

TOWARDS VISIBILITY

A THREE-YEAR CULTURAL DIVERSITY STRATEGY

(Phase 1)

"We must make sure that as citizens we all value cultural diversity in our society and are committed to taking action to prevent racism".

Jack Straw, Home Secretary, speech to the conference Eliminating Racism in the Public Sector, The Fabian Society, 5 July 1999.

"To treat me equally, you may have to treat me differently."

Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, speech to Whose Heritage? conference; The Arts Council of England and North West Arts Board, 2 November 1999.

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FOREWORD

The ability of the British Film Institute (*bfi*) to properly serve and reflect the diverse audiences within the UK will be a major factor in determining how successful we are in delivering our corporate mission. One of my core aims as *bfi* Director is to develop *bfi* services which meet the opportunities of an increasingly diverse UK and global market by bringing the recognition and celebration of diversity into the centre of all our activities.

The development of the *bfi*'s Cultural Diversity Strategy has, over the last year, involved an internal working group and extensive consultation and research, with the support of partner organisations. We have had an opportunity to explore and reassess the changing needs and diversity of UK minority communities. Examining our work in this area, we have identified our achievements and how they can be built on, while recognising gaps and inadequacies in our current provision and how best to respond.

Issues relating to Black and Asian communities have, in effect, been the flagship of this strategy. It is now our intention, while continuing to develop work in this area, that we should also develop plans to effectively engage with an even broader range of issues over the next three years.

Jon Teckman
***bfi* Director**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the UK agency with responsibility for encouraging the arts of film and the moving-image and conserving them in the national interest, the British Film Institute (*bfi*) has a duty both to celebrate the UK's diverse cultures and to ensure the widest possible access to film and the moving-image. In a re-structured Institute, the Departments of which focus ever more clearly on educational issues, there is recognition of the *bfi*'s duty to meet the needs of a UK society which is increasingly pluralist.

The term 'cultural diversity' is used in many contexts in the public sector. For the *bfi* it refers to film and the moving-image produced and/or consumed by the diverse cultures which make up the UK and who define themselves through distinct cultural identities. It also embodies a recognition of differing cultural heritages and perspectives. While the *bfi* seeks to serve as many of these communities as possible, it acknowledges that priorities have to be established. These are set out in the Cultural Diversity Aims which flow from the Institute's Corporate Plan 2000-2003 and include Black and Asian, disabled and lesbian and gay people.

The *bfi* has had some success with cultural diversity issues in the past, but this is the first time that a corporate approach has been taken across the three Departments: Education, Collections and Exhibition. The document, *Towards Visibility*, is a three-year Cultural Diversity Strategy which has involved a mix of consultation, original research and self-evaluation. The research, conducted by Surrey Social and Market Research, was the first to be undertaken in this area and was key in helping the *bfi* understand the range and level of participation of Black and Asian people involved in UK film culture, and their needs as audiences and consumers.

Key Recommendations

Both the research and the extensive UK-wide consultation with partner media organisations and minority professionals fed into the Departments' analyses of their respective strengths and weaknesses in the area of cultural diversity. Each Department has evolved three-year development plans to move the Institute from inconsistent responses and lack of representation on issues of cultural diversity to a new, strategic approach with performance measures which will be monitored to gauge effectiveness. The plans detailed in this document are most developed in the area of ethnicity in this first phase of the roll out of the *bfi*'s Strategy, and while addressing disability and other issues, these areas will be the focus of further consultation. The *bfi* is committed to future phases of the Strategy which will more adequately develop *bfi* activities in relation to disability and sexuality issues in particular. The Plans detailed in this document relate both to the functions of the various Departments, but also across a number of common areas that the Institute intends to deal with corporately.

Highlights of the Developments Plans include:

- 1) employment issues that tackle the under-representation of prioritised communities within the workforce, through a series of internships and training courses, mentoring and a minority staff focus group;
- 2) South Asia 2002, a pan-Institute project which will involve all Departments in a celebration and interrogation of film and moving-image media history and contemporary practice in the sub-continent;
- 3) physical access for a range of disabilities to be taken into account through the South Bank redevelopment plans which will see the re-housing of the National Library, new premises for the Museum of the Moving-image and improvements to the National Film Theatre at the new *bfi* Film Centre. These issues will be more fully addressed in Phase 2 of the Cultural Diversity Strategy;
- 4) better communication with minority communities through a range of means including *bfi* Central Marketing and Press and the *bfi* website, which will be enhanced to include information relevant to diverse communities;
- 5) the development of mechanisms to strengthen partnerships with organisations working with diverse cultural communities across the UK on a sustainable basis;
- 6) For the *bfi* to reflect in its planned activities the current 'lived experience' of ethnic minority communities in terms of film and the moving image and particularly the tastes of young people;
- 7) in collaboration with its partners, to identify mechanisms that facilitate dialogue between organisations working with minority communities on film and the moving image across the UK;
- 8) the development of touring actor-led event Black in The Frame, which is designed to heighten the awareness of Black representation in film, as an education event for young people, adults and also on-line;
- 9) the commissioning of a range of new titles relating to African and Asian cinema as part of the World Directors series and Modern Classics series, while also seeking to commission authors from a range of communities;
- 10) the development of the NFT's programming Strategy to include more culturally diverse work, including workshops and screenings on Turkish migrant identity and the Asian Women's Film Festival and regular screenings of South Asian and East Asian films;

- 11) *bfi* Exhibition will develop an Audience Development Strategy for all sections of the Department that targets minority communities to increase attendances;
- 12) *bfi* Collections have set a target of 20% of annual video/DVD releases being of culturally diverse material, supported by theatrical releases, to gain a national profile for this work as well as branding a new strand of Black and Asian film with its own label;
- 13) plan to broaden access to a wider range of culturally diverse audiences by programming *bfi* Collections' material in non-traditional spaces (leisure centres, community centres, museums and galleries) as well as in cinemas.

Implementation of the Strategy will be under-pinned by the pan-Institute post of Project Leader for Cultural Diversity, who will also act as an advocate and knowledge resource on cultural diversity issues both within the *bfi*, and further afield.

This strategic document, therefore, demonstrates how the *bfi* will move forward to work with partner organisations to celebrate, inform and provide access to the UK's rich diversity of cultures and challenge areas of social exclusion.

The *bfi* is now directly funded by the Film Council, which has been established by the Government as the strategic agency responsible for developing the film industry and film culture in the UK. Both organisations in partnership are committed to reflecting the richness and vitality of Britain's diverse cultures, helping to foster public appreciation of film through improved access to cinema, film heritage and educational provision. We expect that the *bfi*'s work on cultural diversity will directly complement the Film Council's emerging plans in this area.

1. INTRODUCTION

The British Film Institute (*bfi*) is going through a period of enormous change. In order to be best placed to meet the challenges of the future and to work effectively with evolving organisations and audiences, the *bfi* has developed a clearer operating structure, regrouping the Institute's functions into three departments: Collections, Education and Exhibition, all of which are committed to working across the whole of the UK and to reflecting its different cultures.

One of the key areas identified for concerted action by this new structure is the promotion of cultural diversity in relation to film and the moving-image. This is not a new issue for the *bfi* and has been the subject of a number of initiatives over the past 20 years, with the Institute sometimes in the foreground of attempts to support and examine representation of and work by minority cultures. It is true to say, however, that this work has often been the result of the particular interest of individual staff rather than coherent and deliberate policy. This lack of strategic vision has resulted in a stop-start relationship with practitioners and professionals from minority cultures and has had the effect of reducing the visibility of the *bfi* within these sectors. At the beginning of a new millennium, the *bfi* accepts its responsibility to take action in a concerted way to meet the needs of a UK society that is increasingly pluralist. Though this document is essentially about the *bfi* getting its own house in order the *bfi* must also work with existing partners and develop links with new ones around the UK to achieve its goals in terms of cultural diversity, which are only possible through effective collaboration, allowing diverse cultural communities sustainable engagement with film and the moving image.

In order to tackle this task, and to do so with the co-operation of the minority cultures it seeks to serve, the *bfi* has undertaken a range of meetings with key organisations throughout the UK, together with original research, to formulate this Strategy which focuses in its first phase on Black and Asian communities. The developmental action plans move beyond rhetoric and show how the *bfi* will work with others to recognise, enhance and celebrate the UK's rich diversity of cultures and challenge areas of social exclusion.

Towards a Definition of Cultural Diversity

Difference and diversity are irreversible facts of modern life. The UK has always been highly differentiated: composed of differences of class, region, community, gender, ethnicity, religion, educational attainment and so forth. But society has become much more pluralised, diversified and fragmented with the numerous 'community' identities offering alternative points of identification.

This is a complex, hybridised modern culture and more and more people have a stake in this modernity and where it is headed, and intend to have a voice in shaping it. However, the fact remains that many individuals from minorities remain excluded, their talents underused or wasted.

For all communities and identities, film and the moving-image are extraordinarily powerful media through which people learn about themselves and the world around them and participate in that world. The *bfi*'s mission is to develop greater understanding and appreciation of film, television and the moving-image, and the Institute therefore has a duty both to celebrate the UK's cultural diversity and ensure the widest possible access to our film and moving-image culture. In this way it can contribute to the liberation of the creative vitality and innovative practices coming from these hitherto marginalised communities and silenced voices.

Defining Cultural Diversity in a *bfi* Context

The term cultural diversity has been widely debated and is used by the public sector throughout the UK in a variety of ways: in relation to specific ethnic minorities; in line with equal opportunities to combat discrimination in all its forms; on the grounds of social exclusion. Over the past three years, and often as a direct result of overt and institutional racism/homophobia (such as the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry and the 1999 London bombings of minorities), there has been a heightened determination both in government and the public sector to tackle discrimination by legislation and action plans.

