

Diversity and inclusion in the screen industries: a rapid evidence assessment

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Diversity and Inclusion in the Screen industries: a Rapid Evidence Assessment

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Summary

1. The UK screen industries are something of an economic success story – the sector has an international reputation in TV, film and video games. However, the sector also experiences significant issues around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and as such the benefits of growth are not equitably shared.
2. In this report we provide a rapid evidence review of EDI in the screen industries, using a structured approach to evidence sourcing and assessment, focusing on the following diversity dimensions – gender, race and ethnicity, disability, social class and LGBTQ+. This provides the context for local and regional evidence and practice developed in the subsequent strands of this work package.
3. The evidence base is somewhat limited and is also uneven, in particular there has been more focus on gender.
4. The screen industries have a number of structural elements which are important in shaping and reinforcing inequalities across different diversity dimensions. The screen industries have quite a distinct production system, driven by the project-based and often short-term nature of work assignments. In parts of the sector the project-based model, with temporary employment and diffuse production networks, is an important aspect in creating the conditions for inequalities. Project networks of collaboration can tend towards being exclusive, and privilege dominant groups in the sector.
5. Recruitment process such as informal recruitment, the training and development costs being borne by individuals and the use of unpaid internships can all restrict access to the sector.
6. The literature highlights evidence of gendered segmentation in different occupations and sub-sectors within the industry. The evidence also demonstrates the career progression barriers women can face in relation to the nature of recruitment networks in the sector, the challenges of balancing caring and working in the sector, and sexism within the industry.
7. There is under-representation of BAME workers in the sector. Notwithstanding industry-led efforts around inclusion there remain significant diversity issues and important challenges remain.
8. Social class is the topic of significant commentary, in particular around acting and the arts, and there is good evidence that class disadvantage within the sector permeates well beyond high-profile examples.
9. There is comparatively less evidence around disability within the sector. However, survey data on disability within the sector is not positive – showing both under-representation of individuals with a disability and large numbers of disabled workers reporting that discrimination had limited their career progression.
10. There is little evidence exploring intersectionality. This is an important gap in the evidence base and something with practical significance for the potential design of interventions.
11. In response to EDI issues there are examples of sectoral and organisational interventions which seek to address inequalities in access to opportunities. There is however less evidence around the development of approaches which seek to engage with the structural conditions in the industry which generate exclusionary outcomes, and which seeks to change them.

1. Introduction

The screen industries are widely considered to be an economic success story – the UK has internationally renowned strengths in film and TV production, animation and video games; and the sector accounts for the work of more than 200,000 employees, self-employed and freelancers (Carey et al, 2021). However, there are many industry and worker accounts, as well as academic studies, which point towards widespread inequalities, and a significant incidence of inequality and exclusion persists within the sector (Ozimek, 2020).

In the report we focus on the following diversity dimensions – gender, race and ethnicity, disability, social class and LGBTQ+. Some of these dimensions (particularly gender) have been more researched than others, and there remains only limited evidence around the intersectionality of different characteristics.

The report is structured as follows. Chapter 2 presents the methods followed in the evidence search and the approach to the synthesis and analysis of the evidence base; this is followed by a brief appraisal of the evidence base in terms of the volume, coverage and quality across different elements of EDI in the screen industries. Chapter 3 discusses the working structure and practices in the sector which impact on EDI issues – including issues relating to the production system and way work is organised often around short-term, project-based, activities; it also considers practices around recruitment, training and access to opportunities. Chapter 4 reports the main evidence base findings on diversity characteristics and inclusion. Chapter 5 reviews the evidence on interventions, Chapter 6 concludes.

2. The approach to sourcing and evaluating evidence

This report presents the results of a rapid evidence assessment focused on diversity and inclusion in the screen industries. The assessment follows the principles of a structured or systematic evidence review – using a process of sourcing, screening, collating and assessing the evidence (EPPI-Centre, 2002).

2.1 Rapid Evidence Assessment Design

A three-strand approach was adopted to sourcing evidence – including searching academic databases, grey literature and selected relevant organisations repositories.

The academic evidence search used the following databases:

- Scopus
- Web of Science

Subsequently, Google Scholar was also searched. Given differences in the design and search functions the approach to searching Google Scholar was inevitably somewhat different (the approach to this is summarised Appendix 1).

In order to search the databases a set of search terms were developed to try and capture the most relevant evidence (see Appendix 1). These were developed to cover the sector, a focus on EDI and a series of diversity characteristics. The databases were searched on the basis of the use of these terms within the papers' Abstract and were limited to papers published since 2012.

The second phase of the evidence search sourced grey literature materials. This necessitated an adapted set of the search terms which are also reported in Appendix 1.

The third phase of the evidence search involved reviewing the publications on the websites of a range of relevant organisations, these included:

- Arts Council England
- BFI (British Film Institute)
- Centre for Cultural Value
- Centre for London
- Creative Industries Clusters Programme
- Creative Industries Council
- Creative Industries Federation
- Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre
- Creative Scotland
- DCMS
- ScreenSkills
- SIGN (Screen Industries Growth Network)
- We Are Creative

During the searching stage articles were shortlisted based on the title relevance of the paper. Of those papers identified as being potentially suited a second sift used the papers' abstract in order to identify evidence which was of core relevance. A proforma was then developed in order to record the information and evidence on a consistent basis. The proforma consisted of a series of headings which covered:

1. Bibliographic details
2. The sector focus
3. The country of study
4. The diversity and inclusion focus
5. Methods
6. Main paper findings
7. Implications for policy and practice

The completed set of proformas covered 33 papers and reports; these proformas provide the evidence base which is presented on this report. Some additional follow-up references are also cited where pertinent.

