



**National Library  
of Scotland**

Leabharlann Nàiseanta  
na h-Alba

# **Equalities Mainstreaming Report**

**April 2021-2025**

**Part 1 of 3**

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## **1. Executive summary**

As a publicly funded organisation, the National Library of Scotland has a duty to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity in its everyday work. It is also required to report on how it is achieving these objectives.

This is a progress report for the two-year period from April 2017 on the progress that has been made in complying with the terms of the Equality Act of 2010. It demonstrates that the Library continues to take significant steps to ensure that equality issues are considered and addressed at all stages in the development and delivery of its services.

Progress recorded in the report includes:

- Improving access across all its services for people of all backgrounds
- Offering a range of volunteering and career support opportunities for young people
- Carrying out building upgrades to allow people with mobility impairment to access the reading rooms
- Offering guided tours and assisted technology to support people with disabilities
- Promoting dignity at work training for staff
- Ensuring equal pay for equal work
- Arranging cultural, equality and awareness training for staff
- Planning the establishment of a Library equality and diversity group to ensure further progress.

The report recognises that improvement is a continuous process and identifies a range of targets for future work. It reinforces the Library's commitment to this area of work while acknowledging the significant challenges that lie in achieving further progress.

## **2. Introduction**

The National Library of Scotland (the Library) is one of six legal deposit libraries in the United Kingdom and Ireland. These libraries are entitled to request and receive a copy of each item published in the UK and currently the Library is the custodian of over 34 million items held in trust for the people of Scotland.

The Library was formed in 1925 by the National Library of Scotland Act largely with material from the library of the Faculty of Advocates. The Faculty had been collecting material since the early 1680s and it was much of this material that became the basis of what is now the National Library of Scotland.

The National Library of Scotland preserves the memory of the nation with collections that span the centuries, from earliest times to the digital age. Our collections document the influence of Scots at home and abroad, while reflecting the ideas and cultures of the world. They cover all aspects of human endeavour in multiple formats, including books, manuscripts, archives, websites, maps, music, moving images and sound.

We support education, research, business and innovation and our work enhances the reputation of Scotland as a country with a rich cultural heritage and a vibrant future. We are committed to providing easy access to our physical and digital collections and delivering services that are open and available to all.

In 2015, the National Library of Scotland launched 'The Way Forward: Library strategy, 2015-2020' as the first of two five-year strategies to take the Library to its centenary in 2025. 'Reaching People: Library strategy, 2020-2025' is the second strategy, concluding in the year the Library celebrates its 100th anniversary.

The first five-year journey to our centenary focused on building infrastructure, capacity and resilience, while growing partnerships, reputation and income. This second period concentrates on sharing information, knowledge and experiences with a diverse audience in Scotland and around the globe.

[Further information on the strategy](#) can be found on our website.

The Library has six buildings, four in Edinburgh with the main building at George IV Bridge and two in Glasgow. The Kelvin Hall facility in Glasgow provides the west of Scotland with access to the Library's electronic resources.

There are around 320 staff working across the Library sites, all playing a role in supporting the delivery of the strategy with the aim of moving us towards being recognised as one of the best national libraries in Europe. Staff have a wide mixture of skills, including those who are highly specialised in the fields of conservation, curatorial and archival work, those supporting public areas in the reading rooms and the corporate support functions such as finance and human resources.

Under the National Library Act of Scotland Act (2012), the Board of the Library was reconstituted and as of March 2021, we have 13 Board members and in addition a member who is a nominee from the Faculty of Advocates. The current Chair is acting on an interim basis. The position of Chair is directly appointed by Scottish Ministers and the appointment process is under way. It is hoped to have a newly appointed Chair by September 2021.

As a result of the Equality Act (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016 which came into force on 18 March 2016, there is a commitment to achieving greater

diversity on the boards of public authorities. In light of this amendment the Library now provides information within the mainstreaming report on the number of male / female members of the Board as well as a statement from the Board on their commitment to promote greater diversity of membership as part of a wider remit of succession planning.

In April 2017 we published an Equalities Mainstreaming Report which reset the planned outcomes for the period 2017-2021 as well as presenting an analysis of the gender pay gap and our employee and recruitment data as at January 2017. These outcomes were reviewed and updated within the 2019 Equality Mainstreaming Progress Report along with updated employee and recruitment data.