Given its responsibility to serve effectively the whole of the UK, the *bfi* does not advocate a single 'hard-edged' definition of cultural diversity. Its emphasis is one of inclusiveness and breadth.

For the purpose of this Strategy, the term cultural diversity has been used to refer to film and moving-image produced by and/or consumed by the diverse communities and groups which make up the UK, and who define themselves through distinct cultural identities. It also embodies a recognition of differing cultural heritages and perspectives. These identities may be based around common experiences of social exclusion.

For the *bfi*, the term cultural diversity, therefore, includes: Black and Asian communities who constitute a range of distinct racial/cultural identities; South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African-Asian, Sri Lankan), African-Caribbean, African (Nigerian, Somali, Ugandan etc.), Chinese and Vietnamese and other minority communities including Irish, Turkish, Italian, and Jewish. It also includes a range of language communities in the UK such as Polish, Greek, Spanish, Urdu and Gujarati. Cultural diversity can also refer to other communities and identities who may experience social exclusion or under-representation, such as people with sensory, physical or mental disabilities. The common disparity of provision for rural or inner-city communities is also a consideration, as is gender, age, class, sexual orientation, religion, caste, HIV status and so forth.

The *bfi* also recognises the distinct identities of the UK nations who themselves have uniquely different cultures and identities which may be positioned around religious communities and language.

From this broad spectrum of diversity, however, it has been agreed that the *bfi* will prioritise its work with three specific 'communities': Black and Asian communities; disabled people; lesbian and gay communities.

These communities are specifically referred to in the Institute's Cultural Diversity Aims (see page 11). The *bfi* will seek to engage with a wide range of UK communities in line with its overall commitment to cultural diversity but it is important, when resources are scarce, to be unambiguous as to where priorities lie.

Phasing of the Cultural Diversity Strategy

The Development Plans detailed herein strongly reflect the *bfi*'s determination to engage more effectively with minority ethnic communities, reflecting the fact that work with these communities has over the past two years led the debate on cultural diversity issues for the *bfi*. It is recognised, however, that the current plans do not reflect to the same degree our future development work with disabled and lesbian and gay communities and therefore this document should be considered as Phase 1 of our cultural diversity plans. The *bfi* is committed to developing a second phase of the Cultural Diversity Strategy which will focus on disability and a third examining sexuality issues in greater detail. The expected delivery date for these further Strategy phases is 2001 for the disability phase, which will be in line with the completion of development plans and a social inclusion policy for the new *bfi* Film Centre, and 2002 for the sexuality phase.

2. *bfi* CORPORATE CULTURAL DIVERSITY AIMS

The development of the Cultural Diversity Strategy has been informed by the *bfi*'s Corporate Plan 2000-2003 which sets out the Institute's Mission Statement:

"To develop greater understanding and appreciation of film, television and the moving-image."

The success of which will be measured against:

"The extent to which we serve audiences reflecting diverse cultures in the UK."

This statement is further defined by a series of Cultural Diversity Aims that will frame the *bfi*'s work over the plan period:

- 1) **to encourage awareness, education and appreciation of film and the moving-image relating to the diverse cultures within the UK, recognising and reflecting different histories, heritages and contemporary practices with a particular focus on communities which may experience social exclusion on the grounds of race, disability or sexuality;**
- 2) **to promote public access to film and the moving-image which relates to the diverse cultures within the UK with a particular focus on serving Black, Asian, disabled and lesbian and gay communities;**
- 3) **to be an authoritative and accessible knowledge resource on the diverse film and moving-image cultures within the UK with particular focus on Black, Asian, disabled and lesbian and gay communities.**

In order to achieve these aims it will be necessary for the *bfi* and its partner organisations to develop work cultures which ensure the involvement and inclusion of individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds, with particular emphasis on UK communities who are currently under-represented in film and the moving-image, and to treat those individuals with common standards of dignity and respect.

3. DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

In order to collect data and opinion about the Cultural Diversity Strategy, three areas of work were undertaken:

- a range of UK-wide visits to Regional Arts Boards and Media Development Agencies;
- commission of Surrey Social and Market Research for 'Cultural Diversity Black and Asian Film Research';
- submissions from *bfi* Collections, Education and Exhibition Departments outlining current practice and future plans.

National and Regional Meetings

The purpose of meeting a wide range of key developmental media agencies and minority film and moving-image professionals around the UK was to elicit their views on the direction that the *bfi*'s work should take in the area of cultural diversity and to learn from their evolving policies and examples of good practice. The barriers facing minority professionals were also explored. A list of organisations visited is appended, as is a digest of their comments (see Appendix 1), which reflects the variety of minority communities' responses and how provision to these communities could be increased.

Among the many issues raised surrounding cultural diversity were the following:

- 1) the need for the *bfi* to play a key role in both advocacy for and work around cultural diversity and its greater representation in the media sector;
- 2) concern about the *bfi*'s lack of communication with minority communities leading to a lack of awareness of the *bfi*'s role and potential in this area;
- 3) the imbalance of provision between cities and rural areas and a perceived tendency to marginalise regional practitioners;
- 4) the relation between the cultural diversity policies of regional and national institutions and the *bfi*;
- 5) for the *bfi* to understand the needs of grassroots community organisations and support them;
- 6) the importance of utilising new technology for better communication with a range of communities;
- 7) the need for sustained funding over a significant period of time;

- 8) the importance of a diverse workforce to stimulate work in priority areas;
- 9) the need for access issues to be foregrounded (including broadening audiences, the range of films available, and disability access);
- 10) education and training to be regarded as key to the future of the *bfi*'s engagement with cultural diversity issues;
- 11) that the *bfi* should recognise the huge diversity of communities and identities around the UK, and within individual communities themselves.

Cultural Diversity Black and Asian Film Research

Prior to the development of this Strategy, the *bfi* recognised a considerable information gap about the range and level of participation of African-Caribbean and South Asian people in UK film culture. In order to inform *bfi* departments about current practice and the self-defined needs of Black and Asian consumers and practitioners, the *bfi* commissioned Surrey Social and Market Research to conduct research through a UK-wide street survey, a series of ten focus groups and telephone interviews with Black and Asian media professionals. A full summary of the research is included in Appendix 2.

The recommendations of the report are as follows:

- 1) there is an opportunity for the *bfi* proactively to develop its relationship with Black and Asian audiences, particularly through focused film festivals, regional and national archives, and specific culturally focused events and seminars around the UK;
- 2) the *bfi* needs to better understand these communities' tastes and priorities with regard to film in augmenting its services and activities;
- 3) there is a need for the *bfi* and its partner organisations to engage these communities in film education either through formal or informal education and to raise the profile of Black and Asian film in schools;
- 4) targeted information is required for Black and Asian professionals as there is currently a low awareness of what the *bfi*'s functions and activities are;
- 5) the *bfi* should ensure that its workforce includes Black and Asian staff, including at senior management level, and to make additional investment in staff to work on minority ethnic activities;

- 6) *bfi* should have a role of cultural diversity advocacy in the broader film sector;
- 7) the *bfi* should be more proactive in its collections policy, seeking to 'acquire' existing ethnic archives and individual films, documentaries, home videos etc;
- 8) *bfi* Collections should also distribute more Black and Asian titles;
- 9) the organisation's image is too London focused and the *bfi* should increase its representation and activity in other UK nations and regions.

It is interesting to note from the research a degree of complementarity between the views expressed during the regional visits and, in particular, those of Black and Asian film professionals. These common issues included the need for the *bfi* to communicate more effectively with minority organisations; a lack of awareness of the role and activities of the *bfi*; its perceived lack of a UK-wide focus and the need for more culturally diverse activities to be supported.

Submissions from *bfi* Departments

Each of the *bfi* departments (Collections, Education and Exhibition) and *bfi* Central Services (comprising Marketing and Press, Personnel, Information Technology, Finance and the *bfi* Film Centre) were requested to examine their current activities and outputs in relation to the corporate Cultural Diversity Aims and with reference to the commissioned research and consultation findings in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses in this area and identify action plans for the next three years.

The work of the *bfi* in its attempts to promote cultural diversity in film, television and the moving-image, both historically and in its future plans, form the major part of this Strategy.

4. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE *bfi*'s ENGAGEMENT WITH CULTURAL DIVERSITY POLICY AND PRACTICE

The *bfi* has long recognised the need to reflect the increasingly diverse cultures that underpin UK society in its range of activities and services. Its record, however, has been less than consistent and has often relied on individual initiative and effort rather than an explicit, sustained and sustainable policy commitment.

The *bfi*'s achievements in serving the communities now identified as priorities, has been variable. The gay and lesbian community has been relatively well served through an annual film festival, NFT programming and a range of publications. Disabled communities benefited from interventions by a governors' subcommittee for a number of years, but this has been inactive now since 1998. Activities in relation to ethnic communities have a longer history but have been affected by an inconsistency of approach and structural uncertainties.

In 1993, a governors' subcommittee, chaired by Dame Jocelyn Barrow, undertook an Activity Review on Equal Opportunities "to assess the extent to which the aims of accessibility and diversity are realised across the entire gamut of Institute activity: the policies, objectives and activities of each department or division." The review's conclusions reflected on the Institute's "unwillingness or inability to make a permanent commitment to this work" and urged that the priority "must be to address the racial imbalance of Institute staff and grades, particularly for posts which have the responsibility of addressing audiences and creating cultural agendas..." Although received and accepted by both governors and senior management, the review's findings have not been followed through by previous managements. It is important that the Cultural Diversity Strategy takes on these conclusions and challenges.

