



## BIG's equality information – grantholders guide

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### Accessibility

Please contact us to discuss any specific communication needs you may have.

### Our equality principles

Promoting accessibility; valuing cultural diversity; promoting participation; promoting equality of opportunity; promoting inclusive communities; reducing disadvantage and exclusion. Please visit our website for more information.

### We care about the environment

The Big Lottery Fund is working towards sustainable development and the use of sustainable resources.

### Our mission

We are committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need.

### Our values

We have identified three values that underpin our work: making best use of Lottery money, using knowledge and evidence and being supportive and helpful.

You can find out more about us, our values and the funding programmes we run by visiting our website [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)

The Big Lottery Fund is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity, both as a grantmaker and employer. The Big Lottery Fund will aim to adopt an inclusive approach to ensure grant applicants and recipients, stakeholders, job applicants and employees are treated fairly.

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# Introduction

Equality considerations are central to the achievement of our mission – to bring about real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need. We have recently introduced changes to the way we manage grants to ensure the projects we fund reach those most in need. We recognise that some grantholders will struggle with these new requirements (particularly small and newer organisations). So we have developed an Equality Information guide for grantholders which provides additional guidance, links to useful data sources, good practice and examples.

See [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/grant-uk.htm](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/grant-uk.htm)

This guide is a summarised version of the material on our website. It covers:

- our requirements
- gathering your evidence
- evidence collection tools
- reviewing your evidence
- reaching everyone
- where to find out more
- our equality categories.

## Why do we ask for equality information?

We ask for equality information because:

- we want to know who benefits from the projects we fund, so we can find out if we need to give more support to some applicants, target our funding or change how we run our programmes
- we're keen to learn how our funding can reach the widest range of people as possible
- by sharing what we learn, those running projects can find out how to reach the widest range of people who could benefit.

## You'll find it's useful too!

By gathering equality information you'll be able to:

- find out who is and isn't benefiting from your project
- ensure you're reaching everyone who could benefit, by making changes to your project if you need to
- show good practice and share your learning with us, other funders and your community.

## How will we use this information?

- ▶ We'll review what you tell us and we may contact you with questions.
- ▶ If your project isn't reaching everyone who could benefit from it or if there are weaknesses in how you're collecting your evidence we may ask you to consider making some changes to your project.
- ▶ When you've finished your project we'll grade how effective it was in reaching everyone who could benefit from it.

# Our requirements

We'll ask for some equality information at the beginning of your project, then every year and when you've finished it.

## At the beginning

You'll need to send us a Starting your grant form before we will begin paying the grant. This has an equality information section, where we ask you to:

- tell us about any changes since you sent us your application (for example, if you've thought of new ways of getting more people involved, you've identified new beneficiaries that need a different approach, or you've found that some people no longer need your support)
- estimate the percentage of people who will benefit from your project under our equality categories
- tell us what evidence you've based your estimates on
- tell us how you'll collect evidence throughout your project to show the percentage of people who have benefited under our equality categories.

If you need more time to fill in this part of the Starting your grant form you can send the rest of the form back when you're ready to start your project and the equality section afterwards. But we must receive the equality section within six months of the date you signed your grant agreement, or within twelve months if we're funding a building project.

## Every year

You'll need to send us an End of year form. This has an equality information section, where we ask you to:

- tell us what you did to make sure that everyone who could benefit from your project knew about it and was able to use it or get involved
- give the percentage of people who benefited from your project under the equality categories given in the form and back this up with evidence
- tell us how effective you think you were in making sure that everyone who could benefit from your project knew about it and was able to use it or get involved, and if you need to, what you'll do differently in the next year.

## When you've finished

You'll need to send us an End of grant form. This has an equality information section, which is similar to the End of year form but instead of asking you what you'll do differently next year, we'll ask you what you've learned over the lifetime of your project.

**“We'll ask for some equality information at the beginning of your project, then every year and when you've finished it”**

# Gathering your evidence

## How to collect evidence at the start

In your Starting your grant form we ask you to estimate the percentage of people who will benefit from your project under a number of equality categories. There are no model answers here. The information you give will depend on what your project is for. We'll also ask you to tell us what evidence you've used to work out your estimates.

You may already have evidence to hand through your own research, consultation or from previous projects or you may be able to get it from:

- statistics (from sources such as the Census or Office of National Statistics)
- research carried out by someone else (such as a voluntary sector organisation, local authority or university).

