

## 1. POLICY TO BE SCREENED

### What is a policy?

The Equality Commission has defined 'policies' as '**all the ways a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland**'. The Act defines 'functions' as including powers and duties'.

These are effectively a catch-all definitions that cover all Departmental policies, strategies, schemes, procedures and functions. If in doubt please contact the Equality Unit for advice.

#### 1.1 Title of policy to be screened:

Arts and Older People Strategy

#### 1.2 Brief description of policy to be screened:

The arts and older people strategy has been prepared in recognition of the priorities set out in the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's (ACNI) five year strategy, Creative Connections for the period from 2007-2012. Theme 3: Growing Audiences and Increasing Participation of this strategy specifically addresses the importance of exploring and developing opportunities for older people to engage with the arts. This policy document sets out recommendations for an Arts and Older People strategy for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. It is based on extensive research and consultation conducted by the Arts Council's Strategic Development Department.

#### 1.3 Aims of policy to be screened:

*It is essential that **all** the aims of the policy be clearly and fully defined.*

ACNI's central aim in developing this arts and older people strategy is to assist older people overcome barriers and increase access and participation in arts-related projects that address both their creative and social needs. While this strategy sets out a number of measures that will help tackle broad issues and encourage partnership working, the fundamental objective of this engagement strategy is to increase the number of avenues for older people to become involved in the arts.

#### 1.4 Branch responsible for devising and delivering policy:

*You should indicate if responsibility is shared with another Government Department or Departments.*

Strategic Development and Arts Development

#### 1.5 Name of and contact details for person carrying out screening:

Jacqueline Witherow, Policy Development Officer. Contact: 028 9038 5219

## 2. SCREENING ANALYSIS

When proceeding to screening “proper”, the Equality Commission has stated that there are four criteria to be considered. These are listed at 2.1- 2.4 below. You are asked to consider the criteria in relation to the Section 75 groups and to answer the questions accordingly.

### **“Don’t know”?, “No evidence”?**

The questions ask for evidence in relation to the Section 75 groups. You should not think of the “don’t know” column in the form as the easy option to respond to any of the questions. In cases where you don’t know and you don’t have data on file, you will need to make a pragmatic judgement based on experience as to whether the policy you are screening may have an impact on any of the groups. If your judgement is that the policy may have a differential adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups (i.e. it affects them differently and less favourably than other groups), you should seek to obtain evidence. You should note that evidence can be qualitative – i.e. drawn from the experience of individuals from their perspective - as well as quantitative. Officials must give consideration to steps that they could reasonably be expected to take to obtain evidence and thereby inform their decision-making. Such steps could include meeting with a representative group or selective consultation.

**Where there is little or no evidence, and common sense indicates that a differential impact may be expected, you should discuss this with the Equality Unit.**

2.1 Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups? If so, please indicate below.

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	✓		
Sexual orientation		✓	
Religion		✓	
Political opinion		✓	
Disability (physical and learning)	✓		
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)			
Age	✓		
Dependant responsibilities			✓
Marital status		✓	

**If YES give details:**

1. More women than men over 50 participate in the arts in Northern Ireland.
2. Research shows that participation in arts activities is lowest amongst 65 and over, and dropped by 0.5% between 2004 - 2009.
3. Research identifies a number of issues that impede take-up and participation by older people in the arts. These include:
  - longstanding illness or disability which can affect the individuals access to or enjoyment of art forms.

**Give brief details of the evidence available/used:**

1. ACNI's General Population Survey (2009).
2. ACNI's *General Population Survey* (2004, 2007 and 2009).
3. ACNI's *Research into the actual and perceived barriers to publicly funded arts in Northern Ireland* (2005).

**2.2 Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy?**

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓	
Religion		✓	
Political opinion		✓	
Disability (physical and learning)	✓		
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)		✓	
Age	✓		
Dependant responsibilities		✓	
Marital status		✓	

**If YES give details:**

Older people are as heterogeneous as any other group in our society. Older people can include those who are newly retired, vulnerable, extremely active and physically disabled. For example, some older people experience barriers which prevent them from participating in a wide range of activities. These obstacles may be financial, related to health or for people living in rural areas, lack of transport.

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**2.3 Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy or working with others in Government or in the larger community?**

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓	
Religion		✓	
Political opinion		✓	
Disability (physical and learning)		✓	
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)		✓	
Age	✓		
Dependant responsibilities		✓	
Marital status		✓	

**If YES give details:**

<p>To better promote equality of opportunity and/or community relations this strategy sets out the importance of working in partnership with community organisations, age sector organisations and Government departments such as OFMDFM, who specifically address the issue of age.</p>
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**2.4 Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems that are specific to them?**

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓	
Religion		✓	
Political opinion		✓	
Disability (physical and learning)		✓	
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)		✓	
Age	✓		

Dependant responsibilities		✓	
Marital status		✓	

**If YES give details:**

In 2009 Age Concern Help the Aged NI produced a report which evaluated OFMDFM's progress on the implementation of the *Ageing in an Inclusive Society* strategy. While this report acknowledges positive results such as: progress towards establishing an Older People's Commissioner; extension of the SmartPass to people over the age of 60; protecting disadvantaged older people under the new rates system, and the adoption of Lifetime Opportunities; it also expressed concern that not all the recommendations had been met. The report specifically highlights that there has been a lack of engagement with the age sector since the strategy was established and that there has been a failure to produce annual actions plans and reports since 2005/06.

If the answer to **any** of the questions in respect of any of the categories is **"YES"**, you – in discussion with the Equality Unit – will have to consider whether the policy has a significant impact on equality of opportunity and, therefore, should be subject to an equality impact assessment.

If the answer to **all** the questions in section 2 is **NO** an equality impact assessment is not required.

If the answer to any of the above questions is **DON'T KNOW**, and common sense and experience indicate that a differential impact may be expected, you will need to discuss this with the Equality Unit.

**It may be that a policy has an adverse differential impact on certain people in one or more of the categories as a consequence of targeting or affirmative action to combat an existing or historical inequality. If this is the case, please give details below and contact the Equality Unit if you are in doubt:**

### 3. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATION

Equality impact assessment procedures are confined to those policies considered likely to have significant implications for equality of opportunity.

#### 3.1 If screening has indicated that a policy is having an adverse differential impact, how would you categorise it?

Please tick. N/A

Significant impact	
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Low impact	✓
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#### 3.2 Do you consider that this policy needs to be submitted to a full equality impact assessment?

YES	NO
✓	

**If NO but the policy has significant impact, please give reasons for your recommendation:**

**Please indicate the time it has taken to complete this form and at what level.**

This form was completed by ACNI's Policy Development Officer within the time period of 1 hour.

**Please forward a copy of this form to the Equality Unit**