The *bfi* and Ethnic Diversity

The *bfi*, mainly in its exhibition and educational work, has long had a culture of engagement with ethnic issues and representation. In the 60s the NFT ran a season on 'Negro' film culture and in the 70s the *bfi* Education Department published Jim Pines' *Blacks in the Cinema* and teaching materials on the history of Black representation.

The first major initiative to provide a more consistent approach was taken in 1985 with the joint appointment with the Commonwealth Institute of an Ethnic Minority Film and TV Adviser. This fixed-term contract position was strategically located in the Directorate and was successful in developing some activities (e.g. an African television festival) but the expectations far exceeded the means provided to achieve them.

The post holder worked across Divisions; one important joint initiative was the setting up, in 1985, of a research project to investigate the contribution of Black actors and creative workers to British television. This received

financial support from the BBC between 1987 and 1989 and resulted in *Black and White in Colour*, two documentaries and a supporting season on BBC 2, with an accompanying book published by the *bfi*.

In parallel, the *bfi* was involved with Channel 4 in the funding of a number of franchised production workshops (Sankofa, Black Audio and Ceddo), which have had a lasting effect in the culture.

When the Ethnic Minority Film and TV Adviser's contract ended in 1988 there was a hiatus of some 18 months before a new post was established, again on a fixed-term contract. This post was initially located in the Distribution Division but moved into the new Research and Information Division in 1990 when the African-Caribbean Unit was formed. This Unit, which had two members of staff on fixed-term contracts, was extremely proactive in the Black community and became an invaluable source of information and advice, initiating the quarterly *Black Film Bulletin*. The Unit was also responsible among other initiatives for developing the film section of the major arts festival Africa '95. The Unit was wound up in 1996 as part of the restructuring of the *bfi*, to the wide dismay of the external world.

After a period of consultation it was decided to create a post of Project Leader for Cultural Diversity located in the National Film and Television Archive. Following the 1998 restructuring of the *bfi* this post was relocated to Education, then the Directorate, and in 2000 back to Education. This post has engaged proactively with Black and Asian communities and led several key projects including the conference New Futures for Black British Film (1998). It has also initiated and developed a range of cultural diversity policy and research, actively working to bring these issues to the core of the *bfi*.

The *bfi* and Disability

The *bfi* Disability Committee, a subcommittee of the governing body and initially chaired by Lord Brabourne, was set up in 1990 with external representatives with media backgrounds, and a range of sensory and ambulatory disabilities, to keep access and other disability issues on the Institute's agenda. A number of important initiatives followed its establishment, including the commissioning of a document, written by a disabled architect, on disabled access for cinemas which had a significant effect on the design of the *bfi* London IMAX. Spin-off initiatives from the Committee included an ambitious but ultimately unsuccessful Arts 4 Everyone lottery application, and a successful collaboration with the film department of the Arts Council of England in the research for and writing of *Framed!* (1997), a book about representations of disability in the media during that year, edited by Ann Pointon with Chris Davies.

Despite the best efforts of the Disability Committee, however, the *bfi* has continued to have an inconsistent relationship with disabled practitioners and audiences. For example, the *bfi* has always sought exemption from the quota of disabled workers it was supposed to employ under (now

superseded) legislation and still has work to do to comply with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) which comes fully into force in 2004.

The *bfi* and Lesbian and Gay Issues

The *bfi* and Lesbian and Gay Culture Services and the employment of staff from these communities has enjoyed some considerable success. The London Lesbian and Gay Festival is now in its fourteenth year and is the third largest film festival in the UK. The Book and Video Publishing operations have been catering to the so-called pink pound for many years. The *bfi*'s achievements in this area can provide a valuable lesson when dealing with other elements of exclusion: the importance of employing staff at all grades from a wide variety of backgrounds and with interests and passions to deliver services which reflect both their background and their expertise.

5. THE *bfi* AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY: THE PRESENT

This section, which has been derived from *bfi* Departments' own comments and their assessments of their relative strengths and weaknesses, examines the ways in which, currently, the *bfi* is meeting the objectives framed by the Cultural Diversity Aims.

It should be recognised that over the last year the *bfi* has developed a range of initiatives to challenge the lack of engagement with minority ethnic communities, particularly in the areas of employment, research and increased representation in all the *bfi*'s emerging strategies.

The *bfi* is well aware of the deficiencies in its provision, and sees the Development Action Plans (which follow in Appendix 3, on page 48) and the consultation process on the Strategy itself as mechanisms to assist in filling some of the gaps in that provision.

Cultural Diversity Aim 1:

To encourage awareness, education and appreciation of film and the moving-image relating to the diverse cultures within the UK, recognising and reflecting different histories, heritages and contemporary practices with a particular focus on communities which may experience social exclusion on the grounds of race, disability or sexuality.

The *bfi* is, predominantly, a body that seeks to disseminate information and stimulate understanding of and debate about moving-image culture. To achieve this, it is responsible for the national collection of film and television (*bfi* Collections), which contains some half-million titles, and the National Film and Television Library (in *bfi* Education), with a collection of more than 40,000 books in 15 languages, as well as periodical holdings and newspaper cuttings. Both the Collections Department and the Library have a crucial role to play in the collection and preservation of the artefacts, both historical and contemporary, of minority cultures and, wherever possible, in making them accessible to a range of consumers.

The National Library systematically collects works which reflect the diversity of filmmaking cultures world wide and its acquisitions policy ensures that all books published in English on Black and Asian film are now acquired. Its SIFT (Summary of Information on Film and Television) database seeks to be as comprehensive as possible and contains in excess of 600,000 film and television titles and 750,000 personality files.

The ability of both the Library and the Collections Department to commit to Aim 1 is tempered, as always, by financial availability and, in the case of the Archive, by the fact that the historical holdings, dating from 1895, tend to reflect the cultural values of the day. Attempts to redress the balance retrospectively by identifying collection gaps have had some success but much material is missing or lost forever. On the positive side, *bfi*

Collections is adopting a new Acquisitions and Disposal Policy which should ensure the prioritisation of material produced by and for diverse cultures, as should greater co-operation between the *bfi* and broadcasters, Black and Regional Archives. *bfi* Education clearly has an important contribution to make to the fulfilment of this Aim. As well as the National Library, the Department consists of Knowledge, Publishing, *Sight & Sound* and Education Projects. All these sections contribute positively, but most agree that their major contribution is in the area of Black film. Education Projects, for example, is currently working more in urban than in rural areas, so that the proportion of ethnic students attending *bfi* events is relatively high. The section has also developed events and course materials that address topics of concern and interest to ethnic minorities e.g. the Black in Frame event, resource pack for Key Stage 3 students, Teaching African Cinema. *bfi* Education Projects recognises, however, that it has done little for other minority communities and that their relationships with representative national and regional bodies are insufficiently developed.

Similarly, Book Publishing has a history of addressing Black and Asian film and encouraging authors from those communities. Pioneering studies such as *The Colour Black: Black Images in British Television* and *Black and White in Colour*, characterised work in the late 80s and early 90s, while, more recently, the focus has shifted to the publication of works of reference in this field (e.g. the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Cinema*), and collections of broad international scope such as *Symbolic Narratives/African Cinema*. The *bfi* Film Classics series includes among its authors Salman Rushdie. The Classics are constrained by the films which have been defined as canonical unlike *bfi* Modern Classics which will be able to celebrate the work of Black and Asian film-makers. Book Publishing has maintained a long and purposeful commitment to issues of gay and lesbian interest, most recently the *bfi* Modern Classic on *Caravaggio*, and has published the seminal work on disability issues, *Framed!*, though this area is otherwise under-represented. Book Publishing acknowledges that, historically, insufficient attention has been paid to marketing relevant books to the three prioritised communities.

The post of Project Leader for Cultural Diversity is located in *bfi* Knowledge and it is expected that this post, which has already developed strong networking relationships with the Black and Asian communities, will continue to act as a catalyst and advocate to the whole of the *bfi* and further afield on cultural diversity issues, with an important role in helping the *bfi* departments implement and monitor the progress of the Cultural Diversity Strategy. The post also co-ordinates the *bfi*'s recently appointed Black and Asian External Advisers Group which will provide on-going advice on the development of the Strategy.

bfi Knowledge also takes responsibility for, potentially, one of the most powerful tools by which images of and information on the *bfi* corporately are disseminated: the *bfi* website. While some departments have taken the opportunity to provide material relating to issues of cultural diversity on the

site this clearly remains an area which requires a lot of further thought and additional content to meet the perceived needs of diverse communities. The Marketing and Press Section of *bfi* Services has, over the past year, tried to ensure that images reflecting cultural diversity are used in most corporate *bfi* publications.

bfi Exhibition has adopted a new aim and objective to offer audiences the broadest possible range of British and world cinema, television and moving-image culture by providing these activities to the broadest range of audiences. The department contributes to cultural diversity aims through the National Film Theatre, Festivals and Cinema Services, which provide a range of funding and programming services to regional film theatres. As other departments, however, it acknowledges that its support for disabled communities is extremely limited.

Cultural Diversity Aim 2:

To promote public access to film and the moving-image which relates to the diverse cultures within the UK with a particular focus on serving Black, Asian, disabled and lesbian and gay communities.