The results from the objectives are set out through this report. We believe that the Library has made progress in mainstreaming equalities across the organisation. However, there is more to do and there are still a number of challenges for the years ahead.

### **3. The legal framework in relation to the Library and the duty**

Under the 2012 National Library of Scotland Act we are prescribed under the general function to 'manage the Library as a national resource for reference, study, research and bibliography, having particular regard to Scotland'. Under the Act the Library is also specifically charged with:

- Preserving, conserving and developing its collections
- Making the collections accessible to the public and to persons wishing to carry out study and research
- Exhibiting and interpreting objects in the collections
- Promoting collaboration and the sharing of good practice with and between other persons providing library and information services, and the adoption of good practice by those persons with a view to:
  - Encouraging education and research
  - Promoting understanding and enjoyment of the collections
  - Promoting the diversity of persons accessing the collections
  - Contributing to the understanding of Scotland's national culture.

Under the Equality Act 2010 the Library is specifically charged, under the public sector equality duty, to 'exercise its functions, having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and person who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.'

Additionally the Library has responsibilities under the Specific Duties (Scotland) Regulations 2012 to:

- Report on progress towards mainstreaming the duty
- Publish equality outcomes and report on progress
- Assess and review policies and practices
- Gather and use employee information
- Publish gender pay gap information and statements on equal pay
- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
- Publish in a manner that is accessible.

### **The protected characteristics**

There are nine listed protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and these are:

- Gender
- Disability
- Race
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Marital status and civil partnership
- Age
- Gender reassignment

## **4. Mainstreaming the equality duty including an analysis of employee and Board data and recruitment data**

The Library continues to take significant steps to ensure that equalities are mainstreamed throughout its activities. Below we have detailed some of the equality initiatives and projects which the Library has been involved with or will shortly launch since the 2019 Equality Mainstreaming Progress Report.

### **Development of the Library's new strategy, 'Reaching People'**

In the spirit of co-production and genuine partnership working, the Library held its first ever public consultation on our draft strategy for 2020–2025. We designed a strategy consultation that began with an intense schedule of stakeholder engagement across the culture, tourism and equalities sectors, encouraging individuals to attend a high-intensity workshop to help us meet their needs. Our aim was to incorporate new voices and audiences, and we ensured these were included in the content and presentation of the draft strategy

This preparatory work and concerted effort to listen to people's views across a range of perspectives greatly enhanced the draft strategy. The official public consultation resulted in 50 responses, which were instrumental in helping us to shape the finalised strategy.

### **Young people**

In 2020 the Library partnered with the Scottish Youth Film Festival to run a film-making competition on the theme of 'home' for young people living in Scotland aged under 19. The winning entries were selected by a panel of judges and have been added to the Moving Image Archive to become part of Scotland's stories for future generations.

As part of Book Week Scotland 2020, we collaborated with the Scottish Book Trust to deliver 'See You in 10 Years' – a literary time capsule containing works by six young writers aged 13 to 18. The works are accompanied by a new piece of writing by Val McDermid and contained within a specially designed capsule by artist Ali Forbes. The capsule is being stored at the Library for a 10-year period until it is opened, and its contents revealed in 2030. A film about the project was shared online as part of Book Week Scotland in October 2020.

From December 2020 to April 2021, we delivered a virtual Gaelic youth project. We recruited young people from three Gaelic medium schools to take part in the project from Edinburgh, Inverness and Portree. The project was led by a Gaelic-speaking freelance educator, with input from guest experts from City of Edinburgh Council and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. This was part of the accompanying programme for the forthcoming 'Petticoats and Pinnacles' exhibition, funded by Baillie Gifford.

## **'What Scotland means to me' youth film competition**

2018 was the Scottish Government's Year of Young People. For the Moving Image and Sound Collection, this brought the launch of a national youth film competition to proactively engage new audiences and celebrate the culture of Scotland on screen from young people's points of view. The competition was launched in May 2018 in conjunction with the Scottish Youth Film Festival, inviting young people to create a one-minute film on the theme 'What Scotland means to me'.

The call-out for films was promoted far and wide around school networks, youth groups and young film-makers' clubs. The promotional material was produced in both Scots and Gaelic to encourage young people to create their story in any language. All types of technology were eligible in the production of the films from phones, tablets and cameras.