The amount of evidence you'll be able to get will depend on the type and scale of the project, how much you know about the people who will benefit and the time your staff or volunteers have available to research it. You need to be able to show that you've taken a balanced approach to working out your estimates bearing all this in mind.

It's possible you may not be able to find up to date data for the area where your project will take place, or that you'll find it difficult to collect particular types of equality data, for example, on sexual orientation and religion or belief. In this case you'll need to take a common sense approach. For example, you may decide to carry out your own short piece of research or base your estimates on statistics from a larger geographic area.

## Example

A heart healthy project planning to run cooking classes for everyone wasn't able to find data on the sexual orientation of people living in their local area. Instead they decided to use data from the Office of National Statistics about people living in the UK (which you'll find in the following report).

[www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778227150.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778227150.pdf)

## Example

A village hall running educational and recreational activities knew that the ethnic profile of the area had changed in the last year, following the arrival of some families from Poland.

To find out how large this new community was and ensure that activities were responsive to their needs and interests, the village hall committee asked the local authority if they had statistics for their village. As the research department of the local authority had recently carried out its own audit it was able to provide up to date information, which showed that 0.5 per cent of the beneficiaries were likely to be 'Any other White background' (this included the recent arrivals from Poland).

## Example

A project aiming to provide lifelong learning opportunities for older people living within a large rural area, recognised that it didn't know what proportion of its beneficiaries were likely to be male or female. It knew from past experience that female and male users typically had different interests so this meant that it didn't know how to design its programme. The project worker approached the local university's continuing education department which was able to provide gender statistics for older people from their own database (60 per cent female and 40 per cent male).

## How to collect evidence throughout your project

In your End of year and End of grant forms we'll ask you to tell us the percentage of people who have benefited from your project under our equality categories and back this up with evidence. So you'll need to put in place ways to collect this.

### What to consider

- ▶ We encourage you to collect information about all our equality categories but we realise this might not always be possible or appropriate, for example, if finding out this information might stop people getting involved in your project or affect how they will benefit from it. If you think this may be the case, please contact your grants officer to talk it through.
- ▶ When you're collecting equality information it's important to tell people that all the questions are voluntary. Some equality categories are particularly sensitive (typically about a person's sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability, ethnic background or community background) so you could include an option of **'prefer not to say'** (although this may reduce your response rate).
- ▶ In general, sexual orientation information shouldn't be collected from people aged under 16, although there may occasionally be projects working with young people aged 12 and over where it is appropriate.
- ▶ Many projects have both direct beneficiaries (the people who use the project) and indirect beneficiaries (for example, their family). You only need to collect data on your direct beneficiaries, unless indirect beneficiaries are important to achieving your project's outcomes.
- ▶ How you collect your evidence will depend on the type and scale of the project, how much you know about the people who will benefit and the time your staff or volunteers have available. You need to be able to show that you've taken a balanced approach bearing all this in mind.

- ▶ We don't expect you to collect information from everyone but you'll need to have enough evidence to provide reliable figures about the spread of people benefiting from your project.
- ▶ Your evidence collection methods should minimise the risk of collecting information about the same person more than once in any year.

Remember that effective equality data collection can help you identify who is and isn't benefiting from your project's activities and services. You can then use this learning to make changes, to ensure that your project is reaching everyone that could benefit.

### Example

BIG agreed that it would be impossible for an anonymous helpline service to collect any equality information from its callers and therefore it wouldn't need to collect this information.

### Example

A project running a support service for older people with dementia felt that it wouldn't be appropriate to collect information about their sexual orientation as they would largely be relying on the individual's family to provide this very sensitive information. BIG agreed that the project wouldn't need to collect sexual orientation information.

### Example

A project running skill-based activities to help children cope with the stress that occurs when a member of their family misuses alcohol, decided that it would post out an equality monitoring form to all participants, to collect its equality information. The project sought permission first from the children's parents or guardians.

# Evidence collection tools

## Where to start

The best way to find out a person's age, gender, ethnic background and so on, is to ask the person to classify themselves. You can do this using routine data collection, equality monitoring forms and user surveys. You may need to use a mixture of these approaches.

You can also get someone else to classify a person if they are unable to do it themselves. This might be due to the age of the person or because they are considered vulnerable (for example, because of a mental impairment).

If any data you collect is linked to an individual (so that someone looking at the data could identify the individual) it becomes personal data. Personal data is subject to the requirements of the Data Protection Act. If you collect data anonymously there is no requirement to comply with the Data Protection Act.

If you collect any personal data you'll need to explain why you're asking for it, what it'll be used for, how it'll be safely stored and who it will be shared with (this is good practice even if you're collecting data anonymously). Providing this explanation upfront will also help increase your response rate.