In terms of promoting public access, *bfi* Education has had some success in attracting Black and Asian students to its events and courses. It ensures that for its own seminars and symposiums, an effort is made to select panel and workshop leaders who come from those communities. In addition, the Museum Education team has addressed learners with special needs in both formal and informal learning contexts and has developed pedagogies, content and resources for different kinds of special needs. Little attention has been paid, however, to special needs learners in published resources, policy arguments or teacher training. Issues around sexuality have not been considered at all (due in part to the lack of clarity about the legal position on the provision to schools of services and resources that deal with sexuality). In terms of encouraging access to education activities and services for non-English speakers, little work has been done in minority languages - though this is true for most of the rest of the *bfi* with English being the predominant mode of address in all leaflets, catalogues, programmes etc.

Book Publishing's address to ethnic minorities has already been acknowledged and the reference material, special collections and teaching packs could be said to encourage wider viewing of material from Africa and South Asia. Given the nature of book distribution, however, and the market for *bfi* Publishing in higher education, it is virtually impossible to know whether the books which have a direct bearing on Britain's diverse communities are actually read by people from those groupings. Similarly, *Sight & Sound* with its varied and global coverage of cinema, provides one of the few significant sources of information in the UK about films from outside the US but statistical evidence reveals that 75 per cent of its readership is from higher education, 76 per cent are male and 75 per cent are in the ABC1 socio-economic demographic grouping. It is not known

whether the magazine is read in the sectors prioritised in this Strategy. And *bfi* Knowledge has continued the Institute's ties with the *Black Film Bulletin* under the aegis of a tapering grant to sustain the journal through its first three years of independent existence. The *bfi* has collaborated with the BFB on the influential conference, 'New Futures for Black British Film', with a follow-up publication, *A Fuller Picture*.

The department with arguably the greatest potential in the *bfi* to promote public access to materials from differing cultures is the Exhibition Department, with its responsibilities for the National Film Theatre, festivals and for providing funding and programming services to designated regional film theatres. The integrated approach to London/regional exhibition means that there are opportunities for work from the capital to tour regionally, and vice versa.

The NFT's wide-ranging programme of world cinema has an excellent history of addressing minority cultures, and lesbian and gay audiences are particularly well served both by the general programme and at the annual London Lesbian and Gay Festival. The presence of Black and Asian people as members of the NFT or as part of the audience is, however, another matter. Current figures of attendance according to race are not available and the marketing area of the Festivals Unit lacks the expertise to address minority ethnic audiences.

Cinema Services funds a range of initiatives around cultural diversity through its Film Festival and Regional Exhibition Projects Funds, but these tend to be short-term one-offs, rather than sustained funding. The unit also believes that it tends to work with the same, albeit committed, organisations on these types of projects instead of broadening its reach and stimulating different venues to vary their programmes and marketing culturally.

The *bfi*'s archival collections have been consistently catalogued and indexed to an internationally agreed set of standards allowing titles to be retrieved by subject. Indexing has developed to reflect diversity through genre and subject headings. Resources have not allowed, however, for the thorough and systematic indexing of feature films, which means that these are not easily retrievable by subject, and retrospective conversion of subject indexing has not been carried out. The new Collections Access Policy, developed in response to the Cultural Diversity Aims, presents an opportunity to consult with minority communities on their special access needs, develop outreach programmes and fill gaps in existing provision. Though dependent on sponsorship, plans are underway to develop DVD releases with closed captions for hearing-impaired people and for non-English language material.

Inevitably, in an examination of the ways in which the *bfi* is seeking to fulfil this Aim, issues of physical accessibility tend to rise. The current headquarters of the *bfi* in Stephen Street are accessible to wheelchair users by lift, but only have one toilet adapted for disabled use on the ground floor. The Boardroom has an induction loop, though the majority of

staff have not been trained in its usage and there is currently no minicom system for the main number. The *bfi* National Library, also situated on the ground floor, has limited space for the public as a whole and is not conducive to use by the ambulatory disabled.

The National Film Theatre has partial disabled access but the auditoria arrangements are problematic for wheelchair users. The NFT does, however, provide facilities for the deaf and hard of hearing with an induction loop and facilities for subtitling English-language films. The latter, together with films that are audio-described for the blind and visually impaired, have had to rely on sponsorship to pay for their necessary translations, which means that their appearance in the programme is infrequent and unlikely to build audiences. The museum (MOMI), currently closed for redevelopment, occupied a space under Waterloo Bridge with an access route which was torturous for wheelchair users. The museum presented the story of film through text-based panels in English, inaccessible to foreign visitors or UK citizens who may have limited English, and not accessible either to the blind or visually impaired. There were no representations of lesbian or gay filmmaking in the museum.

Given the age of most of the buildings that the *bfi* occupies, and its lack of available capital, large-scale improvements to physical access are unlikely until the new *bfi* Film Centre is developed on the South Bank, which would create a new museum, improve the NFT and rehouse the National Library and all other elements of the *bfi*. This is planned to be completed by 2004 at the earliest.

Cultural Diversity Aim 3:

To be an authoritative and accessible knowledge resource on the diverse film and moving-image cultures within the UK with particular focus on Black, Asian, disabled and lesbian and gay communities.

Many of the comments relating to the *bfi*'s strengths and weaknesses in its ability to address Aim 1 can also be applied to Aim 3, given that knowledge and the capacity to promote awareness often go hand in hand.

One of the strengths of the Institute has been its power to attract key individuals who are able to interpret their knowledge in the interests of others and who have taken the lead on particular initiatives. In the Exhibition Department's Festivals Unit it has been the policy to employ a wide range of external advisers to provide expertise and information on world cinema and on lesbian and gay film. A gap in expertise in Arab/North African film has been recognised within the Unit though there is a lack of resources to meet this need.

Sight & Sound routinely reviews and commissions articles on outstanding feature films from culturally diverse sources. For instance, films from Iran, Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong are particularly rich at the moment and so there have been a number of feature articles commissioned about them.

For a variety of technical reasons, including the 20 per cent increase in all films being released and the pressure on space, Hindi cinema is not reviewed in its entirety though *Sight & Sound* ensures that all Hindi films of particular interest are reviewed.

Both the National Film and Television Archive and the National Film Television Library have internationally recognised collections and reputations as authorities on British and world cinema. The size and breadth of the collections is a massive resource containing films, books, periodicals, newspaper cuttings, video games, stills and designs and museum objects covering the history of cinema and television. The collections also include many small pockets of highly diverse materials e.g. non-fiction holdings, Hindi cinema posters, colonial cinema collection etc. *bfi* Collections is currently halfway through a retrospective acquisitions project to document new titles funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The new computerised subject indexing system developed by the HLF project has already allowed the re-cataloguing of titles relating to music consumed by people of diverse ethnicity (including reggae, bhangra, ragga, hip hop) and has increased the number of indexing entries ten-fold.

Cultural Diversity Objective: Inclusion and Employment

In order to achieve these aims it will be necessary for the bfi to develop work cultures which ensure the involvement and inclusion of individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds with particular emphasis on UK communities who are currently under-represented in film and the moving-image, and to treat these individuals with common standards of dignity and respect.

The *bfi* adopted an Equal Opportunities Policy and monitoring process as early as the 80s and, while having considerable success with addressing imbalances of gender across all grades, has had less impact in the representation of minority ethnic communities and registered disabled people in the workforce. Indeed, there are currently no registered disabled people listed amongst its personnel or on its governing body.

Statistics for the employment of lesbian and gay people are not available though both Collections and Exhibition recognise the employment of staff from these communities, some at senior levels.

Black and Asian staff are mainly located in *bfi* Central Services, in Finance, IT, Personnel and Estates. Including recent appointments there are now four minority ethnic staff working on film and moving-image activities at middle management and one ethnic minority member of staff employed at senior management level. Nasreen Munni Kabir is the sole *bfi* governor from a minority.

In addition to the permanent staff, *bfi* Education now offers one free trainee place per year for a person from Black and Asian communities to follow a course in filmographic work, and another for a place on the *Sight & Sound* film journalism course.

The department recognises its lack of representation of disabled people on panels and lack of effort to find expert teachers, researchers or authors from ethnic minority or disabled communities. *bfi* Education believes that there are opportunities to improve on the situation, with the Associate Tutor scheme providing the means to identify and where necessary, train a wider range of presenters and workshop leaders to provide consistently high-quality events and activities.

Internships and staff training in general are felt to be key to the development of a culturally diverse workforce and there are a few examples of good practice. *bfi* Exhibition part-funds a Black and Asian Trainee Programme at Bristol's Watershed and its Cultural Exhibition Short Course has the potential to develop programmers across the regional film theatre sector. *bfi* Personnel is currently developing a series of minority employment initiatives including internships, Cultural Diversity Awareness Training, mentor schemes and minority staff training. (These are described in more detail on page 26.)

6. THE *bfi* AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY: 3-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Introduction

This section of the Cultural Diversity Strategy (Phase 1) seeks to summarise the Institute's Development Plans for cultural diversity activities and outputs over the next three years. The Development Plans themselves are located in Appendix 3 and have been prepared by the *bfi* departments: Education, Exhibition and Collections. Each Plan relates to the three Cultural Diversity Aims and are focused around provision for the communities identified as priorities throughout this document: Black and Asian, disabled people and lesbian and gay; although with a particular emphasis in Phase 1 of the Strategy on Black and Asian people.

These Phase 1 Development Plans represent an important step for the *bfi*, specifically addressing cultural diversity in a pan-Institute fashion, with Departments taking responsibility for ownership and committed to implementation. The Performance Measures in the Plans will be appraised and evaluated as part of the corporate monitoring process of the *bfi*.