2.2 Initial assessment of evidence base

There is a growing evidence base on equality, diversity and inclusion in the screen sector. The evidence base is skewed towards qualitative accounts but there is also a range of survey data collected either by academic researchers or industry bodies in order to describe the parameters of EDI issues which the workforce face. The scale and depth of evidence base can be summarised as follows:

- Of the diversity characteristics reviewed, most research focus has been on issues relating to gender and access to employment, career pathways and caring responsibilities. The literature highlights evidence of gendered segmentation in different occupations and sub-sectors within the industry. The evidence also demonstrates the career progression barriers women can face in relation to the nature of recruitment networks in the sector, the challenges of balancing caring and working in the sector, and sexism within the industry.
- There is also evidence on ethnicity and race which demonstrates the under-representation of BAME workers in the sector, particularly in senior positions. Notwithstanding industry-led efforts around inclusion there remain significant diversity issues and important challenges remain.
- Social class is the topic of significant commentary, in particular, in relation to onscreen roles in film and TV. However, there is also evidence which shows that class issues within the sector permeate well beyond these high-profile examples.
- There is comparatively less evidence around disability within the sector. The evidence base that exists suggests both under-representation and the potential existence of a disability penalty in relation to career progression.
- The evidence base around the role of place is considerably smaller, with the exception of observations relating to the geographical clustering of the sector and the overall importance of London.
- There is less detailed evidence exploring intersectionality. Some observations can be drawn from industry survey data, but there is limited depth to the understanding of intersectionality and equality in the sector.

3. Working structures and practices in the sector which impact on equality, diversity and inclusion

The screen industries have a number of structural elements which are important in shaping and reinforcing inequalities across different diversity dimensions. Access to opportunity in the sector is shaped by various aspects of social and cultural capital, which are rooted also in inequalities in economic capital (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013; Nwonka, 2015). A general challenge for EDI is the narrative in the arts of an artist meritocracy (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013) in which the 'talent will out', and equality can be seen as contradictory to meritocracy (Cannizzo and Strong, 2020)

The sector has a comparatively high prevalence of self-employment. Freelancing is an important part of the workforce, this is particularly the case for film production where estimates suggest a freelancing rate of between 40-50 per cent (Cary et al, 2017). Freelance workers, although instrumental to the sector's functioning, can suffer from instability of incomes, as well having to bear other costs associated with employment risks (insurance, lack of sick pay etc.) (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013).

Parts of the screen industries have quite a distinct production system, driven by the project-based and often short-term nature of work assignments. Eikhof and Warhurst (2013) detail the in the role which the sector's production system plays in driving inequality and exclusion (Figure 1). They point towards the nature of the project-based model, with its attendant features of temporary employment and diffuse production networks (which can be contrasted with integrated organisations), as being an important explanation in creating the conditions for inequalities in the sector. The lack of integration and the fragmented production system, they argue, negates industry-wide or employer investment in training; while the professional and reputational risks of project-based working encourages a reliance on informal networks which can have exclusionary effects (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013). Within this informal practice accesses to networks to engage with project-based work can have important class dimensions, including social connections as well as shared norms of cultural capital (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012).

Figure 1: The creative production system and generation of inequalities



(Source: Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013, p.502)

The production system in the screen sector therefore presents important challenges to EDI. The industry experiences quite volatile consumer demands (trends and tastes) and the reliance on flexibility and project-based approaches and production networks

produces less secure employment conditions (including a reliance on freelance working), limited industry training and informal recruitment mechanisms (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013; Wing-Fai et al., 2015). The sector also has an organisation structure with a small number of large TV broadcasters serviced by a large number of small employers and freelancers (Wing-Fai et al., 2015).

The nature of project-based recruitment can also reinforce exclusionary patterns in the industry in the context of time-pressured and high (reputational)-risk assignments. Project-based teams collectively carry project-risk, while de-risking a project is seen stem from trust, confidence and competence in the collective project team. Often such 'de-risking' is simplified to 'interpersonal similarity' (Wreyford, 2015) which is seen to play a role in underpinning this trust – but in doing so serves to perpetuate a white, middle-class, male norm with associated specific forms of social and cultural capital (Allen and Hollingworth, 2013; Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013; Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Ozimek, 2020) – to the exclusion of those with different characteristics (Nwonka, 2021b). The expectations around project work – long-hours, work intensity, deadlines can also come to be associated with perceptions of macho ideals (Randle and Hardy, 2017).

Recruitment processes such as informal recruitment, the training and development costs being borne by individuals, degree-level entry requirements and the use of unpaid internships also all serve to restrict access to the sector for disadvantaged groups (Nwonka, 2015; O'Brien et al., 2016; Carey et al., 2021a).

Geographically the sector has a heavily skewed regional distribution of activity. Some 65 per cent of film and video production is based in London and South East; the balance in TV broadcasting is more even, but the sector is complex and relationships and outsourcing across supply-chain functions makes developing an accurate picture of regional distributions and linkages challenging (Carey et al, 2017).