## More about routine data collection

Reviewing the routine data you already collect is a good place to start, as you can then use monitoring forms and surveys to plug any gaps in your evidence.

By routine data collection we mean information you request from people because it's relevant to delivering your project. Typically you'll ask for this data when individuals apply to take part in your project's activities or services. For example, in order to decide whether an activity is suitable for someone you may need to ask their age.

The advantage of using routine data collection is that you're already doing it so you don't need to set up any new systems. The downside is you probably won't have data for all our equality categories.

Also, because the data is linked to an individual it becomes personal data and subject to the requirements of the Data Protection Act. So if you don't already do so, you'll need to let your project users know that you plan to use this information for monitoring purposes.



### More about equality monitoring forms

These are forms designed specifically to collect information on the equality characteristics of individuals. Often you'll ask people to fill in an equality monitoring form at the start of your project, although it can also be completed part way through or at the end.

By assigning each individual (and their equality monitoring form) a unique reference number you can keep track of their relationship with your project (and organisation) over time, without needing to collect their equality information more than once. You can also store the equality information you collect more confidentially as it can be held separately from any information that would identify individuals (such as their names). Remember that as the data is linked to an individual it becomes personal data and is subject to the Data Protection Act.

Monitoring forms should ideally be completed in private. However this assumes that the individual is able to read and write, which won't always be the case, for example, for people with learning difficulties. Another option is to provide some help filling in the

form, for example, from a member of your organisation. This leads to a high response rate but you shouldn't include the most sensitive questions, such as about sexual orientation.

### More about user surveys

User surveys can be adapted to collect information on the characteristics of project users, for example, by including a series of equality questions into a customer satisfaction survey or a project evaluation form. This helps cut down on the amount of extra work involved.

Typically you'll gather this data anonymously, so there's no requirement to comply with the Data Protection Act. The benefit of collecting your data anonymously is that you may get a better response to more sensitive equality questions. This approach doesn't allow you to keep track of the people who use your project over time though. Instead it provides you with a snap shot of people using your project at one point.

In addition, it means that you can't survey or evaluate your project's activities more than once per year and therefore skew your results.



# Reviewing your evidence

At the end of each year we'll ask you to tell us the percentage of people who actually benefited from your project. So you'll need to analyse the equality data you've collected.

First you'll need to **consider the quality of your data**.

- ▶ Have you got evidence from enough people to be able to rely on it?
- ▶ Do the responses reflect the full range of people who use your project?

Then you'll need to **compare the data you've gathered with your original estimates** in your Starting your grant form. If there are big differences for any of the equality categories you'll need to think about why this is.

- ▶ It might be because of weaknesses in the evidence you used to work out your original estimates or the way you've gathered your evidence.
- ▶ Or it may be because of changes in your project beneficiaries or that you need to do more to promote your project and overcome any barriers that deter people from taking part.

Following your review you may need to take some **corrective action**, for example making changes to the tools and techniques you're using to collect data, or taking steps to reach a wider range of people.

## Guidance for lead organisations reporting on behalf of more than one project

Some of our grant programmes make awards to lead organisations managing a portfolio of projects or third party grants. At the end of each year we'll ask the lead organisation to tell us the percentage of people who benefitted from their range of projects. In order to do this, each project will need to provide the lead organisation with their equality information. Each project will also need to tell how many people benefitted from their project that year, so that the lead organisation can decide how to weight the equality information they receive when reporting back to us. So for example, if within a portfolio, Project A had 100 beneficiaries and Project B had 75 and Project C had 25, the lead organisation would want to weight the equality information provided by Project A and B by a factor of 4 and 3 respectively.

### Example

A youth project operating in a suburb of Manchester used data from the 2001 Census when estimating the percentage of people that would benefit from their project by religion and belief. The 2001 data showed that 8 per cent of their beneficiaries could be Jewish.

At the end of the first year, the project had managed to collect equality data from 70 per cent of its users, which they felt was a good achievement. Having reviewed their data, the project identified that only 1 per cent of their project beneficiaries were Jewish, despite their best efforts to promote the youth project through the local Synagogue.

The project felt that the difference between the estimated and actual levels was because the data source they had used for their estimates was so old. They knew that many of the younger Jewish families had moved in recent years to different neighbourhoods. BIG agreed to revise the project's estimated beneficiary levels by religion and belief.

### Example

A mobile library service in a rural area used the local authority's recent community audit to work out the percentage of people who would benefit from their project, under each of the equality categories.

