

British Film Institute (BFI) Feedback & Complaints Procedure

About this Procedure

The British Film Institute (the BFI) welcomes feedback from members of the public and representatives of other organisations.

- Feedback helps the BFI to identify opportunities to make better use of their resources, or to deliver services in a more effective way.
- If you are dissatisfied with a service that the BFI has provided or feel we have treated you unfairly you may wish to make a complaint.

This document sets out the BFI's complaints procedure, explains how to provide feedback or to make a complaint and tells you what you can expect from us if you do.

Depending on the area of activity, feedback and complaints will be handled slightly differently – as set out at Appendix A; however the BFI works to a set of standard guiding principles:

Guiding Principles

1. Feedback and Complaints are an important way for the BFI to be accountable to the public, as well as providing valuable prompts to review organisational performance and the conduct of people that work within and for it.
2. If the BFI has got something wrong, it will apologise and take prompt action to put the matter right. If it can resolve your complaint by clarifying its position, or explaining its decision making process it will do so.
3. Will be open and honest and ensure that you are not disadvantaged in your future dealings as a result of your complaint.
4. Will respect your privacy and ensure that your complaint is treated confidentially.

In addition:

- For all types of complaint, the BFI reserves the right to having the option of using an external third-party to review a complaint at any time during the process
- For all types of complaint to the BFI, once a complaint has exhausted the BFI's internal complaints procedure(s) and if you believe that it has not been resolved, you have the right to contact **the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman** who will look into your complaint. This service is free to use. The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman can be contacted at: <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/>
- Where the BFI feels that it has responded fully to a complaint and can provide no further information on a complaint, it reserves the right not to escalate such a complaint to the latter stages of its complaints procedure, however you will always be able to make a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

Complaints we can help with

The following procedure covers the following BFI activities and depending on the area of activity, feedback and complaints will be handled as follows.

- Section 1 - A Complaint relating to BFI Activities and Services (Non Grant Distribution Complaints)
- Section 2 - BFI (Grant Funding) Programmes
- Section 3 - Complaint/Appeal relating to exclusion or banning order from BFI premises
- Section 4 – BFI production of Official Statistics

What we cannot help with

There are some things which cannot be dealt with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- Our decision on a funding application if we have followed our decision-making process correctly
- Any fraud you think may have taken place. You should report this to our Finance Department (email: counterfraud@bfi.org.uk) or notify the police
- Any personal disagreements that you may have with a particular individual (not a BFI member of staff) and/or organisation - If your concern is a personal disagreement then you should direct this to the organisation in question.
- We cannot enforce the law. If your concern involves a breach of the law, you should consider raising the matter with the relevant regulatory body or, in criminal matters, the police.

If you wish to raise any concerns then please contact customerfeedback@bfi.org.uk

Appendix A

Section 1 - A Complaint relating to BFI Activities and Services¹ (Non Grant Distribution Complaints)

Stage 1

In the first instance, if you are not happy with the service you have received in relation to the BFI's activities and services, such as film and television heritage, distribution and exhibition, publishing and products, or education and research, please ask the staff on duty to assist you. The staff member will make every effort to resolve your issue.

Stage 2

If you do not receive an adequate response, or it is not clear to whom you should complain, or you wish to provide other feedback, please email the BFI within two months of the incident to customerfeedback@bfi.org.uk and your complaint/comments will be directed to the correct department who will endeavour to resolve your issue. You should receive a response to your complaint/comments within 20 working days. It is hoped that complaints can be dealt with as quickly as possible in this way.

Stage 3

If you remain dissatisfied, please write within 1 month (of the date of the response to Stage 2) to:

Chief Executive

BFI

21 Stephen Street

London W1T 1LN

¹ If your complaint relates to a decision by BFI staff to exclude an individual or individuals from BFI premises, please refer to the relevant section of the Complaints Procedure

Or email customerfeedback@bfi.org.uk (please put "Complaint" in the subject line to expedite the processing of your complaint). Please provide as much information as you possibly can, including:

- what happened;
- when it happened;
- who dealt with you;
- what steps you consider appropriate to rectify the issue;
- any further information you consider relevant to the complaint.

Please also advise if there is anything the BFI needs to know about how to contact you (for example, if you would like us to reply by text phone or on audio tape).

The Chief Executive, or a nominated representative of the Chief Executive, will write to you with a decision within 20 working days (or, if more information is required, within 20 working days of you supplying the additional information).

Stage 4

If you remain dissatisfied you can appeal against the decision of the Chief Executive. Please write within 1 month (of the date of the response to Stage 3) to:

Chair of the Board of Governors
British Film Institute
21 Stephen Street
London W1T 1LN

Or email customerfeedback@bfi.org.uk (please put "Complaint" in the subject line to expedite the processing of your complaint).

Subject to availability, the Chair will write to you with a decision within 20 working days (or, if more information is required, within 20 working days of you supplying the additional information).

SECTION 2 - BFI (Grant Funding) Programmes

Please be assured that the BFI welcomes your feedback and the making of a complaint will not affect the level of service you receive from the BFI or prejudice any outstanding funding application.

What can I complain about?