At the end of the competition deadline in October 2018 nearly 50 films were submitted from all over Scotland.

The independent judging panel, formed of award winning Scottish Film Industry talent including Tim Courtney, Raisah Ahmed along with a National Youth Arts Advisory Group Ambassador, were tasked with selecting a shortlist and identifying the winning films. The celebration event took place in Kelvin Hall in Glasgow on 28 November, just before St Andrew's Day, when all 14 shortlisted films were screened to a full house in the auditorium.

The winning film in the '12 years and under' category, 'From Dancing Dundee', was made by Sen and Lucy as they dance their way around Tayside and provide an insight into their view of Scotland. The '13 years and over' category was won by St Thomas Aquinas Acrostic Account where a large group of S2 pupils shared their comical thoughts about what Scotland means to them, using individual pieces to camera.

The Head of Moving Image and Sound Collections at the National Library said: 'Running this competition has been such a great opportunity to add contemporary young people's perspectives to our moving image collections. We were amazed and entertained by the eclectic range of diverse and inclusive films we received for future generations to enjoy.'

We are engaging through the Moving Image Archive with the BFI's Film Audience Network and its strategies for engaging young people with film and television heritage through youth programming and training initiatives.

## **Working with and supporting people affected by dementia**

We have continued to deliver Library Socials during the period April 2019-March 2021. Despite the suspension of our onsite programme due to Covid-19 from March 2020, we



have continued to deliver our regular monthly programme online via Zoom. The Library Socials are part of a larger partnership programme with the National Galleries of Scotland, the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh Zoo, and University of Edinburgh Museums.

As an extension of the partnership, the University of Edinburgh, Napier University and Age Scotland are leading an action-research project 'Unlock & Revive'. The project is exploring the benefits of cultural engagement for people living with dementia, using the Scottish Government's Place Principle approach to supporting the health and care sector, local communities and individuals. The Library is one of the cultural partners for this project, which got under way in February 2021 and will run until September 2021.

We have also been working with the National Galleries of Scotland to develop a new handling box for the MacKinnon touring exhibition, with tailored resources for people affected by dementia. Due to Covid-19, the tour has been postponed to later in 2021.

Films from the Library's Moving Image and Sound Archive are being used as part of Glasgow's dementia strategy which has been hailed as world-leading. The Dementia Innovation Readiness Index 2020 cited Glasgow's dementia strategy, as 'a template for cities looking to improve early detection and diagnosis'. And it also recognised the city for 'explicitly recognising' diagnosis of dementia as 'critical'. Glasgow's strategy was developed by the city's Health & Social Care Partnership, in collaboration with Alzheimer Scotland. Priorities include the provision of resources to enable people with dementia to continue living in the community, reducing stigma and increasing social engagement on the issue. One small part of the wider project has been for Glasgow Life Community Services team to create online resources for 12 care homes throughout the city and provide content to support reminiscence activities through closed Facebook groups. So far three films from the Library's collection have been selected for inclusion in the work: [a short 1959 film](#) about how jams, sauces, sweets and coffee are manufactured in the Co-op's Shieldhall factory, Douglas Gray's [1963 history of Glasgow documentary](#) and the 1985 '[Clyde film](#)' made by members of a local arts and community group in the Cranhill.

## **Accessibility**

We strive to make our services accessible to all. These include:

- We offer regular visits for older people who are socially isolated via a partnership with Contact the Elderly. We also offer visits for other organisations who work with older people, such as the Artlink Vintage Club. We are taking part in the Luminare Festival of Creative Aging in 2019.
- We offer regular accessible exhibition tours for people who are visually impaired and hard of hearing, and we are currently investigating the possibility of offering Deaf-led tours in partnership with other heritage organisations.

- We have a range of assistive technology in our reading rooms to enable people with visual impairments to access our print and digital collections.
- We provide access to our General Reading Rooms for all readers including those with mobility impairment. We have upgraded our infrastructure including the introduction of automated doors to maximise self-service access/egress to our reading rooms for those in wheelchairs or with other mobility barriers.
- We publicise access to our buildings for such users by participating in Disabled Access Day 'You are here' guided tours each year.
- We provide scheduled guided tours of our exhibitions to people with disabilities.
- In 2018, the Library worked with Age Scotland to help deliver a year-long project, funded by HLF, to explore the history of services and campaigns for older people in Scotland.
- Striving to meet the accessibility regulations by ensuring that all websites are accessible to any person by complying with the WCAG 2 AA standards.

