Equality Impact Assessment forms – Projects



# **Equality impact assessment (EqIA) form - www.nls.uk/ main website redevelopment project**

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| Title of work to be assessed | [www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk) main website redevelopment project  |
| Assessment undertaken by | Màiri Lafferty |
| Date of assessment submission | 4 March 2024 |
| Details of the work being assessed | EqIA for the redevelopment and redesign of the main library website (www.nls.uk) over the next two years to achieve the following objectives:* Enable National Library of Scotland to **deliver more relevant and impactful services** through improved user experience and presentation of content.
* Use the rich expertise within the library more effectively, to **improve efficiencies** around content production.
* Build a **secure and scalable platform** and address current 'end of life' technology challenges.
 |
| Who from EqIA Review group have you discussed this with? | E. Muniandy |

## **Introduction: Timeline and purpose of the form**

This equality impact assessment form must be completed **before** you have developed or revised the work in question. This task and form should not be completed by one person – it should be a team effort where possible.

For detailed guidelines on how to work on an EqIA form please read and follow **Equality Impact Assessment Guidance**.

## **Step 1: Impact of the work to be assessed**

* Who does the work affect, and in what way? Think about audiences, staff, partners.

Online audiences. All staff that use or engage with the site to provide information or check information. All staff and partners who contribute to the website and its content.

* Might anyone else be affected indirectly?

Anyone accessing information that has been collated by web crawlers. Or information that is pulled to other sites that we have not been made aware of, will return a 404 link and direct people to the new site.

* Are any other policies or projects affected by this work?

No.

## **Step 2: Identify some evidence**

You must show what will inform your assessment (step 3).

The most basic evidence is Census data. The Scottish Government's [Equality Evidence Finder](https://www.gov.scot/collections/equality-evidence/) can be used to source more detailed and specific evidence relating to different characteristics.

What evidence and research have the Library already conducted that may inform your assessment.

Ensure to include any research you are drawing on in order to complete this assessment in the table below:

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| Resource that informs your assessment | Information provided by the resource |
| User research programme 2023 | **Current context**Supported by user research conducted by frankly green & webb, the proposal advocates for a holistic and user-centred redesign of [www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk). Our findings come under the following challenges: **Misalignment with user expectations:*** The website is acting as an online library rather than just a stepping stone to the physical library: when asked for the primary motivation for their visit, 94% of users reported library-specific motivations – to access collection items, to carry out research, or to feed their curiosity.
* Only 15% of online users have a library card, meaning they are members of the National Library of Scotland, suggesting they can complete the tasks they want to, using the resources that are available without logging in (joining) or that they do not know about membership. In relation to this, one third of online users are from Scotland.
* Only 27% of first-time visitors strongly agreed "I was able to achieve what I wanted to on the website today". In comparison, this rises significantly to 46% of those who had visited more than once in the last 12 months.

**Narrow audience:*** The existing audience profile across the library web profile is older, white, and highly educated: 56% users are male; 90% users are white; 75% users are 55 or over and only 12% are under 45.
* An academic or professional research motivation is the highest motivation in ages 16 to 54, and 68% have a degree or post-graduate qualification.
* Younger academics and students are under-represented. This matters for relevance of the National Library of Scotland into the future given the age of the current audience.

**Accessibility standards:** * 38% of existing users report additional accessibility requirements and the website's outdated design, poor navigation and mix of interfaces is impacting both audience size and identity.

**Limited engagement and returning users:*** 78% of users reported that this was their first visit to any of the National Library of Scotland sites. In comparison, 17% of users reported visiting more than once within the last 12 months.

**Limited reach of narrative content:*** Narrative or interpretative content reaches only a very small audience. Blogs out with the 12 top performing posts had fewer than 500 views over the last year. Out of over 600 blogs, only the top 10% received over 100 views in the last year, this is less than 10 views a month on average.
* The National Library of Scotland produces very diverse types of content, produced in pockets across the web presence without a clear audience or purpose. Online audiences are not expecting this content from the National Library of Scotland, so they are not looking for it and it is not easily discoverable on the site.
* There is no editorial approach or owner, and this causes issues with discoverability. Search engines favor sites that demonstrate authority by consistently publishing on topics and having links between articles and respected sources.