Financial Resources

In any exercise of this nature, financial resources are clearly an issue. The *bfi* does not anticipate that substantial new funding can be identified to support the cultural diversity activities, rather that Departments must prioritise existing budgets and ensure that these activities are embedded into the core work of the Institute. Departments will commit budgets to the individual activities as detailed in the attached Development Plans.

Performance Measures

Performance measures have been added to the Development Plans where currently agreed. The success criteria for the activities described in the attached Development Plans will be closely monitored by the *bfi* governor's sub-committee Black and Asian External Advisers, (feeding directly back to the governing body) and the *bfi*'s, internal Cultural Diversity Strategy working group and the watchful eye of the Film Council.

Partnerships

The *bfi* recognises that there is a need to build and strengthen partnerships with a range of organisations including the Regional Arts Boards and media development agencies, as well as independent agencies, who are currently working with diverse communities at a local and regional level. The Institute will therefore aim to develop mechanisms over the next three years to develop these partnerships and make them sustainable. The *bfi* will also look at joint funding activities with its partners including funding bids with partners for major activities.

A Corporate Approach

While the Development Plans are summarised by Department, there are a number of key issues that have to be dealt with corporately, these issues are as follows:

Employment and Inclusive Work Cultures

Employment of a culturally diverse workforce is a corporate issue for which a *bfi*-wide policy is being developed with training and other initiatives, such as the commitment to internships.

Each of the *bfi* Departments has committed to Black and Asian internships in 2000/1. A total of six internships each lasting six months have been appointed, with the expectation that these interns will go on to find posts in the *bfi* or with its partners, so developing the representation of these communities in the workforce. The *bfi* is now also planning disability internships in the next financial year.

Other corporately-agreed employment initiatives include: mandatory Cultural Diversity Awareness training for all staff of senior and middle management; mentoring and training for Black and Asian staff and the setting up of an ethnic minorities staff focus group to look at the experiences of these staff in the *bfi* and the challenges they may uniquely face.

To complement the Cultural Diversity Strategy, *bfi* Personnel have initiated a review of the *bfi* Equal Opportunity Policy (EOP), and, in conjunction with the Institute's Equal Opportunities Group, is implementing an action plan. This will be used to ensure that principles outlined in the Cultural Diversity Strategy and EOP are demonstrated by all managers and staff, particularly in relation to the rights and responsibilities that come from the employment relationship. The first element of the Action Plan has been to develop and implement a policy to deal with harassment and bullying in the workplace.

The *bfi* has also recently appointed a governors subcommittee of Black and Asian external advisers to advise on the Cultural Diversity Strategy and on-going policies and activities of the *bfi*. The governors subcommittee on disability is currently on hold awaiting future clarification on these issues by the Film Council.

The feedback to the consultation draft highlighted the importance of the *bfi*'s role as a cultural diversity advocate in the broader film sector, and the need for outline mechanisms by which minority communities can effectively inform this process. This is an area which the *bfi* intends to develop over the 3-year period in partnership with the Film Council.

***bfi* Major Projects**

Corporately-based Action Plans include pan-Institute projects to which each Department makes a contribution. 2002 will see a South Asian project which will foreground and celebrate the history and contemporary practice of film and the moving-image in the Indian sub-continent. The *bfi* is expected to build relationships with existing and new partners to develop a range of activities in London and throughout the UK.

Marketing and Communication

The Institute is committed to developing better communication with culturally diverse communities and sustaining and building on this dialogue. This will be achieved through strengthened relationships with our partners around the UK who work closely with local and regional minority 'grass-roots' organisations. The *bfi* will also seek to communicate directly with these communities through *bfi* Central Marketing and Press, the pan-institute Project Leader for Cultural Diversity post and the *bfi* website. While responsibility for *bfi* website provision is located in *bfi* Knowledge, the enhancement of that website by the addition of information which relates to cultural diversity is a charge on the whole of the *bfi*.

bfi Central Marketing and Press will aim over the next three years to raise awareness, amongst UK adults aged 15+, of the various ways to sample, engage in and appreciate Black and Asian film culture through the *bfi*.

In 2000/01, *bfi* Central Marketing and Press will create a bespoke booklet setting out the range of specific ways (e.g. film seasons, publications, videos, *et al*), in which the *bfi* is presenting and making available Black and Asian film culture and disseminate these booklets via: the cultural diversity mailing list; selected film magazines; direct mailing; and some direct response advertising in appropriate press (subject only to budgets).

The Section will also encourage a permanent feature on the *bfi* website and continue to ensure that cultural diversity is reflected in images used in the *bfi* corporate literature it produces.

Central Marketing and Press will also give support to the pan-Institute celebration of South Asian film (in preparation for 2002) and will investigate the availability of *bfi* spokespersons from Black and Asian backgrounds to cover a range of issues (not just Black and Asian film issues).

In order to help encourage the participation of disabled people in *bfi* activities and services, a bespoke leaflet will be published, setting out all the facilities and help with access available at every *bfi* venue (including the *bfi* London IMAX).

bfi Central Marketing and Press will continue to include a large print option on all *bfi* corporate booklets (e.g. the Guide to the *bfi*; the *bfi* 100 films booklet) and encourage colleagues to do likewise.

Responses to the consultation suggested that some of the activities detailed in the draft Development Plans were considered to be old fashioned and did not reflect the current 'lived experience' of ethnic minority communities in terms of film and particularly the tastes of young people. The *bfi* therefore aims within the next three years to find mechanisms to communicate with minority audiences on a regular and direct basis, such as public debates and community based events.

Another task raised in the feedback to the consultation draft is for the *bfi* to recognise and reflect in its services the diversity within individual minority groups; for example, the wide range of cultures and communities who might be considered as addressed under the term 'Black' The *bfi* also appreciates the inherent difficulties associated with such race specific characterisations .

The *bfi*, in collaboration with its partners, was also called upon to identify mechanisms that facilitate dialogue between organisations working with minority communities on film and the moving image across the UK. This is an issue which the *bfi* expects to explore over the next three years with its partners including the Film Council.

Improved Physical Access

Physical access to buildings, alluded to earlier in the document, is being considered in the light of the plans for the new *bfi* Film Centre, to re-house the National Library and other parts of the *bfi* as well as a relocated Museum and improvements to the National Film Theatre. As part of this development process a disability access panel will be appointed in Autumn 2000, to advise on the Film Centre's design and a Social Inclusion Policy will be implemented. These issues of access will directly be addressed in the Plans of Phase 2 of the Cultural Diversity Strategy.

A Summary of *bfi* Departmental Plans

***bfi* Education**

The five sections which make up *bfi* Education: Library, Education Projects, Publishing, *Sight & Sound* and Knowledge are committed to providing improved opportunities to all sections of UK society, and to offering innovative services to meet the needs of a culturally diverse population. At a time when the *bfi* has refocused its activities to emphasise the importance of education, and with education about film and television likely to remain a high priority for the government, this Department's contribution will be key.

The Library's Development Plan will enable wider access to important collections of books and periodicals which already represent a massive resource for study on and about world cinema and television. In order to ensure that Library collections are as comprehensive as possible and cover the prioritised groupings, it will conduct a review of stock and of its acquisitions policy and practice. The Library intends to promote the library to Black and Asian users in order to increase the proportion from these communities using its facilities from 6 per cent to 11 per cent over a three-year period. It also plans to improve partnerships and liaisons with relevant organisations such as the Black Cultural Archive in order to ensure full coverage and mutual support. The Library will provide an increasing number of bibliographic resources to offer guidance to key parts of the collection which relate to cultural diversity issues. Much of this material will be made available on the internet to widen access.

The development of learning materials for young people is a priority at the *bfi*. Education Projects is developing further its Black in the Frame project (which explores the representations of African-Americans in cinema), with additional content from a British perspective and extended to adult audiences. This touring actor-led event is designed to heighten awareness generally of the history of Black representation in film and is intended to produce related on-line resources. Planning has started on the development of a similar project relating to Indian cinema, and an Indian Cinema Education Pack. These projects will be a component of South Asia 2002, and will form part of a longer-term plan to generate a critical interest among young audiences in South Asian film. An Education Projects officer has been charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating all cultural diversity resources produced by the section.

Over the three years of the Development Plan, Education Projects is also intending to create a touring, participatory event exploring the representation of lesbian and gay sexuality in the Hollywood studio system; as well as a project for secondary schools addressing issues relating to boys' identity and masculinity. The section will, in the longer term, build on the already important work undertaken by MOMI Education in special needs, to involve young people and adults with physical disabilities by developing a touring project offering animation workshop or film/video production opportunities.

The *bfi* is committed to enhancing the quality of media education provision in the UK, and Education Projects is developing a register of Associate Tutors to ensure that lecturers and tutors from currently under-represented communities are identified and utilised for relevant events and courses.

bfi Book Publishing will commission new titles to maintain its record of meeting the needs of the academic community for well-researched monographs which reflect the diversity of world cinema. It intends to commission a title in the *bfi* Film Classics series on a Satyajit Ray film, and one title on an African and South Asian director in its World Directors series. In addition, editors hope to commission either another *bfi* Film Classic on Mother India or a *bfi* Modern Classic on Indian film in time for

South Asia 2002, with the unfulfilled options to appear as part of the publishing programme in subsequent years. It is seeking to commission authors from diverse sectors of the community in order to develop a stronger presence in its titles that reflect these interests. It recognises the need to market *bfi* publications to a wider community of interest, as a longer-term objective, by promotional targeting.

Sight & Sound will continue to reflect global cinema in its feature articles and news stories, with a commitment to 10 per cent of content in Year 1 reflecting culturally diverse material. The magazine is committed to increasing the number of reviews of national culturally diverse cinema releases to a minimum target of 15 films in the first year increasing to 20 by 2003. It hopes to be able to produce a supplement on South Asian Cinema to coincide with the pan-Institute project in 2002.