Throughout 2019 and in early 2020 we continued to expand our outreach engagement across Scotland as part of the touring displays programme, visiting venues across Scotland. We also delivered 'Her Century' - a hugely successful outreach film project, delivered in partnership with Film Hub Scotland, which was screened at community venues across the country.

Due to the suspension of our onsite activities from March 2020 caused by Covid-19, we launched a new series of online events and workshops to support ongoing access to the Library for a wide range of audiences. This has enabled people beyond Scotland's central belt and audiences who face other access barriers including disabilities and caring commitments, to engage with the Library in new ways. From May 2020–March 2021 we increased attendance to our events programme by 57%, and on average 68% of event attendees were not Library members and 35% hadn't attended a Library event before. We have strived to make digital programmes more inclusive by providing subtitles to our recorded events and we are currently trialling live subtitling for our live events.

We have been doing work to develop our understanding of underrepresented audiences, and we have been trialling new programmes that better serve their needs and interests. This includes piloting a new onsite family programme at George IV Bridge from autumn 2019 until spring 2020. Unfortunately, this was cut short due to Covid-19, but we have continued family engagement through the development of online family resources and we plan to resume our onsite family programme later in 2021. We have also delivered a number of community partnership projects including partnerships with Edinburgh-based group Networking Key Services (NKS), Scottish BAME Writers Network, and Hidden Disabilities Sunflower.

## **Student engagement and research**

The Library / University of Glasgow MsC Film Curation student placements at Kelvin Hall came to an end in 2019. Student Gordon Park delivered a particularly successful set of screenings for the public on the theme 'Pride of Islands' and also assisted with research into hidden voices in the collection.

A PhD student completed a report on 'archive film and wellbeing'. The report will be reviewed in the coming months and any relevant findings shared within the Library. The internship at Kelvin Hall was supported by the SGSAH.

We have submitted an application for a Wellcome-funded PhD student to work with the Moving Image Archive on 'reframing disability', working together with disabled people to uncover and reassess the representation of people with disabilities in the collection. The outcome of the application will be known in June 2021.

## **Events and research**

In June 2019, we hosted a visit from members of ELIAS (European Librarians in African Studies) to show them items from Archive and Manuscript Collections relating to Africa, around the theme of the challenges of finding African voices within colonial-era collections. Approximately 20 librarians visited the library, many of whom were in Edinburgh for ECAS2019, the 8th European Conference on African Studies, which ran at the University of Edinburgh from 11-14 June.

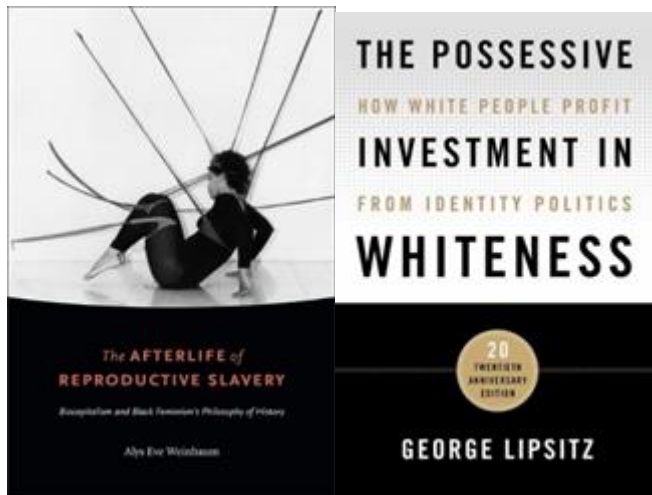
One of the Archives and Manuscripts Team is a member of SCOLMA (UK Libraries and Archives Group on Africa), and was part of the organising committee for SCOLMA's 2019 conference, 'Decolonising African studies: Questions and dilemmas for libraries, archives and collections'. SCOLMA's conference was held at the University of Edinburgh to coincide with ECAS2019, and included speakers from the National Archives of Zimbabwe and the University of Khartoum, as well as from across the UK and Europe. Around 60 delegates heard papers on approaches to decolonising library and archive collections, whether through new collecting policies, re-thinking how collections are described, or repatriating records to their place of origin. The day ended with a discussion on some of the issues raised in relation to the collections of major libraries and archives in the UK and internationally.