**Usability issues for library-motivated users:**Users struggle to succeed first time across the website:* Only 19% strongly agree "I can easily find the information or resources I need".
* Only 21% "feel confident in using the online services, tools, and features".
* Only 17% strongly agree "the layout is clear and easy to navigate".
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## **Step 3: Assess the impact**

It may be helpful to look at the possible outcomes of this assessment before you start – see [Step 4: Monitoring](#_Step_4:_Monitoring).

**A positive impact** is one where the policy, practice, process or service can improve access to your policies, practices, processes or services by removing barriers for equality groups and/or improve understanding between groups.

**A negative impact** may indicate the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, both of which are unlawful.

**Please note you need not provide written answers to the prompting questions, they are there to guide you through the kind of considerations that need to be made for each characteristic.**

### **Age**

Does the work impact on people of different ages differently?

* How might the work impact differently on children and young people, and older people?
* Could a 10 year-old and a 105 year-old easily use, attend this?
* Might age affect how the work is used, accessed or understood?
* How will the communication and engagement strategy take into account the differing needs of people of different ages?
* Does the work make blanket assumptions about age?
* Is there an opportunity to improve outcomes for a certain age group through this policy?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| The project aims to improve accessibility for older users by addressing issues related to sight, hearing, and physical disabilities —those typically affecting more older users.  |  |  | This initiative ensures that older individuals can navigate and engage with the website more effectively, enhancing their overall user experience. |
| By introducing better design of visuals and information, the project aims to make the website easier to use for individuals with neurodiversity, which often affects younger people. |  |  | This inclusive approach ensures that younger users with diverse cognitive needs can access and understand the content more easily.  |

### **Disability**

Does the work impact on disabled people differently to non-disabled people?

* How might your work impact differently on disabled people?
* What barriers, physical or attitudinal, might exist that could hinder disabled people's access and participation?
* What psychological barriers might exist for people with mental health issues?
* Will you need to consider different communication and engagement strategies to take into account disabled people's needs, and how will disabled people find out about this work, if it will affect them?
* Is take-up of this service or information disproportionately low by disabled people?
* Is there an opportunity for this work to improve outcomes for disabled people?
* Is this wheelchair accessible (lifts, doorways, height of written information, interactivity…)?
* Are there disabled toilets nearby?
* Have you assumed everyone attending will be able to hear and see?
* Have you assumed everyone attending will be able to walk?
* Has it been made clear in advance that anyone with specific needs can get in touch in advance, for example audio-description or subtitles required?
* Does this require people to declare if they have a disability? For example, they need a key to use the accessible toilet.

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| An accessible design and inclusive user testing process will prioritise digital accessibility. This involves ensuring that the website's layout, navigation, and content are designed to accommodate individuals with physical disabilities who may use assistive technologies like screen readers or keyboard navigation. The website will include easy-to-find, keyword-rich accessibility and facilities content for users planning a visit. |  |  | By focusing on digital accessibility, the project aims to create an inclusive online environment where users with physical disabilities can navigate and interact with the website effectively.  |
| The project will focus on improving compatibility with screen readers and other assistive technologies used by individuals with visual impairments. This includes optimising the website's code structure, providing alternative text for images, and ensuring proper semantic markup to enhance screen reader accessibility.  |  |  | By ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies, the project aims to improve the accessibility of visual content for users with visual impairments.  |
| Where possible, digital content that is part of the project will be made accessible through inclusive design and user testing with accessibility experts.  |  |  | By providing alternative forms of content presentation, the project aims to ensure that users with hearing-related disabilities can access and comprehend multimedia content effectively.  |
| An accessible design approach and inclusive user testing process will consider the needs of individuals with neurodiverse conditions. Including website layout, structure, and content presentation to reduce cognitive overload and enhance readability.  |  |  | By prioritising cognitive accessibility, the project aims to create a user-friendly experience for individuals with neurodiverse conditions.  |
|  | Despite efforts to provide transcripts and audio descriptions for multimedia content, visuals that cannot be perceived by visually impaired individuals and sound work that is inaccessible to those with hearing loss or deafness may still pose barriers to engagement. Despite mitigating measures, some users may still encounter difficulties accessing certain types of content, highlighting the ongoing need for continuous improvement in accessibility practices.  |  |  |

### **Gender Reassignment**

Does this work impact on transgender and cisgender people differently?