4. Findings on diversity characteristics and inclusion

4.1 Gender

Findings:

- Gender is the most widely studied diversity characteristic
- Women's representation remains unequal across job roles, and particularly in senior roles
- There is some evidence of attitudes representing women in the workforce as being more 'risky' and this affects women's retention and progression in the industry.
- The work patterns in the industry, including intensive working, long hours and tight deadlines negatively impact those with caring responsibilities.
- Women leave the industry more than men when the industry is affected by external shocks.

Gender is the most extensively studied diversity characteristic in the screen industry (for example CAMEo, 2018; Eikhof et al., 2019; Ozimek, 2020). The evidence suggests that women are better represented in the film and TV sector (47 per cent and 45 per cent respectively (Creative Skillset, 2012) than in other parts of screen sector (CAMEo, 2018; Ozimek, 2020). Under-representation of women is however apparent in parts of the production process such as VFX, where the UK Screen Alliance (2019) reports female participation is 34 per cent.

Gender inequality issues become particularly apparent when considering the types of jobs women are over and under-represented in. In the film sector, there is a concentration of women working in makeup and costume roles (CAMEo, 2018); whilst women are significantly under-represented in key creative roles such as screenwriting (16 per cent) and directing (11 per cent) (BFI, 2013). The figures are higher in the TV sector, based on recent data from Creative Diversity Network (2022), with 33 per cent for female writer and 26 per cent for female directors, but these are still under-represented. Furthermore female-directed film projects have a far higher percentage of female writers than male-directed projects do (65 per cent for the former and only 7 per cent for the latter) (BFI, 2013; see also Carey et al., 2017; CAMEo, 2018; Eikhof et al., 2019).

Women directors and screenwriters are more common in film production commissioned by public channels (BFI, 2013); whilst overall female employment in the TV sector is concentrated in a small number of large TV broadcasters such as the BBC, Channel 4 and ITV (Wing-Fai et al., 2015). According to Ofcom (2019) data, the proportion of women working across these companies varies with the lowest participation at Sky TV (39 per cent) compared to the BBC (44 per cent) and Channel 4 (57 per cent) (Ozimek, 2020). There is also evidence that the genre of women's film and TV production is limited. The UK films produced with female writers or directors between 2010-2012 were largely drama and documentary (32.2 per cent and 18.4 per cent of production respectively) (BFI, 2013).

The under-representation of women is significant in technical roles including transportation, sound, lighting, camera and editing in film production (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Carey et al., 2017; CAMEo, 2018; Ozimek, 2022). In the animation, VFX and post-

production sectors, women tend to work in administrative and production management roles rather than in technical or creative operators/artists roles. For example, only 27 per cent of women in VFX work as creative operators or artists, whilst only 14 per cent and 12 per cent of women in animation and in post-production respectively work in technical support roles (UK Screen Alliance, 2019). In the games industry, women represent 30 per cent of the workforce based on 2022 industry census, with a slight increase (2%) compared to the 2020 census (Taylor, 2022). Programming is particularly dominated by men, with around 87 per cent of roles being filled by men according to the UK Games Industry Census in 2020 (Taylor, 2020).

Women in the sector also face challenges around progression and are less likely to be in senior roles (Eikhof et al., 2019; Carey et al., 2017; Ozimek, 2020; Creative Diversity Network, 2022). The UK Screen Alliance (2019) reports that men are more likely to occupy senior and mid-level roles than women in VFX, animation and post-production. Gender inequality in seniority seems to be more severe in the games industry with 77-80 per cent of the senior positions, particularly in core production roles, being male (Taylor, 2020). Evidence from both qualitative interviews and surveys from female workers in the sector reveal that they face a variety of barriers in 'getting on' in their career in the sectors, whilst they are more likely leave employment when the sector experiences difficulties such as recession (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Creative Scotland, 2017; Wreyford et al., 2021).

In the Creative Scotland 2016 survey on equality, diversity and inclusion in the screen sector, 29 per cent of women saw gender as a barrier in their career progression, whilst 52 per cent of women cited sexism in the industry. In part such issues relate back to the project-based model of production and high uncertainty in the sector as discussed previously (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013; Wing-Fai et al., 2015). In such circumstances network-based recruitment and promotion are used to minimise ' (Allen and Hollingworth, 2013; Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013; Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Wreyford 2015; Coles and Eikhof, 2021). Here, the image of women being perceived as more 'risky' is related to their comparatively junior profile in the sector (Wing-Fai et al., 2015), which is partly intensified by ageism and lookism (CAMEo, 2018; Eikhof et al., 2019; Ozimek, 2020), as well as with perceptions about potential caring responsibilities. Even in the broadcasting industry, where women are relatively better represented than other sub-sectors of the screen industry, representation seems to be concentrated at entry level and early career stage – only 16% of women in the TV workforce are aged 50+, compared with 22% of men (Ofcom, 2021).

Although women may be better qualified than their male counterparts (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Carey et al., 2017) they often face 'double standards' in selection and promotion processes – whereby men are more likely promoted on the basis of potential, whilst women were promoted on the basis of performance (Carey et al., 2017). Interventions focusing on 'training' or 'shadowing' can reinforce the image of women as still needing to be trained and thus riskier than men to hire (Coles and Eikhof, 2021). This creates a vicious circle as repeated production credit and continuity in work is important for retaining and progressing a career in the sector (BFI, 2013).