In 2019, the Library worked in partnership with the University of Edinburgh on a project called Prescribe Culture. This is part of a wider UK health and wellbeing initiative (Social Prescribing) where GPs are working with patients who have mild-moderate anxiety / depression to develop their own personalised solutions. This particular project focused on heritage collections and was a pilot project to test the impact of cultural visits and activities on health and wellbeing.

Over six sessions, students, who were referred by health and wellbeing partners from within the university, came to the Library to take part in workshops inspired by the

manuscripts collections (diaries, journals, notebooks, sketchbooks). Each session included an opportunity to spend time with items from the collection, followed by a related creative writing / craft activity.

## Black studies



The Library has continued to develop its collections in this area of study and publishing, paying close attention to the increase in publishing output over the course of 2020 in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. The Library has made a purchase of two eBook purchases of US publications that are outside the scope of legal deposit. George Lipsitz's 'The possessive investment in whiteness', first published in 1998, examines, amongst other things, the structural economic injustices that benefit whiteness. This expanded edition, published in 2018, has been acquired as an eBook, with remote access to registered readers in Scotland. Professor Lipsitz visited the Library in 2018 to take part in the Black Atlantic Authorship and Art international symposium. 'The Afterlife of Reproductive Slavery' by Alys Eve Weinbaum (2019) is another remotely accessible eBook that looks at slavery and capitalism as co-emergent systems, examining the ways in which biocapitalism continue to exist today.

## Widening access and inclusion

The Library marked International Women's Day at Kelvin Hall with a workshop in association with the community arts project 'Hitherto Unknown'. The workshop looked at women film-makers in the film collection and the opportunity to document women's experiences in web-archiving.

For the Luminate Festival 2019, we hosted two Memories workshops at Kelvin Hall in partnership with Glasgow Museums. In May 2019 we supported 'Taking Tea with a Trailblazer' storytelling workshops in both Kelvin Hall and George IV Bridge.

The Library has also been engaging with LGBT Health and Wellbeing on their Luminate-funded film project. The film (on care in later life) opened the Luminate festival in Glasgow

in 2019 this year. LGBTQI+ experiences are dramatically underrepresented in the film and video collections. We will continue to work with this charity on projects to support engagement with the Library and to encourage potential donations of material.

### **Archive of Jim Mearns, 'Repeal the Clause' campaigner**

Jim Mearns, a civil servant, trade unionist, and key figure in the Scottish campaigns to repeal Section 28 / Clause 2A of the Local Government Act 1988, has kindly donated his private papers to the Library. The campaign to repeal the controversial clause which prohibited the discussion of homosexuality in schools, which dominated political debates during the first year of Scotland's new Parliament in 1999-2000, was previously a significant 'gap' in the Library's political manuscript collections. This archive contains correspondence, reports, and publicity materials relating to Mr Mearns's role in the Repeal the Clause campaign and as co-convenor of UNISON Scotland's LGBT Committee, as well as his membership of several Glasgow trade guilds and societies and his intellectual and cultural pursuits. OurStory Scotland have interviewed Mr Mearns for their archive of LGBTQI+ oral histories at the Library, and in the future researchers will be able to consult the materials in the archive alongside the more personal stories preserved in his born-digital recording. The gift also includes valuable additions to the Library's holdings of publications, including a complete run of newsletters of the left-wing Scottish Labour pressure group Campaign for Socialism (of which Mr Mearns was a founder member during the 1990s), and ephemera from early Pride marches in Edinburgh and Glasgow. We hope to continue working in partnership with OurStory Scotland to collect the papers of political activists and campaigning organisations who have recorded oral histories for the archives in order to preserve as diverse a picture of LGBTQI+ politics in contemporary Scotland as possible.