* How can you ensure that your work does not discriminate against transgender people – especially in terms of dignity?
* Are there any opportunities for advancing equality for transgender people through your policy?
* Does your policy present opportunities to tackle discrimination and harassment towards transgender people?
* Are there gender-neutral toilets in the building? How are you communicating their existence and location?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| The project will strive to ensure representation of transgender individuals on user testing panels and advisory boards.  |  |  | By actively involving transgender individuals in the decision-making process, the project aims to promote diverse perspectives and experiences, fostering a more inclusive and equitable digital environment.  |
| The project will aim to represent gender diversity in project-specific website content and visuals. This includes using imagery and language that reflects the diversity of gender identities and expressions.  |  |  | This approach ensures that transgender individuals feel affirmed and represented when engaging with the website.  |
| If forms are part of the scope of work, the project will consult with transgender communities to provide inclusive options for pronouns, names, and proof of identity.  |  |  | By offering diverse and affirming options in forms, the project aims to create a welcoming and inclusive user experience for transgender individuals, respecting their gender identities and expressions.  |
| If profiles are included in the project scope, consultations will be held to provide inclusive options for pronouns, names, and proof of identity.  |  |  | By incorporating inclusive profile options, the project aims to empower transgender individuals to represent themselves authentically on the platform, promoting visibility and recognition of diverse gender identities.  |

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

Does this work impact on people because of maternity and pregnancy?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| In project related content, the website will signpost access to facilities such as lifts, restrooms with baby changing facilities, and designated seating areas for pregnant individuals.  |  |  | Clearly indicating the availability and location of these facilities, the project aims to enhance accessibility for pregnant users.  |
| The project ensures easy access for pregnant or parent individuals to speak with a person for assistance or support ahead of their visit.  |  |  | This promotes inclusivity and personalised care during their visit to the library.  |

### **Race**

Does this work impact on people of different races differently?

* Might your work impact differently on people of different ethnicities?
* How will you make sure that people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds will be able to access your service and information?
* Have you considered different venues and places that you might need to use to advertise your policy or service?
* Are there any particular communities for whom take up of the service/information is disproportionately low?
* Are there any barriers (including cultural) that might impede a group of people from accessing your policy and information? Consider that not everybody will be able to understand English, either written or spoken.
* What opportunities does your policy present to tackle discrimination, and to advance equality of opportunity and help develop community cohesion?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| To ensure we have intersectional representation we will strive to ensure there is representation in the user groups. While people of colour (POC) are not a target group, we will strive to ensure that there is diversity across all user groups.  |  |  | This approach fosters inclusivity and ensures that the platform is designed to meet the needs of a diverse user base, enhancing its accessibility and effectiveness.  |
| Racist content will be identified and proposed to for removal (according to internal policy via the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) working group), replaced with more culturally sensitive approaches. Conscious review and intentional control will be exercised to ensure a respectful and inclusive online environment.  |  |  | This approach seeks to eliminate harmful content and promote cultural sensitivity, fostering a more inclusive and welcoming space for users of all racial backgrounds.  |
|  | Due to constraints such as the cookie policy, comprehensive measurement of demographics may be hindered, limiting the ability to fully gauge the impact of the project on different racial groups.  |  | This limitation may impede the project's ability to accurately assess and address disparities in access and participation among diverse racial communities.  |

### **Sex**

Does this work impact on men and women in different ways?