In the Creative Scotland (2016) survey on barriers to career progression in the screen sector, 84 per cent of women cited having dependent children as a barrier, whilst similar evidence has been recognised by several studies (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Eikhof et al., 2019; O'Brien and Liddy, 2021). The 'macho' style of work patterns in the industry, such as the intensive working, long hours and tight deadlines (Randle and Hardy, 2017)

discriminate against women with childcare responsibilities. It has been reported that women can be reluctant to raise relevant issues or to make requests for adjustment in work, fearing reputational damage due to the highly network-based recruitment/promotion processes in the sector (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Carey et al., 2017; CAMEo, 2018). The gendered image of outspoken being contrasted between male 'being confident' vs. female being 'pushy' and 'difficult' also discourages women from being vocal about problems (Carey et al., 2017; Cannizzo and Strong, 2020). Furthermore, perceptions that having children and childcare will reduce professional hunger is only assumed for women, although fatherhood could in theory have the same negative impact (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Cameo, 2018; Eikhof et al., 2019; O'Brien and Liddy, 2021). A recent survey of mothers (n=523) working in the TV industry during the pandemic reflects motherhood being a barrier to women in the industry throughout entry, retention and progression (Wreyford et al., 2021). 52 per cent of respondents answered that home-schooling and/or childcare affected their application for or acceptance of jobs, whilst 55 per cent and 54 per cent of respondents respectively said that their work was either cancelled/postponed and that they had not been able to find enough work (*ibid*). Moreover, 61 per cent of respondents had seriously considered leaving the industry during the pandemic (*ibid*). Ofcom (2021) also reports that there has been a greater number of people leaving the broadcasting industry since the pandemic, with women being disproportionately represented in those leaving.

Despite gender issues in the industry having been significantly researched (Eikhof et al., 2019), there are still under-studied issues such as the gender pay gap (Carey et al., 2017; CAMEo, 2018) and sexual harassment (Eikhof et al., 2019).

4.2 Race and ethnicity

Findings

- Representation of BAME workers in the screen industry has been gradually increasing. However, their representation in senior roles in particular is still comparatively low.
- Policy discourse on ethnic diversity in the industry largely ignores important structural issues, instead mainly focusing on ideas of harnessing talents and creativity.
- The industry's network-based recruitment and promotion (and the dominance within many of these by socio-cultural capital of white and middle-class work) is an important barrier workforce entry and progression.
- Recent initiatives such as BFI Diversity Standards and commission of minority-interested programmes can be considered as positive moves, but they do less to address fundamental structural issues in the industry.

The figures vary slightly depending on data sets, however the overall picture is one of low BAME (black and minority ethnic) representation in parts of the screen sectors workforce (CAMEo, 2018; Nwonka, 2021a). Regionally, the BAME workforce is concentrated in London and the South East (CAMEo, 2018; BFI, 2020; Nwonka, 2021a). . Across the sector, the proportion of ethnic minorities in the workforce is greater in TV, with 7.5 per cent, compared to film (4.4 per cent) and video games (4.7 per cent) according to Creative Skillset 2012 and 2014 data (CAMEo, 2018). In terms of the TV

industry, ethnic minorities are better represented in large TV channels such as ITV (13 per cent, 2015) and the BBC (13.1 per cent, 2015) (CAMEo, 2018). According to Olsberg-SPI (2015) data (cited in Carey et al., 2017), the percentages of employees from ethnic minority groups across sub-sectors of the film industry, i.e., production, sales and distribution, and exhibition, are 3, 8 and 4 per cent respectively. These are far lower than the UK average (12.5 per cent) and also lower (apart from the figure of Sales and Distribution) than the Creative sector average (7 per cent) (Carey et al., 2017).

More recent trends are more positive with minority ethnic groups reported as representing 16 per cent of workforce in TV industry in 2020-2021 (Ofcom, 2021). According to the UK Screen Survey (2019), in VFX, Animation and Post-production jobs, 19 per cent, 14 per cent and 18 per cent of the workforces respectively are reported as being BAME.

However there remain particular concerns about BAME representation in more senior roles. In the Creative Scotland (2016) survey, 40 per cent of ethnic minority respondents saw ethnicity as a barrier to career progression. According to Olsberg-SPI (2015) data (cited in Carey et al., 2017), there was not one BAME employee in a strategic management/executive role in film production. Even in the VFX, Animation and post-production sector, which shows a better representation than other industries as mentioned above, the percentage of senior roles occupied by BAME employees is around 8 per cent (the UK Screen survey, 2019).

The limited diversity within the film industry in particular is striking in light of efforts in policy and intervention development. For example, the UK Film Council (UKFC) was established in 2000 under the New Labour government to introduce equality and inclusion policies into the sector with a significant emphasis on ethnic under-representation (Nwonka, 2015). However, it has been argued that the UKFC diversity policy discourse and direction was not based sufficiently on an acknowledgment and understanding of inherent structural discrimination and inequality within the sector (Nwonka, 2015). With the language of cultural diversity and social inclusion aligned with equality of opportunity (Nwonka, 2015) leading to a somewhat unbalanced focus on 'openness and faith in talent and creativity' (Brook et al., 2021, p.4), marginalising the language of structural issues such as class (Nwonka, 2015). This so-called 'creative diversity discourse' was argued to have largely depoliticised race equality issues, by instead prioritising ideas of quality and creativity over structural questions of inequality (Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020), generating, it has been argued, a 'myth of inclusivity' (Brook et al., 2021, p.4) in the sector. Consequently, initiatives have tended towards being non-binding, relying on moral responses to equality and not engaging sufficiently with structural explanations such as the impact on under-represented groups of informal and network-based recruitment practices in the sector (Nwonka, 2015).