You can complain if you think that:

- 'maladministration' has taken place (for example, if there has been an undue delay, if mistakes have been made, or if there has been a failure to follow the procedures in the application process as set out in the relevant funding guidelines);
- the BFI has failed to give you access to information or has given you incorrect advice or information;
- you have not been treated politely; or
- the BFI has discriminated against you or treated you unfairly.

Please note that should your application for funding be refused you may not utilise this procedure to appeal against the decision if the process has been correctly adhered to.

In circumstances where the application relates to a creative submission, such as a script, the BFI cannot reassess the script when it has been turned down on the basis of its creative merit.

How to make a complaint

Stage 1

If you are not happy with the service you have received, please contact the staff member with whom you have been dealing as soon as possible and in any event within two months of the incident which forms the basis of the complaint. The staff member will make every effort to resolve your issue.

Within three working days of receiving your complaint the BFI will contact you to acknowledge receipt. You will also be given information on how to contact the person who is dealing with your complaint and when you can expect a response.

In most cases, you will receive a full response to your complaint within 10 working days. Every effort will be made to respond to you within 10 working days, but please be advised that on occasion this period may be exceeded. Should it appear likely that this will be the case you will be notified accordingly.

Stage 2

If you remain dissatisfied, please write to:

Chief Executive
British Film Institute
21 Stephen Street
London W1T 1LN

Please provide the following information:

- what happened;
- when it happened;
- who dealt with you;
- what steps you consider appropriate to rectify the issue;

- any further information you consider relevant to the complaint.

Please also advise if there is anything the BFI needs to know about how to contact you (for example, if you would like us to reply by text phone or on audio tape).

You must initiate stage 2 within four weeks of receiving a response to your complaint under stage 1.

If your complaint relates to the way the BFI has exercised its powers to refuse or manage funding, you can move to stage 3. If your complaint relates to the way the BFI conducts any other aspect its business you will be informed of possible alternatives that may be available to you. In its response to stage 2, the BFI will advise you whether you can utilise stage 3.

Stage 3

If you are not satisfied with response of the Chief Executive you can refer your complaint to the Independent Complaints Reviewer (ICR). Any such referral must be made within three months of receiving a response to stage 2.

The ICR is impartial and will consider evidence from the BFI and the complainant. The ICR is not part of the BFI and its investigations and recommendations are completely independent. You can request that the ICR considers your complaint, alternatively the BFI can make the request on your behalf. The Office of the ICR will contact you within five working days of the receipt of your complaint.

The ICR will determine whether or not to investigate the complaint, and will provide reasons if the complaint is not investigated.

If the ICR investigates your complaint and finds it to be justified, recommendations will be made to the BFI to rectify the matter. The recommendations will be forward looking

and preventative in nature. The ICR will report within three months. Recommendations made by the ICR will be implemented by the BFI as soon as is reasonably practicable.

The ICR cannot consider complaints that have not gone through the procedure set out in this document.

Please be advised that the ICR has no power to reverse funding decisions or to make comments or changes to the BFI's legal responsibilities and policies on awarding grants.

If you wish to progress to Stage 3, please contact Customer Feedback at customerfeedback@bfi.org.uk and/or telephone 020 7173 3218.

SECTION 3 - Complaint/Appeal relating to exclusion or banning order from BFI premises

If your complaint is related to a decision by the BFI to exclude or ban you from BFI premises, then the complaint will be handled as follows:

Stage 1

In the first instance, complaints/appeals relating to an incident and decision to ban/exclude should be made to the Venue Manager within 10 working days.

Stage 2

If you wish to appeal the decision at Stage 1, please contact the Head of Department who is responsible, within 1 month of the date of the incident. The name and contact details of the Head of Department will be provided to you at Stage 1.

Stage 3

If you are still not satisfied, then you can refer your complaint to the relevant BFI Executive Director, within 1 month (of the date of the response to Stage 2), whose contact details will be provided at Stage 2.

SECTION 4 – BFI production of Official Statistics

If your complaint is related to any of the official statistics the BFI produces, please follow stages 1 to 4 of the BFI Activities and Services, detailed above on pages 1 to 3).

If you are still not satisfied, and the issues relates to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, then you can refer your complaint to the UK Statistics Authority. Their address is:

Every effort will be made to adhere to the periods outlined above, but please be advised that on occasion they may be exceeded. Should it appear likely that this will be the case you will be notified accordingly.

General Information

If you'd like to comment on this Complaints Procedure, please contact:

Customerfeedback@bfi.org.uk

Your personal information

The BFI will endeavour to keep all complaints confidential. However, it may be necessary to disclose some information to investigate the issues you have raised. In addition, pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the BFI may be required to release information if a request is made for it. Further information on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 can be obtained from the Office of the Information Commissioner.

Equal opportunities

The BFI is committed to equal opportunities and take complaints about discrimination extremely seriously.

Any complaints of this nature are used to inform and review BFI policies and procedures.

This practice ensures that the BFI treats everyone fairly.

The BFI may record information about the ethnic background, sex and disability of complainants to further enhance the BFI's commitment to equal opportunities.

Getting in touch

British Film Institute

21 Stephen Street

London W1T 1LN

Telephone: 020 7255 1444