### **Contemporary issues in library and archive studies**



The Library has added a number of books that look at libraries and archives themselves, examining topics around language, ethics, and bias. These publications will help to support the work to address both the silences in the collection and offensive language and terms on our catalogues and webpages. The books are: 'Comics and Critical

Librarianship', edited by Olivia Piepmeier and Stephanie Grimm; 'Reference Librarianship and Justice – history, practice and praxis', edited by Kate Adler ...; 'Ethical Questions in Name Authority Control', edited by Jane Sanberg; 'Archives and Special Collections as Sites of Contestation', by Mary Kandiuk; and 'Masked by Trust – bias in library discover,' by Matthew Reidsma.

### **Caribbean newspapers 1718-1876**

The Library has added another eResource to its collections. Caribbean Newspapers is 'the largest online collection of 18th- and 19th-century newspapers published in this region and serves as a comprehensive primary resource for studying the development of Western society and international relations within this important group of islands. This unique resource will prove essential for researching colonial history, the Atlantic slave trade, international commerce, New World slavery and US relations with the region as far back as the early 18th century.'

The resource, which is remotely available to registered readers with a Scottish address, provides easy access to more than 140 newspapers from 22 islands, and chronicles the region's evolution across two centuries through eyewitness reporting, editorials, legislative information, letters, poetry, advertisements, obituaries and other news items.

### **Struggles for Liberty: African American Revolutionaries in the Atlantic World – an online resource**



In 2021, the Library launched an online learning resource – 'Struggles for Liberty: African American Revolutionaries in the Atlantic World'. It shares the lifelong fight for social justice of African American freedom fighters, some of whom campaigned in Britain and Ireland in the 19th century.

## **Her Century**

A partnership between the Library and Film Hub Scotland has produced a timely moving image touring programme: ['Her Century'](#). In late 2019 and early 2020, the tour will visit cinemas and venues all over Scotland, with talks and a newly commissioned zine to accompany the films. Scotland's women lived through major social change in the 20th century, challenging their roles in society and fighting for equality: at work and at home, classroom to croft, girlhood to motherhood. These films are screened together for the first time in a touring programme full of contemporary relevance and guaranteed to spark debate and discussion, with a dose of laughter and nostalgia. Curated by the Moving Image and Sound Collection Learning and Outreach Officer, these rarely seen films follow women's histories through 100 years of film-making in Scotland.

## **Screening of 'Britain on Film: Welcome to Britain'**

The Library presented a screening of the Independent Cinema Office's archival film compilation 'Britain on Film: Welcome to Britain' on 23 October in the Kelvin Hall cinema. The programme charts a century of arrivals to the UK. Featuring the voices of different generations of British immigrants, this programme explores the manifold costs to our shared humanity in turning people away, and contends that all citizens should have a right to call themselves British, no matter their country of origin. Talking to members of the audience allowed Library staff to open conversations with potential donors who may be able to help us in improving the representation in the collections of both new Scots and those whose immigration stories date back to the mid-20th century.

## **Organisational development and training**

Over the period 2019-2021 the contribution of organisational development and training to equalities in the Library has focused on three broad areas: age (and especially youth employability); disability; and ethnicity.

### **Age:**

#### **Youth employability**

The core issue of youth employability is how the individual makes a successful transition from formal education to the workforce. For some young people that transition can be as difficult after a graduate course as it is for school-leavers. We have worked with young people throughout that 'long transition' by raising awareness of how to navigate the change; offering chances to gain workplace experience; and by providing paid opportunities to show their potential and build their confidence. We have worked with young people of all ages – from high school pupils to PhD candidates.

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds can find these life transitions especially difficult. Both Career Ready and the Robertson Trusts Scholarship programme offer

support to young people with great potential from said backgrounds. We have been proud to work with both organisations to support their work with young people through this period. The Library is also looking at ways to engage with the Government's Kickstart scheme.

We regularly offer employability coaching to the young people we work with. This seeks to make the recruitment process transparent and support young people in pulling together the evidence required to be successful in applications and sell themselves at interview.

We see the links between the Library as a holder of world class collections and our role in supporting young people. In a series of short projects in 2019-2020 we used our fashion-related collections to raise awareness of the Library among young audiences. This included a fashion design competition and pop-up exhibition; a fashion collections internship; and a project inviting Fashion Communication students from Heriot Watt to design materials promoting our collections to fashion graduates across Scotland focussing on visual inspiration; technical information; business services and employability support.