The notion of socio-cultural capital is again important to the exclusion of minority groups from the screen industry. As described previously, to minimise the risks and uncertainty derived from the nature of the sector, networks have been used as a useful screening mechanism for both recruitment and promotion within the sector (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013). Here, homophily aids the strengthening of trust and confidence between members of the network (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Wreyford, 2015); as the more the network is exclusive to people with similar shared characteristics, it becomes perceived as comparatively 'less risky for people in the network to trust one another' (Wreyford, 2015, p.92; Cameo, 2018). Hence, the dominance of white, middle-

class and male networks in the sector means behavioural norms and signals sought after in the recruitment and promotion are also based around their cultural and social capital (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012). This in turn has created structural barriers from entry to progression for those who cannot access this type of network, including ethnic minorities (Nwonka, 2021b). Evidence suggests that while under-represented groups network at least as actively in terms of the size or frequency as their white, middle-class and male counterparts, it is the 'quality' of these networks that affects the outcome of getting jobs or being promoted (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012).

One of the most recent initiatives to address diversity issues in the film sector is the British Film Institute (BFI) Diversity Standards introduced in 2016 (Nwonka, 2021a). The purpose of the Standards is to encourage British film production to demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion in their content (Standard A, on-screen representation, themes and narratives), employment (Standard B, diversity in leadership and make-up of the key roles and crew in the project team), industry access and opportunities (Standard C, training, job shares, promotions, mentoring) and audience development (Standard D, meeting under-served audiences including regions outside of London) (BFI, 2020). Films financed by public resources (e.g., Film4 or BBC) or applying for BAFTA and BIFA awards need to meet the minimum criteria in at least two of these four standards (Nwonka, 2021a).

An overview of the key initial findings from the Standard data (i.e., data on 235 film productions which quoted the Standards between June 2016 and March 2019) in the BFI (2020) report shows the proportion of the applications meeting each standard is highest in Standard A with 86 per cent followed by Standard C with 74 per cent, B with 67 per cent, and D with 25 per cent (see also Nwonka, 2020 focusing on Race/Ethnicity data). The Race/Ethnicity criterion quoted as an underrepresented group is the highest in Standard A (50 per cent) followed by Standard B (40 per cent) and C (27 per cent). Considering the more direct and explicit link of Standard B and C to employment and progression, underrepresentation in these Standards might reflect structural barriers for the ethnic minority workforce in the sector (Nwonka, 2020).

Moreover, the data is based on the intention of the film production rather than actual production (Nwonka, 2021a). Hence, some positive figures in the data might wrongly lead to 'unqualified optimism' regarding an improvement in diversity whilst the fundamental issues remain unresolved (Nwonka, 2021b).

In a similar context, some diversity strategies based on a 'deficit model' (i.e., addressing the diversity issues from an angle of 'individual deficiencies') often focus on enabling marginalised individuals to compete more equally with the dominant group (Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020). However, although this approach might help support entry to the industry, it can also reaffirm the negative assumptions and stereotypes of marginalised groups (Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020). Furthermore, without addressing the primary structural issues of recruitment/promotion practices, this type of strategy can create a 'glass partition' (CAMEo, 2018) or 'ghettoising effect' (Cannizzo and Strong, 2020; Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020) against ethnic minority groups, segregating them further from jobs and promotion opportunities (Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020).

4.3 Disability

Findings:

- Disability is one of the most under-represented diversity characteristics across most of the sectors in the screen industry.
- The representation of disabled workers in senior roles and positions is even lower.
- Commissions for specialist programmes has been found helpful for entry level, but this can segregate the disabled workforce to entry level jobs or to limited genre and areas of production.

According to the 'Diamond data and Doubling Disability Survey, 2019' (reported in Tidball and Bunting, 2021), the workforce reporting a disability in both on- and off-screen roles in broadcasting is still significantly under-represented, being 7.9 per cent in 2018 for on-screen roles, and 4. 5.4 per cent in 2020 for off-screen roles. These figures are significantly below the percentage of disabled people across the overall working-age population in the UK. When breaking down disability employment by broadcaster the data finds Channel 4 having the highest representation of disabled workers at 6.2 per cent, followed by BBC and C5/Viacom with 5.5 per cent and 5.2 per cent respectively (and then Sky [4.1 per cent] and ITV [3.5 per cent]) (Tidball and Bunting, 2021). In the games industry, 4 per cent of respondent considered themselves as disabled in a recent industry census (Taylor, 2022).

One of the main challenges in understanding issues regarding the under-representation of disabled people in the screen sector is insufficient and fragmented data...

The Creative Scotland (2016) survey (covering the arts sector) finds that 24 per cent of respondents reported a health condition; 15 per cent of whom viewed their condition as a barrier to their progression. A much larger proportion, over half of the respondents in the Doubling Disability survey reported that 'discriminatory views around the capabilities of disabled people had significantly limited their career progression', with a further 30 per cent reporting that such views 'somewhat limited their career progression' (Tidball and Bunting, 2021). Furthermore, the data finds that only 4.6 per cent of people in senior roles having a disability (*ibid*). Ofcom (2021) also acknowledge that disabled employees across TV and radio are less likely to move up to the higher positions.

It has been suggested that inequality resulting from disability is a qualitatively different source of disadvantage compared to that faced by other under-represented groups. The 'macho' ideals of workers in the industry (fast-moving, intensive working, physical demands) and expectation of high mobility for work and jobs sets physical barriers (as well as structural ones) against disabled people, creating 'double disablement' (Randle and Hardy, 2017). Whilst project-based works in the sector also mean people with disabilities face constant renegotiations on access and adjustment to the physical workplace (Randle and Hardy, 2017), the prevalent negative perception towards disability often discourages disabled people from raising such requirements – for example, 83 per cent of respondents from the Doubling Disability Survey reported that they felt uncomfortable around negotiations on workplace adjustment with either employers or clients (Tidball and Bunting, 2021).

Although there have been some efforts to include more disabled people in the industry, such as by providing entry opportunities to specialist programmes for audiences with impairment, this offers only partial solutions. As observed previously this kind of specialist programme is usually considered as secondary, which can result in disabled people's career paths separating from the mainstream and being limited to entry level roles without prospects for sequential careers (Randle and Hardy, 2017). Moreover, severe under-representation of people with disabilities in senior/decision-making positions can exacerbate issues of exclusion, as the support required to make necessary adjustments for a disabled workforce may be less prioritised in employment decisions. Recent projections suggesting that the workforce who are disabled in TV industry will fall over the coming years (Ofcom, 2021) also support concerns over effectiveness of these efforts.

4.4 Social Class

Findings:

- A significantly higher percentage of workforce in the screen industry is from a privileged family background.
- The nature of employment in the industry, including being freelance, creates economic barriers to those from socio-economically disadvantaged background to enter and remain in the industry.
- This trend contrasts to policy discourses as being open and meritocratic.
- Social capital can play a critical role in accessing and participating in networks that work as a screening mechanism in the industry.

Social class is not one of the nine protected characteristics, but it is nevertheless an important aspect of inclusion and one which can also intersect with diversity characteristics. Based on a workforce analysis in the UK screen sector, Carey et al., (2020) report that across the creative industries those from a privileged background are more than twice as likely to be working in a creative industry than those from working-class backgrounds¹. Compared to the total UK workforce (aged 23-69), which showed the breakdown of workers by class background in 2019 as Privileged 36 per cent, Intermediate 35 per cent and Working-class 29 per cent; in all creative occupations the respective figures were: 52 per cent; 32 per cent; and 16 per cent (Carey et al., 2020). Narrowing specifically to the screen sector, the 2020 data shows the figures as 53 per cent; 22 per cent; 25 per cent (Carey et al., 2021a). A recent census in the games industry reports that 62 per cent of workforce in the industry is from a household where the main parental income earner worked in a managerial or professional job; far larger than the general population benchmark of 37 per cent (Taylor, 2022). The UK Screen Alliance (2019) used education data to analyse social-economic background. According to their data, half of the people working in Animation and VFX have parent(s) with a degree. The education level of the workforce in Animation, VFX and post-production sectors is also a very high level with 85 per

¹ Class in the data is defined in relation to parental occupation when the respondent was aged 14 on NS-SEC. Those from 'privileged' background have at least one parent whose job was a higher or lower managerial, administrative or professional occupation (NS-SEC 1 or 2); those from 'intermediate' origins have parents who worked in intermediate, lower supervisory and technical occupations, or were self-employed (NS-SEC 3, 4 or 5); and those from 'working-class' backgrounds have parents who were employed in routine or semi-routine occupations, or who were long-term unemployed (NS-SEC 6, 7 or 8).

cent having a degree (including post-grad), with the figure particularly high in the Animation sector (93%). This figure is twice as high as that of workforce with degree/postgrad qualifications in the UK economy more widely and even higher than that of the screen industry in general, which is 70 per cent (Carey et al., 2021a). In addition, between 40-50 per cent of the workforce in these sectors went either to private/fee paying or selective state-funded secondary school (The UK Screen Alliance, 2019).

The evidence above suggests that there are important barriers to those from working-class and/or low-income family backgrounds to entering and progressing in the industry (O'Brien et al., 2016). The freelance, networked and project-based employment within the industry (Allen and Hollingworth, 2013) creates economic barriers to those who cannot afford uncertain career prospects with low or even no-pay at the career-entry stage (O'Brien et al., 2016). Several studies have found parents' economic support plays a key role to entry into the industry (Allen and Hollingworth, 2013; Carey et al., 2021a; Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013; Nwonka, 2015; O'Brien et al., 2016), therefore serving to exclude those from disadvantaged family backgrounds.

The role of parental or family background is critical in providing socio-cultural as well as economic capital necessary to enter and progress within the industry. Nwonka (2015) argues that social privileges are reproduced through parental investment in education, skills, networks and experiences. Those from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to be exposed to cultural experiences, education participation/achievement, and role models who can shape their career aspiration throughout their journey from childhood, education, networking, job entry and progression (Carey et al., 2021a). Indeed, Allen and Hollingworth (2013), in their study with youth in deindustrialised regions, found that many young people in the region hesitate to enter creative industry as they don't see it as being for 'people like them'. They may also face their family/parents' resistance to the uncertainty around careers in the industry. This early stage of barriers affects both the aspiration of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds towards careers in the industry, and their pathways to post-16 education which will further shape their networks in their transition to work (Carey et al., 2021a).

In addition, as previously discussed, networks tend to be used extensively as a screening mechanism to minimise risks from uncertainty in the industry (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012). Recruitment based on networks in the industry can operate in such a way that hiring practices are based on 'cultural matching' rather than meritocracy (O'Brien et al., 2016). Thus, family socio-cultural capital invested in educational privileges, cultural norms and soft skills as well as social connections are crucial to sending the right signals to those in hiring positions (Nwonka, 2015).

Furthermore, 'embodied markers' of class such as speech or accent also impact on work experience and progression of those from disadvantaged background, even if they succeed in entering the industry (Ozimek, 2020, p.41). Carey et al. (2021a) present several cases from their interviews of micro aggressions in the workplace, often portrayed as 'banter' about accent and cultural knowledge. At the same time, O'Brien et al. (2016) found evidence of 'class ceiling' reflected in the statistically significant differences in pay between employees from privileged backgrounds and the rest in the creative industry, including in film.

4.5 LGBTQ+

Findings:

- The LGB workforce is better represented in Animation and VFX sector than other screen sectors.
- The LGB workforce voice fears of discrimination and bullying.

The understanding and knowledge production on gender issues in the screen sector is still largely based on a binary view on gender and implicit assumption of heterosexuality (Eikhof et al., 2019). Amongst the available evidence, Creative Skillset (2014) reports that around 7 per cent of the creative media industry identifies as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB), which is higher than the representation in the overall UK working population (Ozimek, 2020). In the same report, 10 per cent of the respondents self-identified themselves as LGB in the film industry, and around 4 per cent in the TV broadcasting sector (*ibid*). According to Screen Alliance (2019), the Animation sector has a comparatively large LGB workforce, with 21.5 per cent, followed by approximately 15 per cent of VFX sector and 12 per cent of post-production, which shows is a far higher representation than estimates suggest within the wider UK population.

However other evidence is less positive. In the Creative Scotland (2016) survey, 15 per cent of respondents who identified themselves as LGB+ saw sexual orientation as a barrier to career progression. While there is also some evidence to suggest issues around fear of discrimination and bullying (Ozimek, 2020).

4.6. Intersectionality

Findings:

- Evidence on intersectionality is still scarce and more understanding is needed of the impact of intersectionality on employment experiences.

Although many of the studies reviewed in this report recognise the need to include intersectionality in the diversity discourse in the sector, evidence on intersectionality is scarce and this is an important evidence gap (CAMEo, 2018; Ofcom, 2021). Even in the substantially developed gender literature, knowledge on intersectionality is still largely absent. At the same time, intersectionality is often a crucial factor in understanding inequality (O'Brien et al., 2016; Ozimek, 2020).

Hence, intersectionality needs to be considered in discussions on interventions and policies to help meet diversity issues. Carey et al., (2021b) also emphasised intersectionality between other characteristics and class as key in levelling up and inclusive growth in the sector. In addition, the focus of the current existing intersectionality discussion still remains mainly focused on gender and ethnicity, due to the popularity and visibility of the topics when compared to other diversity characteristics (Randle and Hardy, 2017). Future studies might need to include a greater variety of intersectionality topics covering age, religion, sexuality, or geographical location (Ozimek, 2020).

5. Evidence on interventions

The evidence presented in this report demonstrates the disadvantages faced in accessing and progressing in the screen sector which are associated with a number of different characteristics. In response to these EDI issues there are examples of sectoral and organisational interventions which seek to address inequalities in access to opportunities (Nwonka, 2015). To a significant extent such interventions have been targeted at disadvantaged groups and based on ideas of tackling individual or group barriers to access to opportunities. However, as has been discussed there is also an importance of the structural conditions in the sector which generate unequal outcomes. There is however less evidence around the development of approaches which engage with these structural conditions in the industry.

There is evidence for different forms of **individual and group-based interventions** seeking to open-up access to the sector – such as training, mentoring, buddying and paid placements (Cameo, 2018). Often there is relatively little formal evaluation evidence for how well such initiatives have functioned, rather the evidence is largely anecdotal (Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020). It is also unclear the extent to which even when entry needs are addressed, whether this generates progression outcomes, or whether structural issues in the sector reduce the efficacy of such interventions because of barriers to progression. There is also a danger that such targeted initiatives perpetuate negative assumptions and a deficit-based model (Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020; Tidball and Bunting, 2021), potentially reinforcing a sense of segmentation stemming from the perceived need to have separate initiatives targeted at disabled individuals (Randle and Hardy, 2017) ethnic minorities (Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020; Cameo, 2018) and women (Cannizzo and Strong, 2020), at times implicitly suggesting they need to change rather than the industry.

There has been less evidence of engagement with some of the **structural issues** facing the sector in relation to EDI (Nwonka, 2015). Employment trends such as the growth of freelancing create challenges for industry-wide improvements (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Wreyford, 2015), but there is little evidence of a search for changing practices in this area. It is clear that there is now increasing recognition of the structural nature of many of the issues, however the deep-rooted nature of these issues makes systemic change challenging and sector practices have been slow to address (CAMEo, 2018).

Recently the trend has been towards refashioning equalities concerns into the language of the **business case**. Here the financial benefits of diversity are highlighted – the 'lost opportunity' to employers of not drawing on the most diverse pool of workers (Cameo, 2018; Eikhof et al., 2019; Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020). Critiques of this discourse view the business case argument as de-politicising the issue (Nwonka, 2015; Newsinger and Eikhof, 2020), on the other hand it is a potential tool for employment engagement with the EDI agenda.

The overall landscape around interventions described by Carey et al. (2021a) is one in which measurement of the issues is improving (albeit from a low-base), and there is a significant amount of relatively small-scale activities in particular parts of the sector aimed at social mobility – for example through careers advice and training; as well as some examples of diversity standards and strategic actions plan. However, overall there is little evidence of a strategic approach to sector development (either nationally or within place) which adequately engages with the range of issues which shape unequal access to opportunities in the sector and which operate across the life/career course – from early life, education, transition to work and in-work progression and advancement (Carey et al, 2021a).

6. Conclusions

The UK screen industries are economically and culturally important. Although there is a predominance of London in the sector's overall composition, important clusters of firms in the screen sector are distributed across the country. For all the sector's economic vibrancy important issues remain around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in accessing and progressing within the sector. There has been some notable progress in terms of understanding the issue (for example with a new emphasis on data collection) as well as a proliferation of, largely small-scale, business, policy and practice initiatives in this area.

The evidence base on EDI in the screen industries is somewhat patchwork and is stronger in some areas than others. There is significant evidence of gendered segmentation in different occupations and sub-sectors within the industry, and that women face barriers to progression. There is important under-representation of BAME workers in senior roles in the sector. The same is true for disabled workers, for whom survey evidence suggests a disability penalty to career progression. Social class remains an important determinant of who accesses, and who succeeds, particularly in some parts of the sector. Importantly, there is relatively little evidence exploring intersectionality, and this is an important gap in the evidence base and something with practical significance for the potential design of interventions.

Across diversity characteristics, the screen industries have a number of structural elements which are important in shaping and reinforcing inequalities across different diversity dimensions. Parts of the screen industries have quite a distinct production system, driven by the project-based and often short-term nature of work assignments. The project-based model, with temporary employment and diffuse production networks, is an important aspect in creating the conditions for inequalities in parts of the sector. Project networks of collaboration can tend towards being exclusive and privilege dominant groups in the sector.

As described above there has been some progress in the sector in addressing longstanding EDI concerns. Industry data has improved as a result of new survey work (albeit from a low base). Initiatives focused on social mobility have been developed, targeting for example improved careers information, access to training and development, and in some cases more structured diversity standards or strategic approaches. However, taken together the current landscape is not one which fully engages with the range of issues which shape unequal access to opportunities in the sector and which operate across the life/career course. Critically, such initiatives largely do not engage effectively with the structural conditions in the industry which generate exclusionary outcomes.

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Appendix 1: Additional information on evidence searching

Academic database search terms

The following search terms were used in the search of academic databases:

“Creative industr*” OR “Cultural industr*” “Screen industr*” OR “Television industr*” OR “TV industr*” OR “Film industr*” OR “Drama industr*” OR “Creative work*” OR “Screen work*” OR “Television work*” OR “TV work*” OR “Film work*” OR “Drama work*” “Cultural work*”
AND
“Social mobility” OR “Diverse” OR “Diversity” OR “Inequality” OR “Equality” OR “Inclusi*” OR “Equit*” OR “Exclud*”
AND
“Ethnicity” OR “Gender” OR “Race” OR “Religion” OR “LBGT” OR “LBGTQ” OR “LBGTQ+” OR “Lesbian” OR “Gay” OR “Bisexual” OR “Transgender” OR “Class” OR “BAME” OR “Disability” OR “Disabled” OR “Disadvantaged” OR “Income”

Google Scholar search

The Google Scholar search used an adapted series of search terms (and a consistent criteria for publication since 2012), for each of these terms the first 5 pages of search results were reviewed.

Creative industries	Social mobility
Creative industries	Diverse
Creative industries	Diversity
Creative industries	Inequality
Creative industries	Inclusion
Creative industries	Exclusion
Screen industries	Social mobility
Screen industries	Diverse
Screen industries	Diversity
Screen industries	Inequality

Screen industries	Inclusion
Screen industries	Exclusion
Creative work	Social mobility
Creative work	Diverse
Creative work	Diversity
Creative work	Inequality
Creative work	Inclusion
Creative work	Exclusion
Screen work	Social mobility
Screen work	Diverse
Screen work	Diversity
Screen work	Inequality
Screen work	Inclusion
Screen work	Exclusion

Grey literature search

For the grey literature search the following terms were used, with the results from the first 10 pages of Google results reviewed.

Inclusion	Creative industries	Report
Inclusion	Screen industries	Report
Inclusive growth	Creative industries	Report
Inclusive growth	Screen industries	Report
Exclusion	Creative industries	Report

Exclusion	Screen industries	Report
Diversity	Creative industries	Report
Diversity	Screen industries	Report
Inequality	Creative industries	Report
Inequality	Screen industries	Report