



Equality Screening Template

Implementation of Online Grants Applications of Relevant Grants in Belfast City Council

Belfast City Council - Equality Screening Template

The Council has a statutory duty to screen all policies. Please note a policy can be written or unwritten, formal or informal. This includes our strategies, plans, policies, legislative developments; and new ways of working such as – the introduction, change or end of an existing service, grant funding arrangement or facility. Please note a policy can be written or unwritten, formal or informal.

This screening template is designed to help departments consider the likely equality impacts of their proposed decisions on different groups of customers, service users, staff and visitors.

Before carrying out an equality screening exercise it is important that you have received the necessary training. To find out about the training contact – gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk or dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk

The accompanying [Screening Guidance](#) note provides straightforward advice on how to carry out equality screening exercises. Detailed information about the Section 75 equality duties¹ and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission's website.

The screening template has 4 sections to complete. These are:

Section A - asks you to provide details about the policy / decision that is being screened.

Section B - has 4 key questions that require you to outline the likely impacts on equality groups, and all supporting evidence.

Section C - has 4 key questions in relation to obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order

Section D - is the formal record of the screening decision.

¹ ECNI 'Section 75 of the NI Act 1998: A Guide for Public Authorities' April 2010. www.equalityni.org

Section A

Details about the policy / decision to be screened

Title of policy / decision to be screened:-

Implementation of Online Grants Applications of Relevant Grants in Belfast City Council

Brief description of policy / decision to be screened:-

(Explain - Is this a new, revised or existing policy? Are there financial / legislative / procurement implications?)

In December 2008, an independent review of grants within the Development Department highlighted a number of issues with the current grant process and its management:

- Poor customer service
- Inefficiency and risks to Council through lack of sharing of information
- Inefficiency of human resources
- Lack of robust monitoring and accountability

To address these issues the establishment of a Central Grants Unit (CGU) was established to co-ordinate and manage the administration of grants across Belfast City Council from one Central Unit that would:

- Improve governance and accountability
- Provide greater consistency in systems, processes and decision making
- Ensure separation between application, assessment and award, and monitoring and evaluation
- Enhance co-ordination, management and ongoing review of the grant making process to in turn minimise grants processing timescales and make the process more customer focused

The CGU have procured a Grants Management system that will bring many administrative benefits, including the facility for applicants to apply for grants online through the Belfast City Council website.

Aims and objectives of the policy / decision to be screened:-

(What is the policy trying to achieve?)

As well as the obvious internal benefits of streamlining and standardising the processes and systems, and efficiencies from all of the information already keyed into the system, there will be many benefits to external organisations such as applicants, co-funders and stakeholders including:

1. An additional way of applying for Belfast City Council grants through an online grants application
2. One stop shop application process – by bringing together the grants and providing an open call twice a year for small grants for the three departments, applicants will benefit from a single coherent process
3. Reduction in the amount of time spent by organisations completing and printing application forms and supporting documents and submitting by hand or post
4. Standardisation of monitoring and evaluation leading to a reduction in the time spent by organisations administering varying grant requirements
5. A fully accessible system available 24 hours a day to log in and review the progress of their application / grant awards / payment
6. Increased development work by Project Officers and allowing more time to be spent working directly supporting and capacity building with the organisations the Council is supporting

Internal benefits

- Improved governance and accountability
- Greater consistency in systems, processes and decision making
- Separation between application, assessment and award, and monitoring and evaluation
- Enhanced co-ordination, management and ongoing review of the grant making process to in turn minimise grants processing timescales and make the process more customer focused
- Ability to provide cohesive reporting on Council Investment through grants

External benefits

- Streamlined application and payment process resulting in less time spent by organisations completing ,following up applications and administering varying processes for monitoring & evaluation
- Ability for organisations to have 24 hour access to the system to

- log in and review the progress of their application / grant awards / payment
- review previous applications or drafts of applications
- draft applications for future amendments prior to submission deadlines
- automatic 'flags' on draft applications where fields are not completed, including when mandatory and eligibility information has not been met or, for example incorrect dates, thereby helping groups meet the standard requirements for application and reducing the risk of submitting a potentially ineligible application
- upload supporting documentation

On whom will the policy / decision impact?