* Will men and women be affected by this policy equally, or are there differences, in which case, are there actions needed that can be taken to redress the balance?
* Is it easier for men or women to find out about the work?
* Does the work have any in-built stereotypes about what men and women can and can't do, and does it seek to dismantle those?
* Does the work recognise the particular issues faced by certain groups of men and women, for example the additional barriers to employment faced by minority ethnic women?
* Is the space pushchair accessible?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| The project will strive to ensure representation in user testing panels, providing diverse perspectives and insights that reflect the needs and preferences of men and women.  |  |  | This inclusive approach enhances the usability and relevance of the platform for all users.  |
| The project incorporates diverse representations of men and women in its content and visuals, promoting gender inclusivity and representation.  |  |  | By depicting a wide range of experiences and identities, the project aims to create a platform that resonates with all users.  |
| The project includes expectations for equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the tender process, setting clear standards for suppliers to adhere to principles of fairness and inclusivity.  |  |  | This proactive measure ensures that gender equality considerations are integrated into the project's implementation from the outset.  |
|  | There is a risk that the project may be executed by a majority male supplier team, potentially limiting diverse perspectives and insights in the development process.  |  | This imbalance may lead to oversight of gender-specific needs and preferences, requiring proactive measures to ensure gender diversity among project stakeholders.  |

### **Sexual Orientation**

Does this workpeople with different sexual orientations differently?

* Might your policy impact differently on people in the LGBTQ+ community in comparison to heterosexual people?
* Does your policy present opportunities to advance equality for lesbian, gay or bisexual people and to tackle discrimination and harassment?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| The project will strive to ensure representation of diverse sexual orientations in its content, promoting visibility and inclusivity for LGBTQ+ individuals.  |  |  | By depicting a range of experiences and identities, the project aims to create a welcoming and affirming environment for users regardless of sexual orientation.  |
| In addition to representation, the project will employ inclusive language and imagery in project-specific content, that acknowledges and respects diverse sexual orientations.  |  |  | This approach fosters a sense of belonging and acceptance among LGBTQ+ users, contributing to a more inclusive online space.  |

### **Religion or Belief**

Does this work impact on people of different religions and beliefs differently?

* Might your work impact people differently depend on their religion and beliefs as well as those with no religion?
* Is the take up of or access to your policy, service or information disproportionately low amongst those of a particular religion or belief?
* How will your community engagement and communication strategy take into account different religious communities?
* Might different religions practices or observance need to be taken into account in the design of your work, or when consulting, for example, consider the potential impact of Ramadan or the Jewish Sabbath, dietary requirements at events, and so on?
* Does your work present an opportunity to tackle discrimination and to advance equality of opportunity and increase community cohesion between those of different faiths (and none)?
* Is this event on a religious holiday?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| The project will strive to ensure representation of diverse religious beliefs in its content, promoting visibility and inclusivity for individuals of different faiths.  |  |  | By depicting a range of religious experiences and identities, the project aims to create a welcoming and affirming environment for users regardless of their religion or belief.  |
| In addition to representation, the project will employ inclusive language and imagery in project-specific content, acknowledging and respecting diverse religious beliefs.  |  |  | This approach fosters a sense of belonging and acceptance among individuals of different faiths, contributing to a more inclusive online space.  |

### **Marriage and Civil Partnership**

Does this work impact on people because of their marriage or civil partnership status?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
|  |  | X | Not applicable.  |

The following groups are not covered by the Equality Act (2010) but are covered in the Fairer Scotland Duty. We are not legally obliged to assess our work against this Duty but considering the impact of our work on these groups means we might reach more people and are addressing access issues pertinent to Scotland.

### **Households with low or no income or wealth**

How does this work impact on people with little or no income or wealth compared to those with more income or wealth?