We recognise that real, paid work experience is a powerful boost to both the skills and the confidence of young people heading for their first permanent job. We have sought funding that we can dedicate to creating these paid opportunities. We secured project funding, in partnership with Google, for two six-month digital internships in 2019 and, as the pandemic struck in 2020, we created six remote internships of nine months each.

Working with the Robertson Trust we were delighted to be able to host four of their scholars as interns in the summer of 2020. We also funded a digital scholarship internship for a PhD candidate.

With generous support from a donor, we were able to recruit the second cohort of Fragile Format Trainees in 2020. These traineeships allowed young people who are committed to a career working with sound, video or the conservation of paper vital hands-on experience at the start of their working lives.

### **An aging workforce**

At present, 30% of our workforce is aged 55 or older and therefore, potentially, within 10 years of retirement. An aging workforce represents a wealth of accumulated knowledge and experience that the organisation risks losing.

We encourage staff to engage positively with the aging process and to plan ahead for a successful and happy retirement. We have offered pre-retirement training for individuals and run training sessions on age awareness and preparing for retirement with the Pension Scheme (MyCSP).

We are also investing in an e-learning system which will help us engage staff who are working towards retirement in creating learning modules that capture their knowledge and experience for the benefit of colleagues and successors.



## **Disability**

We recognise that equalities issues are as important for the Library as a public service provider as it is for the Library as an employer. Training in disability awareness issues is especially important in working across these two aspects of our function.

Key themes in the past two years have included Autism Awareness for both managers of staff who may have autism and public-facing staff who may be engaging with members of the public with autism.

We also ran a series of mental health awareness training sessions for managers and all staff. Following accredited training, we now have Mental Health First Aiders within the workplace.

Working with Edinburgh College during the lockdown, eight members of public-facing staff completed a course in British Sign Language.

## **Ethnicity**

In 2019 we identified an opportunity to work with the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) on ways that we could engage effectively with more ethnically diverse audiences and bring more of that diversity into our workforce.

We commissioned CRER to run two pilot workshops on white privilege as a concept we could use to better understand how a predominantly white organisation can identify and address barriers to inclusion. The sessions, titled 'Privilege and Silence', ran in February 2020. Our plans to build upon this pilot project were disrupted by the pandemic and delayed by the secondment of the facilitator to another organisation. Our intention is to return to this area of work when conditions allow.

In February 2021 we took part in a multi-agency training session, 'White Supremacy and Cultural Heritage', run by Intercultural Youth Scotland and looked at how unspoken and unexamined assumptions held in the cultural heritage sector may create barriers to wider ethnic diversity in both our audiences and our workforces.

## **Period poverty**

Following [MSP Monica Lennon's period poverty bill](#) and the Scottish Government's '[Let's Call Periods, Periods](#)' campaign, the Library committed to supplying free sanitary products in its buildings.

General Collections curators have been working with Professor Bettina Bildhauer and Dr Camilla Mørk Røstvik of St Andrews University, who have recently won a RSE Arts and Humanities Research Grant to research the factors behind how period poverty become a policy initiative in Scotland. The curators put together a display 'The special blood in which all our lives were started' in George IV Bridge front hall. The Library continued its RSE

funded research partnership with academics on the topic of period poverty, with an online event on 3 September 2020 called '21st century periods' by Professor Bettina Bildhauer and Dr Camilla Rostvik.

## **Board statement: Promoting diversity of Board membership**

The Board of the National Library of Scotland is committed to the promotion of diversity of Board membership. The Board believes that it has a role to play in promoting diversity and inclusion across our workforce. The engagement and productivity of our people are positively impacted by bringing people into the organisation from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. The Board endeavours to continuously reflect on and improve the diversity of Trustees as part of the cycle of board recruitment.

## **Employee data analysis**

The tables showing the staff data are within Part 3, Appendix 1 [separate PDF]. Where data is referred to, the table is referenced.

Unless otherwise stated, the information on our staff has been taken from the HR Management Information System as at 31 March 2021.

### **Gender and age**

Within the Library there is a fairly balanced number of female and male employees with 56% female and 44% male.