Consider the internal and external impacts (both actual or potential)

- X** Staff – increased efficiency and co-ordination of information through one system that relevant officers will have access to. It will also reduce the administration and processing of paperwork and allow staff more time for working with groups and greater accuracy of information
- X** Service users – a an additional way to apply through a more coherent, efficient and transparent application process which will also allow organisations to apply for a range of grants through one application, , ease of including automatic 'flags' on draft applications where fields are not completed, including when mandatory and eligibility information has not been met or, for example incorrect dates, thereby helping groups meet the standard requirements for application and reducing the risk of submitting a potentially ineligible application
- X** Other public sector organisations – a more coherent and robust application process that will allow greater transparency of awarded funding
- X** Voluntary / Community groups / Trade Unions - an additional way to apply through a more coherent, efficient and transparent application process which will also allow organisations to apply for a range of grants through one application, ease of including automatic 'flags' on draft applications where fields are not completed, including when mandatory and eligibility information has not been met or, for example incorrect dates, thereby helping groups meet the standard requirements for application and reducing the risk of submitting a potentially ineligible application

- Others, please specify: Funders – greater audit compliance, prevent and discourage irregularities and other related issues

Are there linkages to other Agencies/ Departments?

Yes.

The grants that are administrated by the Central Grants Unit come from the following Council Departments:

- Development
- Health & Environmental
- Parks and Leisure

External linkages include:

- Policing and Community Safety Partnership's and Joint Committee (Policing Boards and Departments of Justice) - as funders of the Policing and Community Safety Small Grant
- Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and Good Relations Partnerships – as funders of the Good Relations Grants, Summer Intervention Grant and St Patrick's Day Celebration Grant
- Department of Culture Arts and Leisure – as match funders of the Community Festivals Fund
- Arts Council of NI – as match funders of the Creative and Cultural Belfast Fund

Section B

1. Outline consultation process achieved or planned

To date an extensive amount of time and research including but not limited to, the following have informed the decision to move to an online system:

- Audit Reports
- Consultation with grant awarding units across council
- Ongoing feedback from current grant recipient and potential applicant organisations
- External Grant Consultants
- European and other funders practice, including other UK and NI local authorities
- Current best practice
- Current internal processes
- Desk research on systems and processes
- Plain English Campaign
- Presentation at the BCC 'Policies for Consultative Forum'

2. Available evidence

What evidence / information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Set out all evidence below to help inform your screening assessment. Please note: It is important to record information gathered from a variety of sources such as:

Section 75 category	Details of evidence / information and engagement
Religious belief	Our consultation and research has led us to understand that some religions will not use modern technology.
Political opinion	Our consultation and research has led us to understand that there are issues associated with applying for grants including capacity of groups and access to information

Racial group	Our consultation and research has lead us to understand that access to information and low literacy levels affect the ability of groups to apply for services.
Age	Our consultation and research has lead us to understand that there are issues associated with applying for grants including capacity of groups and access to information.
Marital status	n/a
Sexual orientation	n/a
Men & women generally	n/a
Disability	Our consultation and research has led us to understand that there are issues associated with applying for grants including capacity of groups and access to information.
Dependants	n/a

3. What is the likely impact (indicate if the policy impact is positive or negative) on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? What is the level of impact?

The purpose of this screening is not on individual grant aims, including targeted groups however, through the new centralized approach we will collect completely anonymous statistical monitoring information at application and project reporting stages for statistical analysis.

Section 75 category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information • Communication • Shared space • Offensive to a particular religion • Lack of inclusion in monitoring questions 	
Political opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information • Communication • Shared space • Offensive to a particular religion • Lack of inclusion in monitoring questions 	
Racial group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information • Communication • Literacy Issues • Lack of 'Know how' may require capacity building 	
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people may not be web users • May require large print • May be unable to use a complicated telephone service and would prefer to talk to one person • May require extra time to complete tasks and require assistance • Older people may not be disabled but may have impaired ability in relation to sight, hearing and mobility, mental health and understanding 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of events (late evening may not a good time for older people) 	
Marital status	none	
Sexual orientation	none	
Men and women generally	none	
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual disabilities - may not be able to see, or read information and will require an alternative format • Hearing disabilities - may not be able to hear the information and will require an alternative format • Physical disabilities - may not be able to access the information or service and will require an alternative provision 	
Dependants	none	

4. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief	<p>We will ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove chill factors and use neutral or shared space - Ensure wide advertisement of jobs/ tenders etc, advertise in broad range of networks not just the main paper 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review distribution lists/ issues - Review consultation and engagement processes - Benchmark good practice - Monitor and evaluate the access and uptake of services 	
Political opinion	<p>We will ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciation of cultural differences - Review distribution lists/ issues - Review consultation and engagement processes - Benchmark good practice - Monitor and evaluate the access and uptake of services 	
Racial group	<p>We will ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciation of cultural differences - Review distribution lists/ issues - Review consultation and engagement processes - Benchmark good practice - Monitor and evaluate the access and uptake of services 	
Age	<p>We will ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative formats such as large print, telephone support, hard copies of applications, etc - One stop shop rather than passing onto other 	

	<p>services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target information to older peoples groups - Review consultation and engagement processes - Benchmark good practice - Monitor and evaluate the access and uptake of services 	
Marital status	n/a	
Sexual orientation	n/a	
Men and women generally	n/a	
Disability	<p>We will ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative formats such as large print, telephone support, hard copies of applications, etc - One stop shop rather than passing onto other services - Target information to older peoples groups - Review consultation and engagement processes - Benchmark good practice <p>Monitor and evaluate the access and uptake of services</p>	
Dependants	n/a	

5. To what extent is the policy likely to impact (positive or negatively)on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? What is the level of impact?

Good relations category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	n/a	
Political opinion	n/a	
Racial group	n/a	

6. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Good relations category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief	n/a	
Political opinion	n/a	
Racial group	n/a	

7. Multiple identities

Provide details of the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities

Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

N/a

Section C

Belfast City Council also has legislative obligations to meet under the [Disability Discrimination Order](#) and Questions 5 -6 relate to these two areas.

Consideration of Disability Duties

8. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for the Council to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

Explain your assessment in full

N/a

9. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?

Explain your assessment in full

The new approach will provide more opportunities to receive information on the grants available including:

- wider promotion, both on the Council website and citywide roadshows
- 1-2-1 meetings with officers to discuss project ideas and support organisations on completion using the new system
- Clearer, standardised guidance and other documentation available in all formats, including minority languages, upon request, where practicable.
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The following statement has also been included on the front page of the online system 'If you would like a hard copy of the application form and guidance notes please call the Central Grants Unit on 9091 8748'

10. Monitoring Arrangements

Section 75 places a requirement the Council to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity.

Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.

Equality	Good Relations	Disability Duties
Number of groups applying – to ensure the uptake of online grant applications remains	Number of complaints	
Areas of Belfast groups are applying from		
Attendance at roadshows		
Telephone surveys		
Monitor and evaluate the access and uptake of services on an annual basis		

Section D

Formal Record of Screening Decision

Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened

Implementation of Online Grants Applications of Relevant Grants in Belfast City Council

I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision has been screened for –

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Equality of opportunity and good relations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disabilities duties

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is –

****place an X in the appropriate box below***

<input type="checkbox"/>	*Screened In – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA
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<input type="checkbox"/>	*Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts) Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached:
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>* Screened Out - Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)</p> <p>We will ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove chill factors and use neutral or shared space - Ensure wide advertisement of jobs/ tenders etc, advertise in broad range of networks not just the main paper - All staff will attend Equality and Good Relations Training and will be aware of cultural differences - Review distribution lists/ issues on an annual basis - Review consultation and engagement processes on an annual basis - Benchmark good practice - Monitor and evaluate the access and uptake of services on an annual basis - Alternative formats such as large print, telephone support, hard copies of
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	applications will be made available
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- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- One stop shop attitude to service delivery will be assured rather than passing onto other services- Target information to older peoples groups |
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Formal Record of Screening Decision (cont)

Screening assessment completed by (Officer level) -

Name: Jacqui White, Grants Manager

Date: 9 February 2015

Department: Development

Signature:

Screening decision approved by -

Name: John McGrillen, Director of Development

Date: 9 February 2015

Department: Development

Signature:

Please save the final version of the completed screening form and forward to the Equality and Diversity Officer – gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk or dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk . The screening form will be placed on the BCC website and a link provided to the Council's Section 75 consultees.

For more information about equality screening contact –

Stella Gilmartin / Lorraine Dennis

Equality & Diversity Officer (job-share)

Belfast City Council

City Hall

Belfast

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