* What are the public transport facilities to access this event in person?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| Targeting underrepresented user groups: the project aims to reach individuals who may have limited experience accessing research or national libraries, particularly those less likely to have pursued higher education after school and statistically more likely from lower socio-economic backgrounds.  |  |  | By targeting this demographic, the project seeks to address barriers to information and knowledge access, promoting equity and inclusion among marginalised communities.  |
| Representation in user testing: ensuring representation of individuals from low-income households in user testing activities, providing valuable insights into their needs, preferences, and challenges.  |  |  | This inclusive approach helps identify and address barriers to access and usability, resulting in a more user-friendly and accessible final product.  |
| Representation in content: incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences from individuals with low or no income or wealth into the project's content.  |  |  | This ensures that the information provided is relevant, relatable, and accessible to users from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, fostering greater engagement and empowerment.  |
| Accessibility of public transport: providing information and support regarding public transport options for accessing project events or resources, particularly for individuals who may face transportation barriers due to financial constraints.  |  |  | This ensures that all members of the community have equitable access to project activities and opportunities.  |

### **Rural or island location**

Does this work impact differently on people living in rural or island locations compared to those in urban areas, particularly the Central Belt?

* Will this work be available online?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| Online accessibility: ensuring that the project's resources and services are available online, making them equally accessible to individuals living in rural or island locations as well as those in urban areas, including the central belt.  |  |  | This online availability removes geographical barriers, ensuring equitable access to project information and opportunities for all residents regardless of their location.  |
| Representation in user testing: ensuring diverse representation from rural or island communities in user testing sessions, fostering inclusivity and capturing a wide range of perspectives and experiences.  |  |  | By actively recruiting participants from these areas, the project aims to validate the accessibility and effectiveness of its resources and services across diverse geographical contexts, promoting equity and relevance for all users.  |
|  | Budget constraints: limited budget available for testing may restrict the extent of outreach and engagement efforts in rural or island locations, potentially leading to disparities in representation and participation.  |  | This constraint highlights the need for strategic resource allocation and prioritisation to ensure equitable access and inclusion across all communities, despite financial limitations.  |

### **Digital literacy and access**

Does this work impact differently on people with high digital literacy and easy access to the internet and computing, compared to those with lower digital literacy and less access?

* Is this work only available online?
* What are the public transport facilities to access this event in person?

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| Positive | Negative | None | Reasons for decision |
| User testing: incorporating diverse representation in user testing sessions, including individuals with varying levels of digital literacy and access to technology, ensures that the project's digital resources are intuitive and accessible to users across different proficiency levels.  |  |  | By actively involving participants from socioeconomically diverse backgrounds, rural or island locations, cultural background, those for whom English is not their first language, and older age groups, the project validates its digital solutions' usability and effectiveness across intersecting demographics, fostering inclusivity and enhancing overall user experience.  |
|  | Limited accessibility: sole reliance on online platforms for accessing project materials may pose challenges for individuals with lower digital literacy and limited internet access, potentially excluding them from benefiting fully from the project's resources.  |  | This limitation underscores the importance of adopting a multi-channel approach to dissemination, complementing online offerings with offline alternatives to accommodate diverse user needs and preferences effectively.  |

## **Step 4: Monitoring**

* How will this work be monitored, evaluated to check progress on any equality issues that may arise or have arisen in the EqIA?

The project manager, as part of their role, will oversee the monitoring of equality issues outlined in the EqIA. This will be documented officially and integrated into risk assessments.

* Who will carry this out?

The project manager will conduct the monitoring.

* How often will this be carried out?

Monitoring frequency will be determined later in alignment with the project schedule.

## **Step 5: Publishing**

Publish screening form on website. EqIAs will be published in six-month cycles. Part of our Equality Act (2010) duty is to make our EqIAs publicly available.

## **Sign off**

**Stage 1: For the EDI officer to sign off**

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| --- | --- |
| Do you accept the outcome? Yes or No | Yes |
| If no, what action do you recommend or require? |  |
| Signed | E. Muniandy |
| Date | 04 March 2024 |

**Stage 2: For the Equalities Review Group to sign off**

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| --- | --- |
| Do you accept the outcome? Yes or No | Yes |
| If no, what action do you recommend or require? |  |
| Signed | E. Muniandy |
| Date | 07 March 2024  |