Within the grades there are a proportionately larger number of male staff in Grade B and C and a larger number of females in Grade D, E, G, H and J (Table 2 and 3). It is interesting that the predominantly female grades are within the middle and upper middle quartiles which goes against the general trend in organisations. Within these grades there is an element of occupational segregation, particularly in the following roles:

- Grade B and C – Porter, Security, Collection Support (Drivers)
- Grade D, E and H – Administrative roles, Reader Services, Curatorial Staff

The breakdown of the full-time and part-time staff (Table 4) shows a higher proportion of female staff working on a part-time basis. This is not uncommon and in line with national statistics. An element of this difference is that more female staff have caring responsibilities and in a number of cases it is through choice to work on a part-time basis. It is important to support all employees with caring responsibilities and ensure flexible working requests are treated favourably where possible.

There are a larger number of males within the higher age categories (Table 8). Within the Library there are a number of areas where there are predominantly male employees with long service and very low turnover, e.g. Security and Collections Support Services.

### **Disability**

There is a fairly even spread of staff with a disability (Table 5). This would suggest that proportionately, disability is not a barrier to being appointed or promoted to higher grades.

### **Age**

The number of staff in the 55+ age group accounts for 30% of the staff (Table 6 and 7). One concern is in relation to the number of staff who could potentially retire and leave gaps in the levels of knowledge and skills. This is being considered through career planning and development of staff. Our work over the past few years has reduced this percentage. The figure of staff in the 55+ age group in 2019 was 43%. The other concern is the number of younger people (age 20–24) employed by the Library. There is an element that there are a number of roles that require experience in the Library, but efforts to attract and employ young people continue as can be seen from our work in Section 4.

### **Ethnicity and nationality**

It is evident that the staff of the Library are predominantly white, i.e. 86% of those that have disclosed which is a high representation (Table 9). This figure has remained the same from 2019. The number of staff represented by different ethnic backgrounds remains low and the majority of staff within this group are within the lower pay grades. This is an area where we will focus our efforts which can be seen from the outcomes for 2021–2025.

On nationality, the staff are predominantly British, i.e. 89% (table 10). This is slightly less than in 2019 (92%). The impact of Brexit may have an ongoing affect.

### **Sexuality**

It is evident that, in the main, staff declare themselves as heterosexual, i.e. 63% but comparisons are difficult given that 32% of staff have not disclosed or prefer not to say (Table 12). The number of staff within the LGBT+ group has increased from 2% in 2019 to 5%.

### **Quality of data:**

#### **Staff data**

In a few areas it is difficult to provide valid conclusions due to the amount of incomplete data. The number of staff who have not disclosed or prefer not to say has reduced slightly

from 2019. To continue to improve the completion of staff data, we will continue to encourage staff to update their personal record within the self service system which is part of the HR System.

### **Recruitment data**

Work has been undertaken on the e-recruitment process to improve the quality of the data provided by candidates. The data shown in Appendix 3 provides a significant improvement from the 2017 report in the reduction of all applicants under the 'not disclosed' category, e.g. in the 2017 report the number of non disclosed candidates in the category ethnicity was 82.9%. In this report the percentage has reduced to 2%.

The improvements have also allowed us to extract information on the number of candidates within each category that have been invited for interview and appointed.

### **Board data analysis**

The tables showing the Board data are within Appendix 2.

The publication of this data is now a requirement under the Equality Act (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016 which came into force on 18 March 2016 and reinforces the commitment of Scottish Ministers to achieving greater diversity on the Boards of public authorities.

Prior to the Act coming into force, The Scottish Government's Programme for Government encouraged public, private and third sector organisations to sign up to the Partnership for Change and to set a voluntary commitment for gender balance on their Boards of 50/50 by 2020.

The Library was one of the first Scottish public organisations to achieve gender balance within its Board.

As can be seen from the data, the Board has a higher number of females. In February 2022, a number of Board members will be leaving. The Scottish Government are responsible for the recruitment of Board members and discussions have commenced with the Scottish Government on the recruitment process for new Board members.

### **Recruitment data analysis**

The tables showing the staff data are within Appendix 3. Where data is referred to, the table is referenced.

There has been a significant reduction in the recruitment that has taken place over the past year due to Covid-19 and therefore the data only covers a small number of advertised posts where the majority of these were internships. This has had an uncharacteristic

impact on the results e.g., 36% of candidates appointed were within the age 18–25 group compared to 18% from the 2019 report. However, within all the categories there are improved percentages across the board in relation to the protected characteristics.

