

**Museum of Science and Industry  
(MOSI)**

**Equality Scheme 2011**

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## Foreword from the Director/Chief Executive of MOSI

The Equality Scheme at MOSI, which replaces the Disability Equality Scheme, has been developed in order to be utilised as a reference point when developing MOSI's policies, procedures and practices. In addition it will be referenced when carrying out business changes and planning in order to ensure that equality matters are integrated and embedded into everything that we do.

I envisage the scheme will allow MOSI to be open and accessible, thus promoting our values, in all areas of activity to ensure that equality and diversity is at the forefront of both existing and new endeavours.

MOSI's vision is 'to bring innovation to life like no other' and this will not be realised without considering the needs of all sections of the community. I look forward to implementing the scheme and engaging with its principles in order to fulfil our purpose: 'to provide engaging, enjoyable and inspirational days out for all, discovering Manchester's scientific and industrial innovations'.

Tony Hill  
Director/Chief Executive

## **Introduction**

MOSI, which is based in the buildings of the world's oldest surviving passenger railway station, is one of the most popular attractions in the North West and welcomes around 600,000 plus visitors a year. Also one of the top dozen science museums in the world, visitors are attracted to the lively, participative way the MOSI interprets the past, present and future of the Manchester region.

MOSI is committed to equal opportunity for all and wishes to promote a diverse environment that is free from direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation, regardless of any protected characteristic<sup>1</sup> or any other unjustifiable criteria.

MOSI will always aim to employ a workforce that reflects diverse communities of the local, national and international populations. As an organisation we encourage and support the recruitment, retention and career development of individuals from as wide a range as possible of ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds.

MOSI is committed to developing an organisational culture which values all individuals and the contribution they make across all our areas of activity. This includes shaping, prioritising and developing our service to visitors through the Access Forum.

MOSI will work within the requirements of all current legislation and demonstrate good practice ensuring all policies, procedures and processes are up to date as necessary.

MOSI's Equality Scheme provides a framework within which MOSI can harness and integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the organisation on a day-to-day basis through the delivery of services and development/revision of current policies and practices. It also builds upon the achievements of the previous scheme and plan.

The Equality Scheme will:

- Enable equality considerations to be at the forefront of what we do
- Ensure MOSI's priorities tackle key equality issues
- Provide actions for the Access Forum
- Enable reflection past achievements

<sup>1</sup> age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership.

## **The general Equality duty (aims)**

The general equality duty is set out in the Equality Act 2010 (the Act). In summary MOSI, as a public body, must in the exercise of its functions have due regard for the following aims:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

MOSI also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status. This means that the first aim of the duty applies to this characteristic but that the other aims (advancing equality and fostering good relations) do not apply.

## **The Equality Scheme Objectives**

MOSI's Equality Scheme sets out how it will integrate equality of opportunity into all areas of the organisation. As such, the following objectives have been identified which link in with MOSI strategic vision and its purpose:

- To promote understanding of the Equality Scheme within MOSI and the wider community ensuring the scheme is communicated to all - with relevant training/support provided for staff and volunteers.
- To ensure MOSI's buildings, galleries and site wide infrastructure reflects the diverse needs of the visiting public, staff and volunteers.
- To ensure all MOSI's processes, policies and procedures reflect the principles and take account of the Equality Scheme.

An action plan is currently being finalised by the Access Forum and will be made available by 31 July 2011.

## **Scope**

The scope of the Equality Scheme encompasses all areas of equality and diversity and takes account of MOSI's Equality and Diversity Policy. The scheme together with the forthcoming plan will demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty across all functions.

## **Developing the Equality Scheme & Plan**

MOSI aims to reflect the needs of its audience and staff with regards to facilities and services, goods, education and employment whilst ensuring the specific actions outlined are realistic and achievable within set timescales.

Recently audits have taken place to establish how accessible two new galleries within MOSI will be, customer comment cards have been acted upon following submission of information to the Access Forum and changes to schemes and policies have been put in place.

## **MOSI's Priorities**

Key priorities, following on from the aforementioned objectives and taking into account MOSI's previous Disability Equality Scheme, will be identified within the forthcoming Equality Scheme Action Plan.