The importance of *bfi* Knowledge with its responsibility for the *bfi* website, which is a key service enabling the Institute's ability to communicate with minority culture groupings, has already been noted. There are plans to draw together material from across the *bfi* for the web site which will stimulate the interest of those groupings. An audit will be carried out of the expectations of culturally diverse audiences of the web site. This will feed back into the site's evolution so that it is both user-friendly and useful in providing navigation systems which enable access by cultural diversity themes. Similarly, the *bfi* Online developmental project will seek to incorporate culturally diverse material in its pilot projects for schools.

Internal seminars will be organised by the section to define what research needs to take place in order to achieve the Cultural Diversity Aims. This will result in published papers and in seminars, particularly in relation to the 'National Everyday Cultures Programme'. A longer-term objective will be to obtain funding for major research into the contribution of Black and Asian professionals to British moving-image culture.

Since the reorganisation of the Institute, *bfi* Knowledge has been the location for the Project Leader for Cultural Diversity, who will take the advocacy lead for the *bfi* in this area, supporting the Departments with the implementation and co-ordination of their Development Plans. Key elements of this work will be the co-ordination of the pan-Institute project, South Asia 2002, and the continued building of links with Black and Asian communities. The post will also continue to act as a key knowledge resource on these issues within the *bfi* and further afield.

***bfi* Exhibition**

This Department with its three sections, National Film Theatre, Festivals and Cinema Services carries the greatest responsibility for improving provision for public access to culturally diverse communities. Some of its ability to do this will depend on the progress of plans for the new *bfi* Film Centre on the South Bank, which will continue through the life of the Strategy and come to fruition in 2004 at the earliest.

bfi Exhibition recognises that, while many advances have been made in the programming of culturally diverse work at the NFT – in festivals such as the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival and in regional film theatres throughout the country – it has lacked a strategic approach to promoting cultural diversity in the material programmed and the audiences served.

With the development of the UK-Wide Strategy for Exhibition and the new NFT Programming Strategy, both of which view cultural diversity as fundamental to their success, *bfi* Exhibition is poised to implement a strategic approach. The starting point will be a review of the Department's activities to encompass all sections and to examine: the materials programmed both quantitatively and qualitatively not only at the NFT, but at all its festival outlets and in regional cinemas and film societies; the nature of its partner organisations and individuals; the audiences served and the Department's operational methods. This assessment will lead to an identification of the Department's strengths and weaknesses, which will define the actions to be taken and the performance measures against which they will be monitored over a three-year period and beyond.

Plans are already in hand to develop the NFT's programming strategy to include more culturally diverse work, such as workshops and screenings on Turkish migrant identity, an Asian Women's Film Festival, and regular screenings of South Asian and East Asian cinema. As well as London-based screenings, opportunities will be provided to make this material available throughout the UK and for the NFT to accept material that has been developed elsewhere in the UK.

The Film Festivals Fund, operated by Cinema Services, will continue to prioritise those Festivals which seek to develop programmes of culturally diverse work and which are working with audiences that are under-represented. The strong commitment that already exists to lesbian and gay film will continue primarily by maintaining the annual festival and ensuring the touring of material from it within the UK. The Department will also ensure that the programmes of both the Lesbian and Gay and the London Film Festival will include a substantial amount of work from East and South Asia, Africa and South America, diaspora film-makers and Black and Asian film-makers.

The Marketing arm of *bfi* Exhibition will develop an Audience Development Strategy for all sections of the Department that targets those communities prioritised by the Strategy. The aim of this Strategy in its first year will be to build contacts with each target segment and to work with them through website links, familiarisation trips, publicity materials etc. to increase attendances. The Unit has undertaken to identify at least one season per year related to cultural diversity issues for a high-profile press and marketing campaign.

The Cinema Services Unit, which is responsible for the provision of programme services and the disbursement of funding to regional cinemas will be the primary mechanism through which the UK-Wide Strategy for Exhibition will be delivered. As part of this Unit's participation in the overall

development of the Department's cultural diversity activities, the Unit will work with *bfi* Education to make available training courses on cultural programming.

***bfi* Collections**

The Department consists of Collections Access, Registry, Collections Preservation and the Museum of the Moving-image. These sections together form a film and video archival resource that has a world-wide reputation and which already contains a substantial range of materials that can be described as culturally diverse.

The Department plans to start collecting in line with the new Acquisitions and Disposals Policy, which highlights the commitment to cultural diversity, by making contact with representative organisations to build a more complete picture of UK film production. It will also undertake a re-evaluation of the subject indexing to expand and improve on existing retrieval methods, from which new filmographies can be developed.

The starting point will be a review of the subject indexing terms used in the past and to up date those most likely to be out of date in order to include references to cultural diversity in all its manifestations. An important contribution to the South Asia 2002 project will be to catalogue and identify the Indian poster collection, thereby making the collection accessible and exhibitable. The Department will ensure that all existing cultural diversity catalogues are available free on the *bfi* website (Ethnic Notions, Gay and Lesbian, AIDS) and will produce a catalogue for the colonial cinema collection, and new filmographies on disability.

A longer-term aim is to establish the Collections Curatorial Group to develop research, publications and programming from the Collections. This will include having a programme of invited high-profile research fellows to curate core cultural diversity collections and setting up a national film register to ensure the preservation and promotion of key cultural diversity titles. The Curatorial Group will also assist in the development of Collections staff knowledge and expertise in these areas, which will be supplemented by participation in the Black and Asian Archives Working Party. A link has been established between the Curatorial Group and the *bfi* Black and Asian Advisers Group.

The Department has set a target of 20 per cent of annual video/ DVD releases being of culturally diverse material, supported by theatrical releases, to gain a national profile for this work as well as branding a new strand of Black and Asian film with its own label. The Department will continue to ensure that hearing-impaired audiences have access to films from *bfi* collections by introducing closed caption DVD releases. Cultural diversity titles will be prioritised in the project to restore and preserve the *bfi* Production back catalogue which should lead to greater international promotion and sales of these titles. Programming Collections' material in non-traditional spaces (leisure centres, community centres, museums and

galleries) will broaden access to a wider range of culturally diverse audiences as well as in mainstream and specialist cinemas.

Plans for the new museum and mediatheque in the proposed *bfi* Film Centre are long term, but will provide the opportunity for greater inclusion of previously under-represented communities. This will be achieved by consultation throughout the planning process with diverse organisations and individuals. MOMI on Tour will take cognisance of local needs in terms of cultural diversity and will be tailored to these needs.

7. CONSULTATION

The *bfi* was committed to a wide consultation exercise on this Strategy document and its Development Plans. As detailed in Appendix 1, meetings were held in 1999 and 2000 across the UK nations and regions with groups that have a particular interest in these fields of activity. The *bfi* has also set up a Black and Asian External Advisory Group (chaired by Nasreen Munni Kabir, a *bfi* governor), to advise on the refinement of the plans and to comment on their implementation.

A consultation draft of the Cultural Diversity Strategy (Phase 1) document was sent out to a wide range of organisations throughout the UK in August 2000. The recipients were requested to respond to this document by 29 September 2000. Of the 1,700 copies dispatched a range of responses were returned, these were collated and forwarded to the *bfi* Departments to consider in producing their final drafts of the Departmental Development Plans.

The consultation document was also considered at length at an Awayday of the Black and Asian external advisers group who fed their comments directly to *bfi* representatives. Industry and public forums to discuss the document took place at Edinburgh Film Festival, hosted by Comex on 18 August 2000, and the London Film Festival at the ‘What’s Cooking in The UK Film Industry?’ debate on 4 November 2000.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Summary of Cultural Diversity Consultation Visits Around the UK

Introduction

In 1999 and 2000 *bfi* officers visited different parts of the UK, as guests of the English Regional Arts Boards and Media Development Agencies. The purpose of these visits was to discuss the *bfi*'s emerging Cultural Diversity Strategy and to find examples of innovative cultural diversity policy and practice. Officers also learnt about the experiences of a range of minority professionals and those organisations that work directly with diverse communities, exploring some of the operational issues they may face. At the end of each meeting practitioners were asked what they would like to see the *bfi* achieve in terms of cultural diversity.

From the visits it was clear that the English Regional Arts Boards and Media Development Agencies, who hosted *bfi* visits, were in various stages of development of their own cultural diversity policies and activities, some of which were aligned with the Arts Council of England's Cultural Diversity Strategy which focuses on ethnicity.

It was also clear that the funding organisations varied greatly in terms of who they perceived as their priority local minority communities, the barriers that these different communities faced and the activities in place to increase provision. Generally the consensus was that there was still a great deal of work to be achieved in this area, especially around film and moving-image media and that the *bfi* had a key role to play.

It is worth noting that a number of the key issues brought up by minority organisations during these visits, were also echoed in the *bfi* commissioned Black and Asian Film Research, in particular the interviews with film professionals. These common issues included: the need for the *bfi* to communicate more effectively with minority organisations; a lack of awareness of what the *bfi* 'does'; its perceived lack of UK-wide focus; and the need for more minority-focused activities.

It is also worth noting that views on cultural diversity issues were markedly different in the non-English UK nations and particularly in Northern Ireland and Wales, where practitioners discussed the importance of religious communities and language in terms of cultural identity.

Digest of Responses from *bfi* Cultural Diversity Visits

Listed below are a digest of practitioners' responses to the question:

"What activities and plans do you think the *bfi* should undertake to more effectively engage with cultural diversity?"