One year down the line, having collected equality data through a one-off customer satisfaction survey, they noticed there were large differences between their original estimates and actual beneficiary levels, across many of the equality categories. On reflection, the project realised they had only managed to collect equality data from 150 project users, despite having over 1,000 people registered for their service. This meant the volume of data wasn't large enough and it didn't include a wide range of users. The library service recognised to encourage a higher response rate in the future, it needed to run its survey over a longer time-frame and explain in the preamble why it was collecting this information and how it would be used.

### Example

A community garden used a mixture of its own research and recent data from the Office for National Statistics website to estimate who would benefit from their project (under each of the equality categories). They asked project beneficiaries to fill in an anonymous equality monitoring form when they registered and managed to collect reasonably complete information from 80 per cent of its users.

At the end of the first year, the project compared their estimates with the equality information they had collected. Knowing there was a sizeable Muslim community in the local area, the project was surprised to see that only a small percentage of beneficiaries described themselves as Muslim.

The project leader talked to one of the members who was a Muslim and found out that running the project on Tuesdays and Fridays (the Islamic holy day) was a barrier to their participation. So the community garden decided to change its days to be more inclusive.

**“Following your review you may need to take some corrective action”**

# Reaching everyone

At the end of each year we'll ask you to tell us what you did to make sure that everyone who could benefit from your project knew about it and was able to use it or get involved in it. We'll also ask you to tell us how effective you think you were in reaching everyone who could benefit from your project.

When you were planning your project you'll have considered who could benefit from it but were less likely to use it or get involved. And from your equality data collection you'll be able to tell if you've been successful in reaching these people. If your results show that you've not been as effective as you could be, you'll need to take steps to tackle this. Here's our suggested approach.

## Learn more about them

It's a good idea to find out more about the groups of people that aren't benefiting from your project, such as where they meet, what they have in common, how to get in touch with them, who else works with them and what is currently stopping them getting involved.

You may decide to hold interviews, focus groups and consultation events with the groups themselves, as these are useful ways to explore people's needs and their experiences of using an activity or service. Or you may ask for help from those who already have a better relationship with the group you'd like to reach, such as local community leaders.

There may be forums, community groups and local businesses you can approach. Many local authorities and councils for voluntary service keep information about local groups. Or you may be able to find out more by referring to local strategies, newspapers and visiting the local library and picking up leaflets.

By learning more about the groups of people that aren't benefiting from your project but could be involved, you'll have a better idea how to promote your project to them and address any barriers. We've found the most common barriers are that people don't know the project exists, or they feel there are real obstacles to getting involved, or they have had bad experiences before.

## Example

Having discovered that their project wasn't attracting any members of the local Sikh community the chair of the youth club decided to visit the local school to try and make contact that way.

Following this initial contact a parent on the parent teachers association who was from the Sikh community offered to visit the youth club and discuss how to make its venue and activities more attractive to members of their community. The project learned that many Sikh parents would allow their children to attend the youth club's mixed sex activities, provided they had appropriate leadership. So they decided to try and encourage adults from the Sikh community to join as helpers.

## What if they don't know the project exists?

To overcome this barrier you'll need to think about how the people you want to reach might find out about your project, for example, what papers do they read, what radio stations do they listen to and where do they already go to meet, shop, pray or use services?

You may need to consider a variety of ways to promote your project, such as press, newsletters, face to face meetings, leaflets, community radio, internet, text messaging, or awareness raising events.

You should also consider the format of any publicity material you use. Use plain language without any jargon and make sure it's easy to understand. People with learning disabilities sometimes find pictures and symbols helpful too. Translating all your information materials into all languages is often not cost effective or useful but you may need to think about what more you can do to reach people whose first language isn't English.

## Example

A wellness project was set up to provide alternative therapies and classes such as meditation and Tai chi to people dealing with stress. Part way through the project, the group realised they weren't reaching many carers, despite knowing that stress was a key issue for them.

Through discussions with their local health trust the project realised that the most effective way to publicise their project was through the professionals that regularly came into contact with carers in their own homes. So they ran a series of briefing sessions with the relevant agencies to help raise awareness of their project among carers.

## Example

A project set up to provide counselling to recent migrants living in London was considering how to publicise the availability of its services. The project wanted to reach members of the Somali community and initially planned to develop some promotional fliers (translated into Somali) which would then be circulated around GP surgeries.

Following advice from Social Services, the project realised that this approach would not be effective, due to the low literacy levels among many members of this community. Instead the project worked with the Social Services department and the local college to produce a short video in Somali, which could be played on GP waiting room information screens. The project also decided to monitor the effectiveness of the video by asking users how they found out about the counselling service.

## What if they feel there are real obstacles to their involvement?

Below are some things you can consider to overcome this barrier.

- ▶ Is your venue close to public transport, in a well-lit area, and somewhere that your target groups feel comfortable and safe?
- ▶ Can people using wheelchairs or buggies, or those who find stairs or heavy doors difficult, use your venue?
- ▶ Can your target groups afford to use your services?
- ▶ Do your target groups have particular communication needs, such as a community language, a signer or an induction loop?
- ▶ Do you need to plan your services around school holidays, religious festivals or offer some activities outside office hours?
- ▶ Do people need support with caring responsibilities, for children or for older or disabled family members?
- ▶ Do you need to take dietary needs into account because of religious, cultural or health reasons or because people are vegetarian?
- ▶ If people from your target groups came into your premises or to your events, would they feel welcome and comfortable?
- ▶ Do you need to find ways of giving your target groups more say in how your organisation is run?

## Example

A pre-school play group was keen to ensure it attracted and catered for children with disabilities. It also wanted to provide play opportunities that encouraged all of the children to mix well.

Through discussions with a local disability organisation and the parents of disabled children, it was able to develop a programme of activities that catered for disabled and non-disabled children.

The programme considered the likes and dislikes of each child and their particular support needs. One of the key learning points for the group was that it needed to adopt a less structured approach and have enough staff, lots of small activities and play equipment set up already and flexibility in what it did.

## What if they've had bad experiences in the past?

In some cases the reason why some groups don't get involved is because they've had a bad experience with 'bureaucracy' in the past and felt let down. They may then lack confidence in your organisation and project.

So you'll need to find ways of gaining their trust. You may be able to achieve this by discussing their views and previous experiences and agreeing what you'll do differently to make them feel welcome.

You'll need to treat them with respect and build up a positive relationship over time. It's also a good idea to get them fully involved in the planning and evaluation of your project, so that you can find out how effective the action you've taken has been.

## Example

A money advice project wanted to establish contact with members of its local Travelling community. It felt that it could offer a useful service but had struggled to make meaningful contact in the past.

The advice worker decided to speak to a local charity that had already developed close bonds with the Travellers. The charity explained that the community was wary of people from outside and agreed to act as an intermediary. They emphasised the importance of being patient, adopting an open and active approach to listening and offering a flexible service approach.

# Where to find out more

This guide summarises the detailed information provided on our website at Equality Information guide for grantholders.

See [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/grant-uk.htm](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/grant-uk.htm)

This online resource also includes:

- some useful sources of evidence which you may find helpful when estimating who will benefit from your project
- a set of example questions for equality data collection that you can use in your forms of surveys
- links to further sources of help that may assist you with gathering your evidence and reaching everyone as well as details of useful organisations
- information about our equality categories including an explanation about what they mean
- guidance on managing your data with respect to the Data Protection Act.

## How to contact us

Your grant offer letter includes the name and contact details of the grants officer who will manage your grant. Please get in touch with them if you are unclear whether these new equality information requirements apply to your project or if you have any questions about this guide

The best way to contact them is by email, so please use this if you can. If you don't have email or would prefer not to use it you can phone them or use the post instead. If you have any particular communication needs that you've not already told us about just let us know and we'll do our best to help.

# Annex A

## Our equality categories

### 1. Gender

- Male
- Female

### 2. Disability

- Disabled
- Not disabled

### 3. Ethnic background

#### White

- English/Scottish/Welsh/ Northern Irish/UK
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background

#### Mixed/Multiple ethnic background

- Mixed ethnic background

#### Asian/Asian UK

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

#### Black/African/Caribbean/Black UK

- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black/African/Caribbean background

#### Other ethnic group

- Arab
- Any other ethnic group

### 4. Age

- 0-24 years
- 25-64 years
- 65+ years

Some projects will be asked to provide information using different age bands (this requirement will be clearly stated in your Starting your grant form).

### 5. Religion or belief

- No religion
- Christian
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Other religion

### 6. Sexual orientation

- Heterosexual
- Lesbians/gay men/bisexual

### 7. Welsh language (this only applies to projects in Wales)

- People who speak Welsh
- People who do not speak Welsh

### 8. Community background (this only applies to projects in Northern Ireland)

- Protestant
- Catholic
- Other

### 9. Caring responsibilities

- People with caring responsibilities
- People without caring responsibilities