## **Equality and Diversity Policy and Respect & Dignity in the Workplace Policy**

MOSI's Equality and Diversity Policy and Respect & Dignity in the Workplace Policy takes account MOSI's commitment to equality of opportunity and outlines a zero tolerance stance in relation to any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation on the grounds of the previously aforementioned protected characteristics.

Site wide policies will be reviewed, developed and enhanced taking into account MOSI's Equality Scheme and Plan.

## **Publication**

The Equality Scheme and Plan will be published on the Intranet and Website. Other formats, such as large print etc will be made available on request.

## **Information Gathering & Data Monitoring**

In addition to Market Research, Access Audits and Visitor Feedback (comments & complaints) the Museum has undergone several inspections by professional organisations all offering recognition of specific service standard. Within these inspections Equality matters and observations have been considered and taken into account recent inspections / audits have included recognition from the following:

- World Class Service Standard
- Customer Service Excellence Standard
- Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme
- Investors in People Standard

## **Involvement, Consultation & Responsibilities**

Previously MOSI set up an Access Forum consisting of representatives from key Museum departments in 2002 which produced the Museum's Access Statement and, following consultation and production of an access audit in 2004 assessing compliance to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, drew up and monitored implementation of an Action Plan which addressed the recommendations that resulted from the audit. Led by the Head of Visitor Services and Human Resources, at the time, this Forum has been reconvened not only to look at access issues across the Museum but also to co-ordinate the Disability Equality Scheme. Subsequently, a new Access Policy 2007-12 was drawn up to dovetail in with the Museum's Strategic Plan 2007-12 which, along with the drafting of the Museum's Disability Equality Scheme, led to producing an Access Action Plan 2007-12. The additional documents built on MOSI's existing Equality and Diversity Policy, produced initially in 2004 and reviewed on a regular basis, demonstrating the MOSI's commitment to disability equality issues.

In September-October 2006 a programme of consultation involving those with both physical and sensory impairment was undertaken. Following this, an impact assessment on access at MOSI was carried out. The information arising from this was incorporated in the production of the Access Plan 2007-12.

*Disability equality impact assessment is the process of assessing the impact of existing or proposed policies and practices in relation to their consequences for disability equality. It includes looking for opportunities for positive impact that may have been missed or that could be better exploited, as well as the detection of actual or potential negative impact for disabled people.*

Developing MOSI's Equality Scheme and Plan will involve consultation with disabled people and access advisors. There will also be at least quarterly meetings of the Access Forum to monitor progress with the Plan, to review and revise the Plan in the light of proposed developments, visitor feedback and external consultation with disabled people, and to carry out impact assessments.

All members of MOSI's community are expected to engage with MOSI's Equality Scheme and Plan. A number of individuals and areas have specific responsibilities as follows:

- MOSI's Chair, Vice Chair and Trustees have overall formal responsibility for compliance with legislation and MOSI's Equality Scheme
- MOSI's Director/Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of MOSI's Equality Scheme
- Heads of Departments are required to provide leadership, communications and support around MOSI's Equality Scheme, its principles and agenda
- Operational, Support Managers and Team Leaders are responsible for communicating MOSI's Equality Scheme to ensure compliance and to carry out any actions associated within the action plan
- All staff and volunteers are responsible for advocating MOSI's Equality Scheme and thus promoting equality and diversity across the site
- The Access Forum are responsible for administering Scheme updates, the Plan, pushing forward the agenda and providing support and guidance to all MOSI's audience

## **Review**

The Equality Scheme will be reviewed annually. The review will outline the actions taken as set out in the Plan, or justify why it was unreasonable or impractical to carry out these actions. It will also include the results of any information gathering and what will be done with that information.

This will include the publishing of sufficient information to demonstrate MOSI's compliance with the general Equality Duty as follows:

- Evidence of analysis undertaken to establish whether policies and or practices have or would further the aims of the general equality duty.
- Details of the information considered by MOSI in carrying out this analysis.
- Information related to those MOSI engaged with, where it was considered those particular interest groups/parties had an interest in furthering the aims of the equality duty.