



ÚDARÁS
CRAOLACHÁIN
NA hÉIREANN

BROADCASTING
AUTHORITY
OF IRELAND

BAI Gender Action Plan

April 2018

Introduction

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) has a central role to play in promoting diversity and equality in the Irish audio-visual industry. In its dual role of developer and regulator of the sector, the BAI has been engaging with its partners for a number of years on issues of gender equality.

In its 3-year Statement of Strategy published in 2017, one of the key strategic objectives under the theme of Promoting Diversity and Plurality is that the BAI would '*foster a landscape that is representative of, and accessible to, the diversity of Irish society*'. A stated outcome for the BAI is that '*Irish audio-visual media is more diverse in terms of its content and those involved in its production*' by the end of 2019.

To this end, the BAI has developed a Gender Action Plan, which is clearly positioned within the framework provided by the Council of Europe Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on gender equality in the audio-visual sector. This Recommendation was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the 27th September 2017.

Following the Recommendation and recognising the need to integrate a gender equality perspective in the Irish audio-visual sector, the BAI Gender Action Plan will address four key areas in promoting greater gender equality. These are:

- Data collection and publication
- Supporting Research
- Encouraging the development of gender initiatives internally, and with stakeholders
- Enhancing accountability processes, including monitoring and reporting.

The BAI's plans under these four areas are detailed below:

1. Data collection and publication

The BAI recognises that up-to-date and accurate data on the numbers of women involved in the audio-visual industry, the types of roles they occupy and the opportunities for funding they access is scarce and difficult to gather.

To address this issue, the BAI has already undertaken a number of changes to its internal processes and procedures, as they relate to funding opportunities offered by the BAI through its Sound and Vision fund primarily, and also through its regulatory mechanisms. For example,

- The Sound & Vision application form has been amended to enable the collection of gender data on the creative roles of Producer, Director and Writer. Applicants

for funding will now have to outline the gender of these three creative roles at application stage.

- Sound & Vision contractors must now report on the gender of the key creatives roles (those above plus editor, director of photography, etc.) in order to draw down the final tranche of payment.
- Broadcaster Returns information for licensed commercial stations requires a gender breakdown of managerial and non-managerial roles within a station, along with salary brackets
- Community broadcasters and those interested in a community broadcasting licence must adhere to a 60/40 gender breakdown within their boards.

In addition to these processes, the BAI is committed to publishing the data it collects on gender equality within the sector. The aim is to provide transparent and accurate data on the number of women involved in the sector, what roles these women have, pay structures within the sector and whether there exists adequate gender balance in decision-making positions in the industry.

2. Supporting Research

The BAI is committed to supporting and undertaking specific gender research in the audio-visual sector.

Specifically, and aligned to the Council of Europe Recommendation, the BAI will seek to promote active research on gender equality in the audio-visual sector, particularly relating to equality of access for women to the industry – including leadership roles, representation of women on-screen and on-air, obstacles to participation and general working conditions. Furthermore, the BAI will, where appropriate, regularly publicise the outcomes of such initiatives.

The BAI will also organise or participate in debates with a view to improving policy and legislation in this area.

The BAI will be seeking partnerships with other bodies but will also conduct standalone research as required.

3. Encouraging the development of gender initiatives internally, and with stakeholders

The BAI has supported learning and development initiatives with the sector for many years, primarily through its Sectoral Development Policy and annual plans. In seeking to encourage the development of gender initiatives with its stakeholders, the BAI will continue and enhance its programme of sectoral development and will also harness creative opportunities offered by the funding programmes it runs to support gender initiatives. Examples include:

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- A commitment to continue working on delivering training and development initiatives which enable women to increase their representation in the media.
 - A focus on the creative opportunities from Sound & Vision, in addressing gender balance issues both on- and off-screen. Examples of how this may be delivered include:
 - The delivery of gender awareness training to various BAI audiences: e.g. staff, Sound & Vision external assessors, Board members. For external stakeholders, seek to promote such training as part of network funding initiatives.
 - The consideration of a special Sound & Vision round on Women's Stories. This would call for projects across all genres telling women's stories. The BAI is of the view that such an approach would provide an opportunity to widen the narrative, present new characters, real or fictional to Irish audiences, and generally promote different stories and different voices.

4. Enhancing accountability processes

The BAI supports the view articulated in the Recommendation from the Council of Europe that gender equality within the audio-visual sector plays a central role as an enabling factor for fully-functioning democracy and the full enjoyment of human rights. It is through accountability that gender diversity can be enhanced. Therefore, the BAI will be accountable through the following:

- The publication of a BAI Gender Action Plan, aligned to the Recommendation from the Council of Europe will enable regular reporting, publication and monitoring of initiatives and actions undertaken to promote gender equality in the sector.
- Initiatives such as those outlined in 3 above will be promoted, published and evaluated for success.
- The BAI will seek partnership opportunities with key players such as other public bodies, other funders, broadcasters and other representative bodies in order to further enhance accountability across the industry.
- The BAI will include an assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of its Gender Plan within its Annual Report.

