disabled people to the arts and the role of the Arts Council generally. It is not a requirement that members of the Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group have previous connection with the arts in any way.

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