We have not included a number of references to the *bfi* and film production. This information has been passed on to the Film Council which now has the remit for film production. It should be recognised that most responses listed were brought up by more than one individual.

General Comments

Geographic issues

Comments included a call for the *bfi* to recognise the huge diversity of communities and identities around the UK and broadly different issues from nation to nation in the UK (especially Northern Ireland). The *bfi*'s perceived lack of presence in both northern England and Northern Ireland was discussed and it was suggested that the *bfi* should have an officer posted in each of these locations. Sgrîn officers discussed the importance of the Welsh language as a key element of diversity issues in Wales.

The *bfi*, it was felt, should recognise the imbalance of provision between cities and rural areas. The *bfi* also had a role to play in linking up related arts/media organisations regionally and nationally.

Networking

It was commonly perceived that the *bfi* should have a closer engagement with minority organisations in their work with local communities, local business and new technology. The *bfi* should consider its responsibilities as a national advocate as it was currently considered to be too London-centric, marginalising regional practitioners.

There was an opportunity for the *bfi* to tie in with minority networks that already exist. Perceived potential for a network brokering scheme, particularly in the area of education, was discussed.

The *bfi* was also challenged to look at smart ways of using the internet for developing contacts, marketing, advertising jobs, and providing access for different communities.

The Cultural Diversity Strategy

Generally the advent of the *bfi* Cultural Diversity Strategy was considered with some scepticism, as it was felt that many minority-oriented policies rarely resulted in practice. As one practitioner put it:

"White middle-class organisations churn out policies, but do things get any better? There is a need for sustainable change."

'Joined-up thinking' on policy was debated with regard to issues such as cultural diversity, equal opportunities and social exclusion. There was also a need to consider related policy links between public sector organisations, such as between the *bfi* and the Arts Council of England.

It was considered essential that the *bfi* policy should reflect the real and diverse culture we live in rather than the misrepresentations of the media, and recognise that minority is mainstream as, it was perceived, Channel 4 had.

Local Communities

The importance of understanding grassroots community organisations was considered essential to develop provision for a range of minority communities. It was argued that this is where most activity took place. There were calls for the *bfi* to develop grassroots exhibition opportunities for films made in the community. Other suggestions included the appointment of community development officers at key *bfi* funded venues.

Communication and Publicity

It was consistently argued that the *bfi* should better communicate its activities and funding initiatives through mail-outs and the website. The *bfi* was considered to be in the privileged position of having a national overview of 'what was going on' and this should also be communicated to practitioners.

Exhibition Issues

The *bfi* was challenged to support and co-ordinate UK-wide tours of key regional festivals. It also had a role to play in broadening the range of minority films available and developing minority audiences at the regional film theatres and the NFT. This should also involve providing cinemas with expert advice on minority marketing, library resources and specialist speakers.

Generally it was felt that British film (including those made by minorities) needed to be prioritised over international film in the exhibition sector.

Best Practice Issues

It was commonly felt that the *bfi* should seek out examples of best practice and consider these in developing its Cultural Diversity Strategy, especially where films have been placed in the community, recognising the immobility of the socially excluded.

Good practice in one region should be communicated to other regions via the *bfi*'s partners, to encourage cross-regional working and synergy on CD policy and activity.

Funding

A number of funding issues were raised and the *bfi*'s current funding role discussed. Several practitioners thought the *bfi* and its partners should offer advice or training on how to apply for funding and how to navigate funding mechanisms. This was particularly important for people who did not have English as their first language.

Other suggestions included increased funding for regional practitioners and funds to meet travel costs for physically disabled practitioners and small organisations, to allow them to visit festivals and make connections around the UK and internationally.

The development of culturally specific funding schemes were argued for by some practitioners while others argued for fair representation in mainstream funding rounds, such as the *bfi*'s Film Festival Fund.

Generally there was a call for sustainable funding, developing a funding relationship with key existing organisations over a 3- to 5-year period, rather than funders always supporting new initiatives or stop-start funding.

Education Issues

The *bfi* should identify the needs of young people who are our future and keep them informed and abreast of new technology as well as encouraging an appreciation of culturally diverse film and video in the classroom.

Disability Issues

The *bfi*, it was suggested, had a key role to play in championing disability issues in the film sector. The *bfi* should recognise and advocate the need for improved access for people with a range of disabilities including hearing and visual problems. This role had begun with the now disbanded *bfi* Disability Committee: it was considered to have an important role to play and should be reinstated.

There was a perceived low awareness of disability issues in the *bfi* especially around access. Practitioners discussed the problems of working

hearing loop equipment in the *bfi* Boardroom. It was felt that all *bfi* staff should undergo Disability Awareness Training, or at least have one officer with specialist technical training.

Employment and the lack of opportunities for disabled practitioners was felt to be another area that the *bfi* needed to address. Employment initiatives recommended included: the adoption of disability intern schemes; the employment of disabled people at various grades within the Institute; and the appointment of a dedicated worker in the Institute on disability issues, to provide specialist advice and information on disability and film issues. A *bfi* disability database was also requested, particularly on films available from the *bfi* collections.

Exhibition was a particular area where there was felt to be a lack of provision. The *bfi* was requested as a priority to take a lead on the development of audio-visual description for disabled audiences. Access difficulties for wheelchair users at a number of *bfi* supported cinemas was also raised.

Lesbian and Gay Issues

There was a limited discussion of these issues on the UK-wide visits. Generally it was felt that the *bfi* was providing a more effective provision for these communities in terms of exhibition with the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival on Tour. The tour was sometimes connected with local Pride festivals such as Bristol's Pride West, which helped to boost marketing and audience attendance. Informal film education outside London was recognised as an underdeveloped area for the *bfi*.

Minority Ethnic Issues

It was felt by some that the *bfi* needed to be more welcoming to ethnic minorities. One professional described the institute as "an uninviting space that was intimidating and unfriendly to Black people and foreign people". There was also a common feeling that the *bfi* should develop and promote its activities for Black and Asian communities.

It was felt that the emerging Cultural Diversity Strategy should consider the diversity of the minority ethnic communities. Even within the individual communities themselves there was great diversity between generations, language groups, communities and levels of financial success and social exclusion. For example there are marked differences between the Pakistani, Bangladeshi and different Indian communities who were lumped together as 'Asian'.

The Strategy Plans, it was felt, did not include other smaller but significant minorities such as Latin Americans, who could be argued to be ethnic minorities and should therefore be included.

Education and training was seen as key for the future of the *bfi*'s engagement with minority communities. It was commonly felt that the *bfi*

and its partners should set up race awareness training schemes. The provision of training on Asian film history and contemporary practice was also felt to be valuable, particularly for exhibitors. The *bfi* was also requested to explore ethnically focused media training for the young, to encourage these people to explore career possibilities in the film sector. This could also effectively take place through informal education.

Film education was considered by some to be the best way to help minorities retain their cultures, and there should be more exhibition of Black and Asian films in schools to allow children to share cross-cultural experiences and develop respect for each others cultures. It was argued that *bfi* Education had a key role to play in this process.

It was commonly felt that Black and Asian films should not just be seen by these communities; there was great potential for crossover audiences, as film festivals like Bite the Mango had proven. The *bfi* should support the exhibition of these films to diverse audiences and support tours of Black and Asian film festivals.

It was also strongly argued that the *bfi* should promote and encourage British Asian films and videos, and not just Indian product which is taking over the film and television markets.

Exhibitors called for the *bfi* to put more Black and Asian films into distribution. The problems facing Black film festivals were discussed, including the lack of availability of product in the UK market-place and that it was particularly difficult for exhibitors outside the South East to access these films. As a result Black film festivals in the North often failed to attract sizeable audiences.

Finally it was felt that the *bfi* should be an advocate for the greater representation of Black and Asian people in the film sector.

Organisations and Individuals Consulted

Visits by *bfi* officers have so far taken place in the following UK nations and regions:

Scotland

A joint meeting took place with: Scottish Screen, Film Fixers, The Filmhouse (Edinburgh), Glasgow Film Theatre, Glasgow Education Business Partnership, Brighter Pictures, Antonine Films, Fife Council, Glasgow Media Access and several independent film- and video- makers.

Wales

Meetings took place with: Media Education Wales, International Film Festival of Wales, Chapter Arts Centre, URDD, CADMAD, Arts Disability Wales, Sgrîn.

Northern Ireland

A joint meeting took place with: Northern Ireland Film Commission, Arts Council of N. Ireland, Community Relations Council, Northern Visions, Around The World Productions, Cinemagic, BBC, The Nerve Centre,

West Midlands

Meetings took place with: West Midlands Arts, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), The Drum, Jubilee Arts, Birmingham International Film & Television Festival.

East Midlands

Meetings took place with: Phoenix Arts, Line Out Film & Video, Metro Cinema (Derby), Viewfinder Media, Viz Productions, East Midlands Arts and independent film- and video- makers.

North West

A joint meeting took place with practitioners from around the region. Organisations included: North West Arts Board, North West Film Archive, Diverse Education Trust, Rais Academy, Full Circle Arts, Arts Investors Unit, Cornerhouse Cinema and several independent digital artists.

North East

A group meeting included discussions with the following organisations: Picture Palace Cinema, the Arc, Tyneside Cinema, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council, Tyneside Disability Arts and Northern Arts Board.

Yorkshire

Meetings took place with: Hallplace Studios, Leeds Film Festival, The National Museum of Photography, Film & Television, Black Media & Training Trust, Yorkshire Arts, Yorkshire Media Production Agency, Yorkshire Arts Marketing and Cherry Pip Productions.

London

Meetings took place with the following organisations: Four Corners, The Lux, Sankofa, The Latin American Film Festival and London Film & Video Development Agency.

South East

Meeting with South East Arts Boards. Meetings with other organisations to be arranged.

Eastern

Meetings took place with Asian Arts Access and Eastern Arts Board.

South Western

A group meeting took place with the following organisations: Black Pyramid, Wild West Films, Community Arts Project, Picture This, Guild Hall Arts Cinema, Watershed Cinema, Asian Arts Strategy, South West Media Development Agency (SWIMDA) and individual film practitioners.

Southern

The following organisations met *bfi* officers in a group meeting: Slough Borough Council, Asian Arts Access, Real Time Video (Reading), Living Archive, Southern Arts Board (SAB) and independent film and video practitioners.

Appendix 2

Cultural Diversity Black and Asian Film Research

The *bfi* commissioned Surrey Social and Market Research to undertake the Cultural Diversity Black and Asian Research in late 1999. The research was designed to enable the *bfi* to gain a clearer understanding of the range and level of participation of African-Caribbean and South Asian people in UK film culture. It also aimed to explore the self-defined consumption needs of these audiences.

The research findings have informed the *bfi* Departments' three year Development Plans which seek to improve services to better meet the needs and aspirations of Britain's minority ethnic communities.

The fieldwork for the research focused on African-Caribbean and South Asian communities (Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis), given that these groups represent the largest UK racial minorities.

Three research methods were used:

- (i) a UK-wide street survey to establish the attitudes of African-Caribbeans and South Asians in areas of high minority ethnic concentration. Four hundred interviewees were asked a series of fixed questions and their responses were then collated;
- (ii) a series of ten focus groups comprising specific African-Caribbean and South Asian communities across the UK (including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and African-Caribbean communities). This qualitative research explored in greater depth the attitudes and perceived barriers to film consumption;
- (iii) telephone interviews with Black and Asian professionals, exploring attitudes to film and possible barriers to participation in the film sector. Film professionals were also requested to give their views on the *bfi* and its current activities.

The results were compared with previous research on film in the UK. Though it was recognised that no such specific research had been undertaken in the UK before, it was, however, possible to draw a number of comparisons with surveys (such as CAVIAR) that had assessed the average film-going activities of UK citizens.

Research Conclusions

In general it was clear from the research findings that the Black and Asian film professionals offered the most comprehensive feedback for the *bfi*, as most professionals had some basic knowledge of the *bfi* and its functions. In contrast, the African-Caribbean and South Asian public had no awareness of the *bfi*. However this public element of the research has potentially valuable applications for the *bfi* in terms of understanding and developing new audiences, and improving access for these communities with particular relation to the *bfi*'s UK-wide exhibition remit, collections access and educational activities.

Summary of Conclusions from Street Surveys (Quantitative) and Focus Groups (Qualitative) research

1. Relationship between film and the viewer

Both the street surveys and focus groups indicated that though the Black and Asian public may be aware of the notion of film as culture, art or social record, the African-Caribbean and South Asian public consider film as primarily entertainment. It was a form of escapism, amusement and excitement that can also provide a focal point for family or other social activity. Related research suggests that this parallels the views of the UK population as a whole, especially those under 35 years of age.

2. Cinema attendance

Data from the street surveys suggested that about a quarter of African-Caribbeans and South Asians went to the cinema two or three times a month or more often. Compared to existing survey data this research suggests that African-Caribbean and South Asian communities attend the cinema more frequently than the population as a whole.

Looking at the same data by ethnic groups findings suggest that South Asians were more frequent visitors to the cinema than African-Caribbeans. For example, about half of the South Asian sample stated that they went to the cinema once a month or more, the equivalent figure for African-Caribbeans being 35 percent.

Cinema-going was somewhat more frequent among people from higher income grades; in other words there was, broadly speaking, some correlation between cinema-going and affluence.

The research suggested that cinema-going for both African-Caribbeans and South Asians tended to be a young person's activity. More than 40 percent of 16-29 year olds went to the cinema 2-3 times a month or more. This parallels data for the UK population as a whole.

For the industry and the *bfi* it is important to recognise the age profiles of Black and Asian populations, where 42 percent of all South Asians and 38

percent of African-Caribbeans are less than 29 years old (compared to 25 percent of the white population).

3. Where films are seen and why

These informants saw far more films on television than were seen in the cinema. Respondents in the quantitative survey were asked to identify where they most often saw films. More than a quarter nominated the five terrestrial television channels, an additional fifth nominated cable/satellite television, with almost the same number selecting video/DVD viewed at home. Just over a fifth, 22 percent - selected multiplex cinemas.

The qualitative research suggested that it is not unusual for some people to watch a film at home every day, either on video or, mainly, on television. Older informants tended to be more frequent in-home viewers of film. These findings were similar for Asians and African-Caribbeans.

4. Dislikes and problems with the cinema

Though there were of course concerns about the logistics and practicalities of cinema-going (price, queues, people talking during the film, etc) there was also concern about film content. There were worries, particularly amongst both Asian and African-Caribbean women, about the levels of violence and sex. Amongst African-Caribbean informants in the qualitative research there was also considerable concern about particular films ranging from old *Tarzan* movies to *Independence Day* which were seen as demeaning or offensive to Black minorities. Amongst South Asians there was some discontent with the film *East is East*, which had been on release at the time of the survey. There was agreement amongst qualitative research informants that there was a need for more films that portray Black culture in a positive way.

In the quantitative research, informants were given a list of different types of film and were asked to select the type they would like to see more of. Though new Hollywood/British film (i.e. mainstream movies) was the type most frequently selected (by 24 percent), British Black/Asian films were chosen by virtually the same proportion (at 22 percent). These two sets of data suggest that despite the undoubted pleasures of the cinema, as it currently exists, the ethnic minorities were felt to be under-represented, and there was an unmet need for films which were more closely related to the day-to-day lives of African-Caribbeans and South Asians in the UK.

5. Information about cinema

Cinema-going tended to be a local activity but, that said, the most important sources of information about new videos or films at the cinema were television and radio reviews, (selected by 28 percent), publicity at the cinema/video shop (15 percent), word-of-mouth (13 percent) and ads/reviews in the mainstream press (11 percent).

6. Influences on the choice of film

A good story-line was selected by half the quantitative sample as the main influence on their choice of film, with the star(s) in the film being selected by 37 percent, friends or family interest by 18 percent, and reviews by 12 percent.

7. The use of video

The households of African-Caribbeans and South Asians – and as other research suggests, the general public as a whole – tend to contain a number of televisions and, increasingly, more than one video player.

As a result, different programmes are watched simultaneously by different household members.

Videos were obtained primarily from large video stores like Blockbuster (by some 40 percent of the sample), but also from local community video shops (20 percent), which were more frequently used by South Asian informants.

Summary of Interviews With Black and Asian Film Professionals

1. Attitudes to *bfi* and the film establishment

There was considerable discontent amongst the African-Caribbean and South Asian professionals about the film establishment of the UK as a whole, including the *bfi*. The *bfi* was felt to be dominated by white middle-class men with limited understanding of, or sympathy towards, the ethnic minorities and their needs. Indeed, the *bfi* was believed by some to be racist, though the racism on the whole was felt to be based not on malice but on a lack of understanding and lack of vision. There was also believed to be a lack of investment and staff involvement in ethnic affairs within the *bfi*. It was felt that such situations were unlikely to change until there were more senior, decision-making staff at *bfi* from the ethnic minorities.

2. Confusion about the *bfi*'s role

There was often a gulf between the professionals' work, in a variety of fields, and any potential contribution or support from the *bfi*. Though the organisation's roles in Exhibitions, Education and Collections were acknowledged as important, there was relatively little detailed understanding of its work and functions, and there was a perceived need for more information on the *bfi* and its activities. This might reflect some problem with the targeting of *bfi* information and suggests the need for better marketing by the *bfi* of its services.

3. Film festivals

Though some dangers were identified (marginalisation, lack of contact with the mainstream, and creating a cultural ghetto), Black and Asian film festivals were felt overall to be of great value, both in creating opportunities

for films to be seen which otherwise might rarely or never be screened and in providing a forum for film professionals to exchange thoughts and ideas. The networking element of such events was seen as positive, constructive and important.

4. Film collection and preservation

Not surprisingly, film archives were felt to be, among other things, crucial to the industry as a whole, not least because of their role as a historical record not just of the industry but of society. It was also believed that access to any archive is important and should be maximised.

Black and Asian Film Research Recommendations

- 1) There is an opportunity for the *bfi* proactively to develop its relationship with Black and Asian audiences, particularly through focused film festivals, regional and national archives, and specific culturally focused events and seminars around the UK.
- 2) The *bfi* needs to better understand these communities' tastes and priorities with regard to film in augmenting its services and activities.
- 3) There is a need for the *bfi* and its partner organisations to engage these communities in film education either through formal or informal education and to raise the profile of Black and Asian film in schools.
- 4) Targeted information is required for Black and Asian professionals as there is currently a low awareness of what the *bfi*'s functions and activities are.
- 5) The *bfi* should ensure that its workforce includes Black and Asian staff, including at senior management level, and to make additional investment in staff to work on minority ethnic activities.
- 6) The *bfi* should have a role of cultural diversity advocacy in the broader film sector.
- 7) The *bfi* should be more proactive in its collections policy, seeking to 'acquire' existing ethnic archives and individual films, documentaries, home videos etc. Collections should also distribute more Black and Asian titles.
- 8) The organisation's image is too London focused and the *bfi* should increase its representation and activity in the other UK nations and regions.