



## Complaints

The common Lottery Distributors complaints procedure to be applied in relation to complaints to BFI for Lottery activity is as follows:

### Making a complaint

#### Introduction

If you want to make a complaint, we have a procedure for you to follow and this page explains how it works. All organisations that distribute National Lottery funding in England or across the whole of the UK use this procedure. Organisations that only distribute in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own complaint procedures. Making a complaint will not affect in any way the level of service you receive from us. For example, if your complaint relates to a funding application your chances of getting a grant from us will not be compromised. You can also read the [Customer Service Charter](#) that BFI subscribes to.

#### What can I complain about?

You can complain if you think that:

- 'maladministration' has taken place (for example, if we have delayed, made mistakes in or failed to follow the procedures in our application process);
- we have failed to give you access to information or have given you incorrect advice or information;
- we have not treated you politely; or
- we have discriminated against you or not treated you fairly.

You may be disappointed if we turn down your application for funding, but you cannot use the complaints procedure to appeal against our decision on giving a grant if we have followed our decision-making process correctly. When the application relates to a creative submission, such as a script, we cannot reassess the script when it has been turned down on the basis of its creative merit.

If you have any comments about our policies, send these to the

Chief Executive  
British Film Institute  
21 Stephen Street  
London W1P 1TN



Awarding funds from  
**The National Lottery**®

Do not use this complaints procedure to make a complaint about any fraud you think has taken place. You should report this to the Director of Finance and Resources at the BFI at the above address.

### **How do I make a complaint?**

#### **Stage one**

If you are not happy with the service you have received, contact the person you first dealt with as soon as possible and in any event within two months of the incident complained about. They will try to put things right. We hope that we can settle complaints as quickly as possible in this way.

#### **Stage two**

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you can take this further by writing to (or sending an audio tape or CD) to the

Chief Executive  
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21 Stephen Street  
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Please tell us all of the following information:

- what happened;
- when it happened;
- who dealt with you;
- what you would like us to do to put things right.
- Also tell us if there is anything we need to know about how to contact you (for example, if you would like us to reply by textphone or on audio tape).

You must do this within four weeks of receiving our response to stage one.

#### **When will I hear from you?**

Within three working days of receiving your complaint we will write to or phone you to say that we have received it. We will also tell you how you can contact the person who is dealing with your complaint and when you can expect a reply.

In most cases, you will receive a full reply to your complaint within 10 working days. If we cannot give a full reply in this time, we will tell you why and when you are likely to receive it.



If your complaint is about the way we have used our powers to refuse or manage funding, you can move to stage three. If your complaint is about the way we conduct any other aspect of our business, we will let you know of possible alternatives that may be open to you. We will tell you in our response to stage two whether stage three is open to you.

### **Stage three**

If you are not satisfied with the Chief Executive's reply, you can refer your complaint to the Independent Complaints Reviewer (ICR). You must do this within three months of receiving our response to stage two.

The ICR is unbiased and hears both sides of the complaint.

The ICR is not part of our organisation and their investigations and recommendations are independent. You can ask the ICR to look at your complaint, or our Chief Operating Officer can ask them to do this. There is no charge for using the ICR.

The Office of the ICR will contact you within five working days of receipt of your complaint.

The ICR has the power to decide whether or not to investigate a complaint, and he or she will explain their reasons if they decide not to investigate it.

If the ICR investigates your complaint and finds that it is justified, he or she will recommend ways for us to put things right, and how to prevent a similar situation in future. The ICR will report within three months, and usually more quickly, we will normally make any changes the ICR recommends to our procedures as quickly as possible.

The ICR cannot consider complaints that have not gone through the procedure set out in this document. If you want the ICR to consider your complaint, you must write to them, or send them an audio tape or CD, within four weeks of receiving our Chief Executive's reply.

The ICR cannot reverse funding decisions or make comments or changes to our legal responsibilities and policies on awarding grants. To contact the ICR see 'Getting in touch' below.

### **Other ways to make a complaint**

#### **The Parliamentary Ombudsman**

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (known as the Parliamentary Ombudsman) investigates complaints by members of the



public who have suffered injustice because of maladministration by public organisations.

By law, the Ombudsman is independent of the Government and the civil service, and has wide powers to investigate.

The Ombudsman does not normally investigate complaints if they have not been through our complaints procedures first.

The Ombudsman's services are free.

You can get an explanatory leaflet about the Ombudsman – see Getting in touch below.

### **Judicial review**

A judicial review is where a judge examines your complaint to see whether we have behaved illegally. The judge cannot rule that we must change a funding decision, but he or she can ask us to reconsider our decision.

### **Freedom of information**

Our publication scheme gives details of what information we make available to the public as a matter of course. You can get copies of our publication scheme by phoning the British Film Institute Information Line on 020 7861 7924. We will extend the range of this list in the future, whenever it is possible for us to do so.

If you want information that we do not include in our publication scheme the Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you the right to ask us for it. Under the Act, we must provide you with the information you ask for unless it is not covered by an exemption within the Act. If the information you want is exempt, we have to tell you why.

If you do not agree with us, you should follow stages one and two of the procedures set out in this document. If you are still not satisfied, you may ask the Information Commissioner to review our decision.

To contact the Information Commissioner, see Getting in touch below.

### **Your personal information**

If you use our complaints procedure, you are agreeing that we can use any personal information you send us for purposes connected with your complaint. We may also give your personal information to other people and organisations if we have to do so by law or if you have given us permission.



### **Equal opportunities**

We are committed to equal opportunities and take complaints about discrimination seriously.

We may use complaints about discrimination to review our policies and procedures. This is to make sure we treat everyone fairly.

We may record information about the ethnic background, sex and disability of everyone who makes a complaint so that we promote and maintain our equal opportunities commitment. We will keep all information confidential.

### **Getting in touch**

British Film Institute  
21 Stephen Street  
London W1P 1TN  
Tel: 020 7255 1444

### **Other contacts**

Office of the Independent Complaints Reviewer  
c/o Lottery Forum  
7 Holbein Place  
London  
SW1W 8NR  
Tel: 020 7591 6038  
Textphone: 020 7591 6255  
Email: [katie.roberts@lotteryforum.org.uk](mailto:katie.roberts@lotteryforum.org.uk)

You can get an explanatory leaflet about the Ombudsman from:

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman  
Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4QP  
Complaints Helpline Tel: 0345 015 4033  
Email: [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk)

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF  
Tel: 0303 123 1113  
Fax: 01625 524510  
Email: [mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk)