UNIVERSITY of BRADFORD

sign_ Screen Industries Growth Network

UNIVERSITY of York

Youth, Diversity & the Creative Industries Research Symposium

15 September 2023, 2pm. Venue: Bradford Cathedral

Guest Speakers

Iki Ikram

Ameenah Ayub Allen

Research Presented by:

Youth, Diversity & the Screen Industries

Jacqui Griffin, University of Bradford

Carlton Reeve, Staffordshire University

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About SIGN

The Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN) is a unique, business-facing initiative supporting the TV, film and games industries in Yorkshire and the Humber. SIGN aims to make this region the UK's centre for digital creativity, and a model of diverse and inclusive activity. In order to do this, SIGN connects companies, support agencies and universities through a programme of training, business development, research and evaluation.

SIGN is a £6.4m project, starting in summer 2020, and funded by Research England, the University of York and its partners. The University of York leads the initiative, working with Screen Yorkshire and eight other Yorkshire universities. An extensive network of collaboration ensures that SIGN is equipped to deliver maximum impact across the region.

Contents

Executive Summary

The screen industries (comprising television, film, VFX, animation and games) are a national and international success story for the UK but the workforce fails to reflect the rich diversity of the UK population[1] with "the working class, women and people of marginalised genders, people of colour, those with disabilities and those with caring responsibilities" struggling to access and progress in the screen industries[2]. Two thirds of employers from the sector report that a lack of applications from under-represented groups as a key barrier to improving diversity in their workforce[3] but numerous studies have indicated the prevalence of inequality and discrimination in the industry[4].

Various organisations, initiatives, and advocacy groups have emerged to address diversity and inclusion issues and these efforts include mentorship programs, diversity-focused festivals, and campaigns promoting equal opportunities but despite concerted effort from the sector, certain groups remain stubbornly under-represented. This SIGN project investigates the attitudes of young people preparing themselves for their careers, and in particular their reflections on jobs in the screen industries.

For this research, deliberately focused on underrepresented demographics, that is, those from ethnic minority backgrounds or lower socio-economic groups who are a lower percentage of the workforce than the general population. The study has interviewed 108 young people in tertiary education (aged 16-18) living in South and West Yorkshire.

The findings suggest that:

- Young people are less influenced by teachers, friends or social media than family, academic ability and interests when considering careers
- Asian young people are least likely to want to work in the screen industries and are least likely to believe that people like them work in film, television, animation and games
- Young people view the screen industries as difficult sector in which to obtain work, with significant barriers to entry
- They regard a degree as being valuable in accessing the market
- They feel that gaining a university degree is less of a challenge than "What you look like," "Who you know," "Finding available jobs" and "Relevant experience" when trying get a job in the sector
- They believe that "Relevant Experience" is the most significant barrier to working in the screen industries
- There is a significant difference in attitude according to gender with 70% of negative comments regarding self-reflection in the screen industries coming from White and Asian female participants

1 Annual ScreenSkills Assessment (2019), Retrieved from: https://www.screenskills.com/media/2710/2019-05-20-executive-summary-annual-screenskills-assessment.pdf

2 Thomas, B, & Einarsdottir, A. (2023), Assessing the Impact of Diversity Schemes on Career Trajectories, SIGN, Retrieved from: https://screen-network.org.uk/publication/assessing-the-impact-of-diversity-schemes-on-career-trajectories/

3 Annual ScreenSkills Assessment (2019), ibid

4 Ozimek, A. (2020) Equality, diversity & inclusion in the screen industries. Retrieved from: http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/170698/

5 Nwonka, C. J and Malik, S. (2018), "Cultural discourses and practices of institutionalised diversity in the UK film sector: "Just get something black made", The Sociological Review, 66: 1, pp.111-27

6 Although 107 gave final consent to participate

Background

CONTEXT

The creative industries are a significant economic driver in the UK. According to data from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the creative industries contribute well over £100 billion to the UK economy a year, accounting for over 5% of the total economy. The screen industries (film, television, games, animation and VFX) has an total annual turnover of £37.5bn and employs nearly a quarter of million people in the UK[7].

Despite the industry's successes, and the challenges of accurately measuring diversity and representation[8], there is a recognition that the workforce is failing to reflect and capitalise on the constituency of the UK's wider population.

Socioeconomic background makes a significant impact on access to opportunities in the screen industries. Internships and unpaid work can be common entry points, which can disadvantage individuals who cannot afford to work without pay or who lack connections within the industry. Similarly, the screen industries often rely heavily on freelance and gig workers. While this can provide flexibility, it also means that many creative professionals face job insecurity and income instability.

These features are reflected in the data. A far higher percentage of the screen industries workforce come from high socioeconomic backgrounds (52%) compared to industries as a whole (38%) and highlighting the intersectionality of wealth and education, those with a degree and from a privileged background are 6.5 times more likely to have a creative role than those from lower socio-economic backgrounds that are qualified only to GCSE-level or below. [9]

In many sectors, women are underrepresented in leadership roles and technical positions. For instance, in the film industry, women held only around 31% of the key technical roles in 2020, according to the British Film Institute and there is a higher proportion of male workers (62%) than the working population of the UK economy as a whole (53%).[10]

There is a notable lack of ethnic diversity in some areas of the screen industries. Research by ScreenSkills found that only 10% of workers in the sector identified as Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic, compared to 12% across the entire UK workforce. [11]

These demographic facts highlight the need for ongoing efforts to improve diversity and inclusivity within the UK's screen industries. By addressing these disparities, the industries can tap into a wider pool of talent, produce more representative content, and foster a more inclusive and equitable creative landscape.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to gain a better understanding of the attitudes of youth from under-represented groups to careers in the screen industries.

The study has used interviews and a survey with 16-18 year olds from across West and South Yorkshire to determine attitudes and opinions. The anonymous survey data was disaggregated to reveal the attitudes of particular demographics.

METHODOLOGY

There is a bank of useful research that gives insights into the screen industries including diversity -related issues but a lack of studies with respect to the attitudes of the next generation of workforce. This study employs a mixed research methodology comprising:

- Desk research (review of existing literature relating to diversity in the screen industries)
- Secondary research (locating suitable schools and colleges)
- Primary research (a specifically-commissioned survey of young people in Yorkshire).

7 Annual ScreenSkills Assessment (2019), ibid

8 CAMEo. (2018). Workforce diversity in the UK screen sector: evidence review. Retrieved from: https://www.bfi.org.uk/sites/bfi.org.uk/files/downloads/bfi-workforce-diversity-in-uk-screen-sector-evidence-review-2018-03.pdf

9 Carey, H., O'Brien, D., and Gable, O. (2021) Social Mobility in the Creative Economy: Rebuilding and levelling up? Multiple: Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre and Work Advance.

10 Retrieved from: https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/social-mobility-in-the-creative-economy-rebuilding-and-levelling-up

11 Annual ScreenSkills Assessment (2019), ibid

The study is based on a 16 question survey hosted on Google Forms. The survey does not collect any individual-identifying details but gathers information on education, ethnicity, family and neighbourhood, career aspirations and beliefs about working in the screen industries. The research passed full ethics approval at the University of Bradford ensuring safeguarding, privacy and wellbeing of the participants was considered and protected.

The scale of the project precluded working with 16-18 year olds outside of formal education because of the challenges of locating and accessing sufficient numbers to survey with any academic robustness. Instead, the study identified a range of schools and colleges in the South and West Yorkshire regions that offer general tertiary education to students from diverse ethnic backgrounds and lower socio-economic neighbourhoods. The study targeted mainstream centres, consciously avoiding those with arts or media specialisms in an attempt to prevent bias. Of 23 educational establishments approached, 5 agreed to participate in the research.

For each of the five locations, Enhanced DBS cleared researchers worked with institutions to organise face to face group sessions with students accompanied by local staff. Sessions took place as part of lessons, assemblies and careers days during Winter 2022 and Spring/Summer 2023.

In each case, researchers gave a brief personal introduction and an overview of the survey and its aims before asking students to complete the 16 questions. Students received a standard link to the Google Form for them access via their phones or tablets or, if the technology was not available, paper copies. More than 80% of participants completed the survey electronically, with researchers transcribing the paper copies manually into the system.

A total of 108 young people took part in the research with 1 participant refusing to provide consent. Therefore, 107 of the 108 surveys have been used for the findings.

Research

Participants by Year Group

Our research goal was to speak to young people primarily between the ages of 16 and 18. As the data shows, the largest demographic of participants is in Year 12, placing their average age at 16 to 17 years old. An additional 12.1% of participants were from years 10 and 11, placing them between 15 and 17 years of age, while 8.4% of participants were in year 13, or 17 to 18 years of age.

18.7% of participants selected "not listed" from the options. As we did not undertake our research with groups below year 10, we can assume that the age of these participants is 16 years or older as these were gathered at a recruitment event at the University of Bradford.

This means that the total percentage of participants that we can verify with absolute certainty were in the target demographic for this research is 81.3%, but that the 18.7% should not be discounted, especially as their presence at a recruitment event for university indicates their interest in higher education.

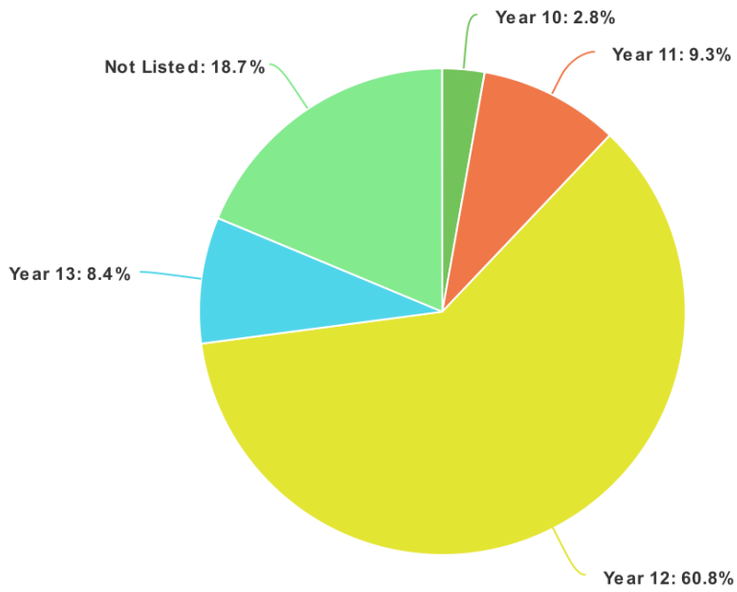


Fig. 1 Approximate Age of Participants by Year Group

12 'Comparing UK Year Groups to US Grade', British International School of Chicago, South Loop, 20 June 2023, Retrieved from: https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/bisc-south-loop/news/2022/03/10/how-old-are-you-in-each-grade

Participants by Gender Identity

Representation of gender in our results is roughly in line with the population demographics for the United Kingdom, as indicated by the 2021 Census. We note that the 2021 Census only allowed for two options (male and female) when selecting gender, while our survey aimed to be more inclusive of different gender identities.

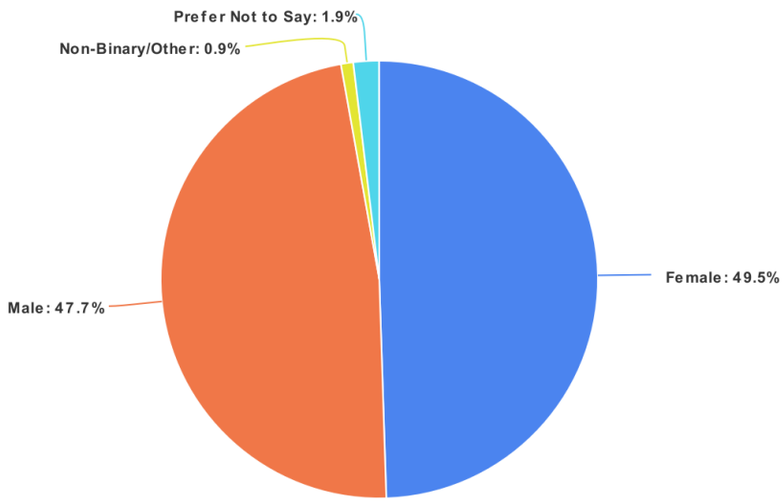


Fig. 2 Gender Identity of Participants

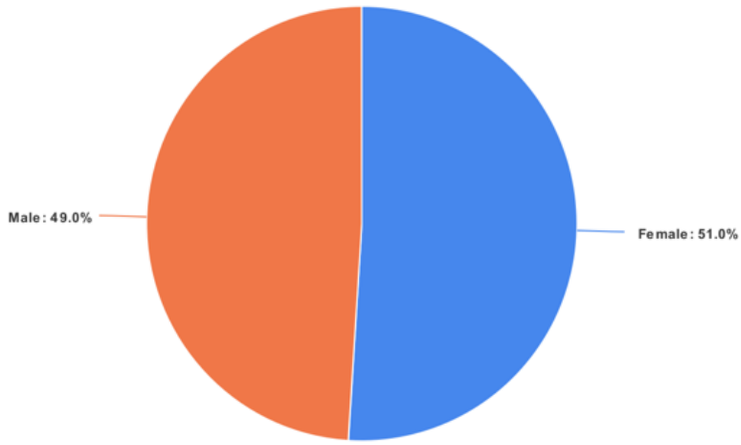


Fig. 3 Gender Identity of the United Kingdom[13]

13 'Male and Female Populations', 31 March 2023, Retrieved from: https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/male-and-female-populations/latest

Participants by Racial Identity

The population of the United Kingdom and the population of Yorkshire, both shown above, are both approximations of one another. By far, the largest racial demographic of both Yorkshire and the United Kingdom as a whole is the White population (85.5% and 81.7%, respectively). However, when considering the demographics of individuals working in the screen industries[16], we note that the White population is slightly over-represented while minority demographics (Asian, Black, Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Groups) are slightly under-represented.

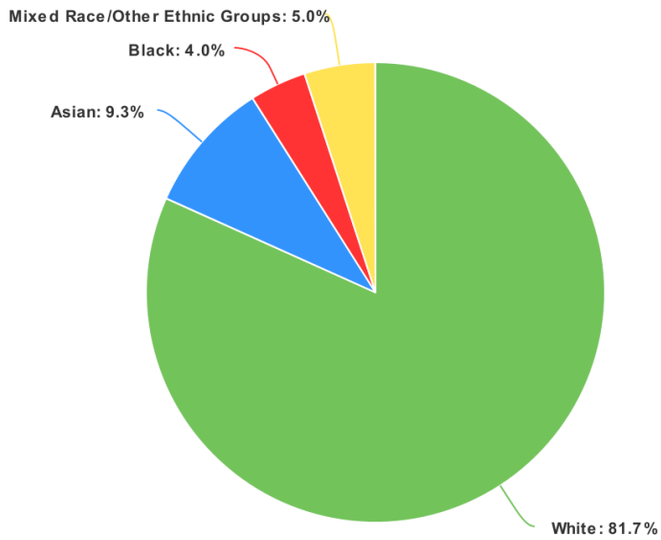


Fig. 4 Racial Identity of the United Kingdom [14]

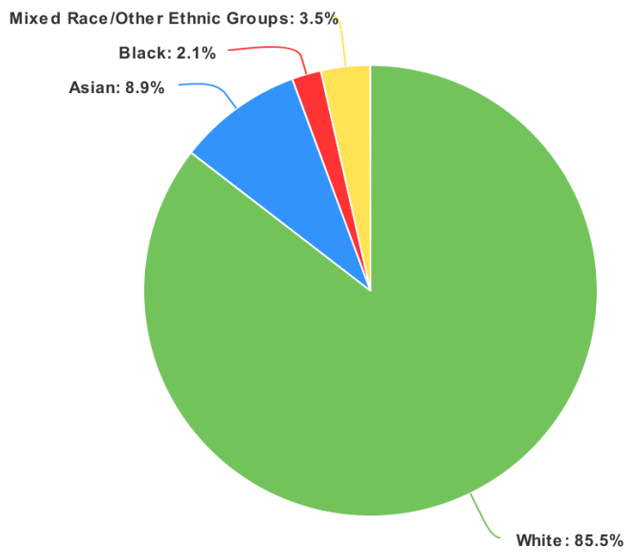


Fig. 5 Racial Identity of Yorkshire and the Humber 15

14 'Population of England and Wales', 22 December 2022, Retrieved from: https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/population-of-england-and-wales/latest

15 'Yorkshire and the Humber Demographics', Varbes, Retrieved from: https://www.varbes.com/demographics/yorkshire-and-the-humber-demographics

Given the under-representation of Asian, Black, and Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Groups (called "Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups" in Figure 6) in the screen industries, we set out to amplify these voices, in terms of response to our survey. Though we wanted to account for all ethnic groups, we wanted to ensure a strong presence from under-represented groups to see how attitudes compared across ethnicities.

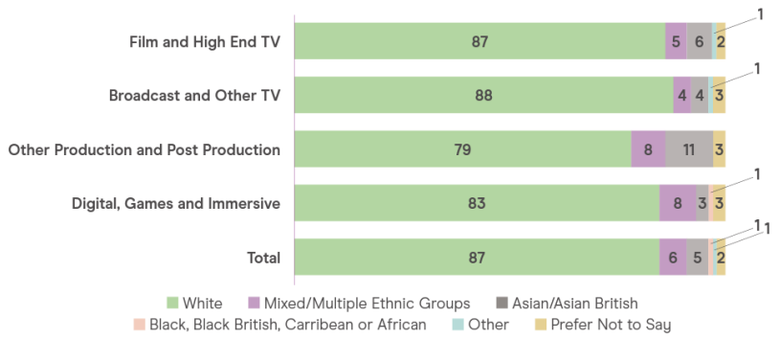


Fig. 6 Racial Identities of Participants for Inclusive Growth Work Stream Survey[17]

"Not many people like me on TV."

ASIAN MALE, YEAR 11

"Not much Jamaican representation in this field."

BLACK FEMALE, YEAR 12

"For example BBC is a British company in which there are a lot of people like me. There are also a lot of successful English movie directors."

WHITE MALE, YEAR 12

16 O'Connor, K. and Flintham, N. 'A Regional Baseline Picture of Diversity and Inclusion in the Screen Industries' (University of York, Winter 2003), Retrieved from: |https://screen-network.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Inclusive-Growth-Work-Stream-1-Report_Feb-2023.pdf

17 ibid

As demonstrated by the graph below, which outlines our participants by Racial Identity, this was clearly achieved. White youth account for 51.4% of all participants, which is the majority of all participants. When this is compared to the overall population demographics for both Yorkshire and the United Kingdom as a whole, we see that this number is under-representative of the population. However, as demonstrated by the above graphics, the Asian, Black, and Mixed Race/Other populations account for less than 20 and 15 percent of the overall ethnic population, respectively, of the United Kingdom and Yorkshire; our research captured just under 50% of responses from young people in those same demographics.

This over-representation of these groups meets our research goals and needs to try and capture and understand the attitudes of youth from diverse ethnic backgrounds towards careers in the screen industries.

We note that intersectional barriers to entry to the screen industries include socio-economic disadvantages and cross racial boundaries. However, this was not the focus of this research. Further research is needed in all racial groups to draw more definitive conclusions about the attitudes within each.

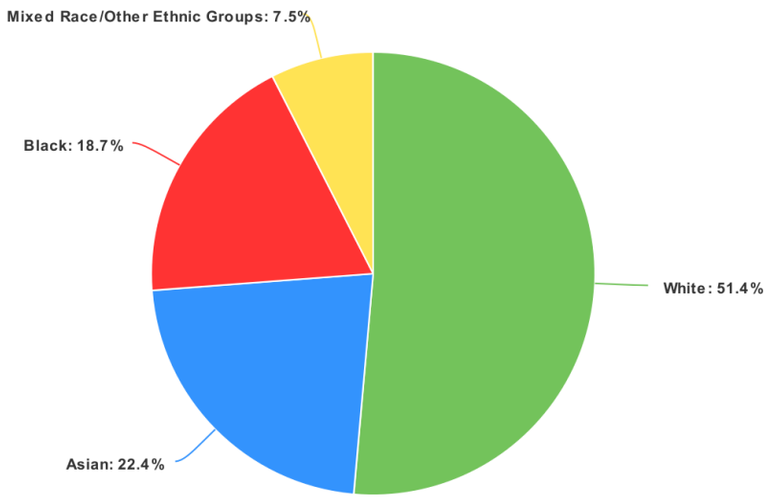


Fig. 7a Racial Identity of Participants

Participants by Postcode

As part of the survey, participants were asked for the first three letters of their home postcode to help identify broad neighbour economic background according to ACORN categories . Recognising that this is an imperfect measure due to Type I and Types II errors associated with 'ecological fallacy' , the data still offers reasonable evidence of home income. Over a third of participants live in West Yorkshire with the remainder coming from South Yorkshire. According to the ACORN categories, 87% of students lived in neighbourhoods where more than half of the community could be described as "stretched societies" or "low income" and more than a third of households are on "'limited budget" or "hard up" indicating deprived geographical areas.

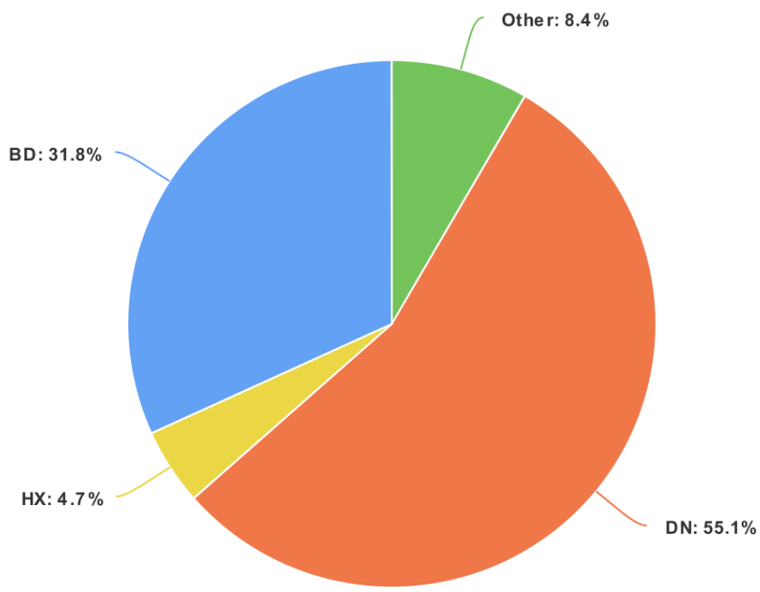


Fig. 8 Locations of Participants

18 'Home', Acorn, accessed 8 September 2023, https://acorn.caci.co.uk/

19 Harrison, N., and C. McCaig.(2015). "An Ecological Fallacy in Higher Education Policy: The Use, Overuse and Misuse of 'Low Participation Neighbourhoods." Journal of Further and Higher Education 39 (6): 793-817.

Participants' Desired Level of Education

We then asked participants what level of education they wanted to reach.

A large majority (79.4%) wanted to attend university for at least their first degree. Furthermore, nearly half (49.5%) of all participants wanted to achieve taught or research postgraduate degrees. This indicates that there is a clear desire among young people for further education.

When we break down these responses by ethnic groups, we can make further assessments.

Considering each ethnic group on their own, the data reveals that Asian and Black young people are more likely than the group average to seek higher education. An overwhelming majority of Asian and Black participants (95.8% and 95%, respectively), said that they were interested in, at least, an undergraduate degree, if not a masters or doctorate.

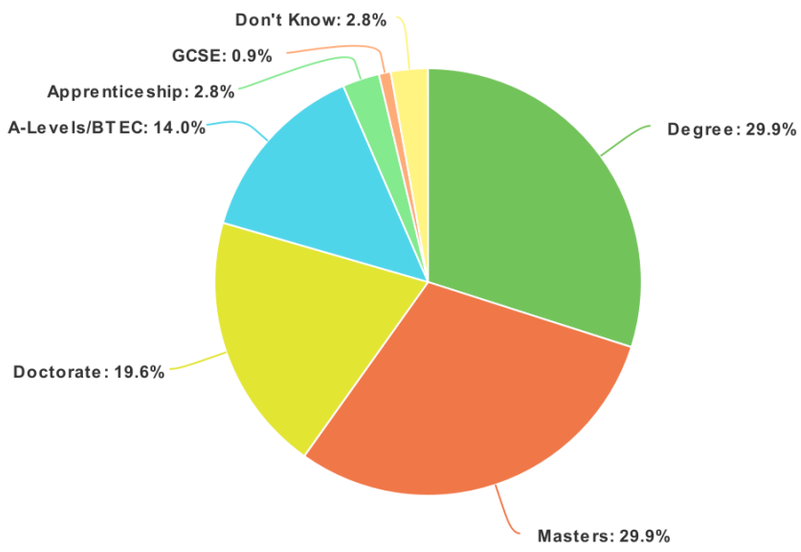


Fig. 10 Level of Education Participants Want to Achieve

While a majority of Mixed Race/Other and White participants (75% and 69.1%, respectively) also desire university education, the 20-25% difference between these groups is significant.

Interestingly, when only considering which participants said they were interested in a postgraduate degree, there is a shift. While Black and Mixed Race/Other participants remain overwhelmingly in favour of postgraduate education (at 90% and 75%, respectively), there was a significant drop in interest from both Asian and White students (41.7% and 34.5%, respectively).

"Absolutely education is the key to attaining any good ladder in life."

WHITE MALE, YEAR 12

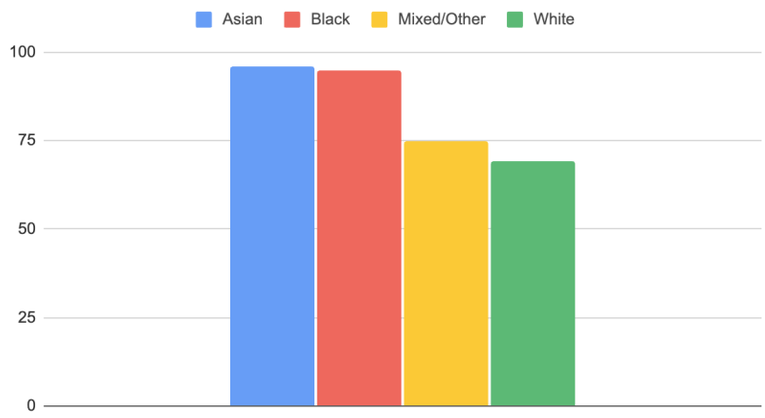


Fig. 11 Percentage of students interested in any kind of degree/higher education, by race

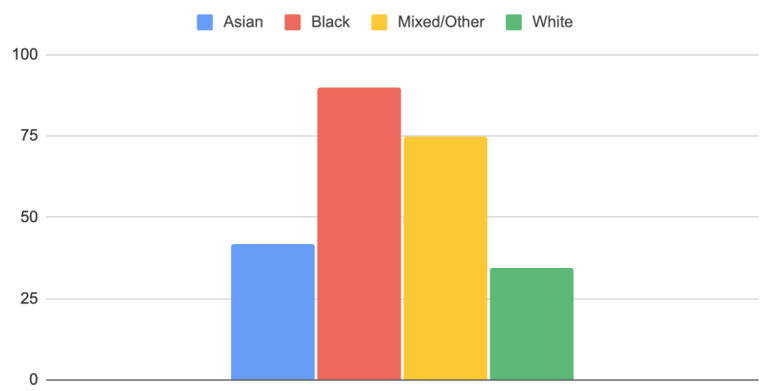


Fig. 12 Percentage of students interested in either a Masters' or Doctorate degree, by race

Participants' Main Influences on Career Choice

Participants were asked to answer what their main influences were on their own career choice. They were provided with a list of options - Likes/Interests, Academic Ability, Family, Friends, Social Media, and Teachers - as well as an "Other" option, which included space for them to specify. Participants were allowed to choose as many options as they felt applied.

Overall, participants predominantly chose "Likes/ Interests" as their main influence, with 76.6% of all participants choosing this option.

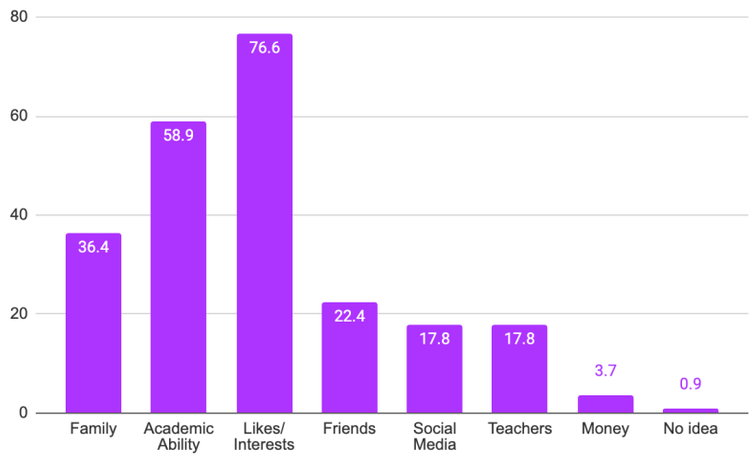


Fig. 13 Overall response by percentages to " What are the strongest influences on your career choice?"

When separating these responses by race, there is an interesting discrepancy. While most groups rank "Likes/Interests" as their highest (or tied for highest, in the case of Black participants), Asian participants ranked "Academic Ability" as slightly above this. In the case of White and Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group participants, nearly 30% more participants responded with "Likes/Interests" than the second highest response ("Academic Ability").

Asian participants were also more likely to say that they were influenced by "Teachers" and alongside Black participants, responded that teachers are more influential on their choices than friends, while the reverse is true for both Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group and White participants.

Additionally, while "Family" ranked third highest across all groups, White participants were significantly less likely to say that this is a main influence; among White participants "Family" and "Friends" bear equal weight at 25%.

Another point of interest is that Black participants were the most likely to be influenced by social media, ranking this option as higher than both teachers and friends - the only group to do so.

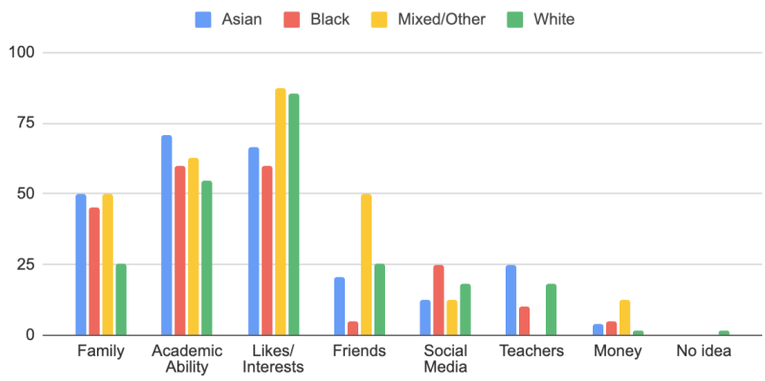


Fig. 14 Percentage of responses, by race, to "What are the strongest influences on your career choice?"

"See[n] them on social media."

BLACK MALE, YEAR 12

Participants' Interest in Screen Industries

As part of the survey, participants were asked "Would you like to work in television, film, animation, or games?" and were able to select a single response between 1 and 5, where 1 was "Not at all" and 5 was "Yes, definitely."

We found that the largest percentage for a single answer was moderate or indifferent, with 27.1% of all participants selecting a 3. There was only a slightly more negative response to this question than a positive one, with 38.3% of participants selecting either a 1 or 2 while 34.6% selected either a 4 or a 5.

The resulting trend is nearly flat due to the large spike in moderate responses, but very slightly favouring the negative side of the chart.

However, when considering the data in subsets broken down by race, this trend is not consistent across all groups. When only considering the average response among each group, it appears that all groups are, on average, ambivalent towards a career in the screen industries (see Figure 15).

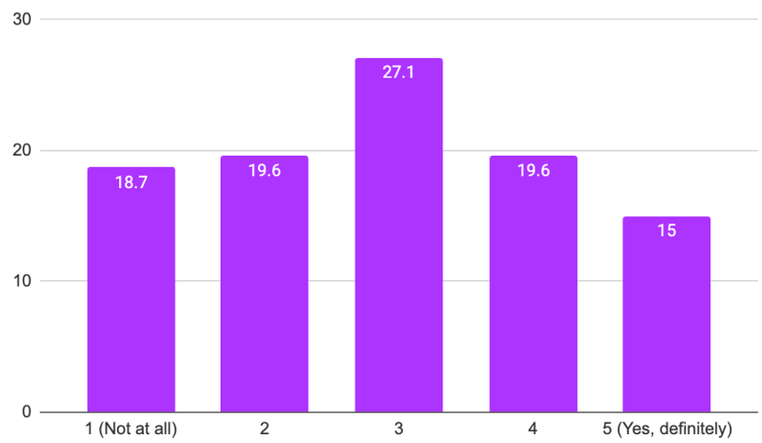


Fig. 15 Overall Participants' Answers by Percentage to "Would you like to work in television, film, animation, or games?"

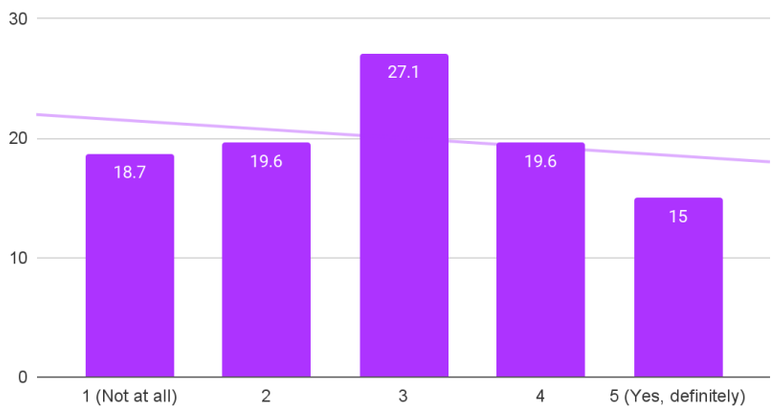


Fig. 16 Overall Participants' Answers by percentage with trendline

Viewing the data as an average in this case is misleading, however, presenting the attitudes of each group as, on average, to be the same. But, when the data are examined to consider the percentages of responses for each individual category, by race, specific trends emerge.

Asian participants were far more likely to respond with a 1 ("Not at all") than any other group, with 41.7% of all Asian participants answering in this way. An additional 20.8% of Asian participants answered with a 2, for a total of 62.5% - a clear majority. Only 12.5% of all Asian participants answered positively with a 4 or a 5, with the remaining 25% answering with the moderate/ambivalent 3. This does correlate roughly with the given responses in this group for the question, "If you could do any job, what would it be?" The majority of participants answered jobs which are, broadly, within the medical field (e.g. "Doctor", "Optometry", "Psychologist", "Pharmacy", etc.). However, participants who did answer positively were also more likely to list an unrelated job title as their ideal profession (e.g. "Dentist", "Lawyer", "Pilot", etc.).

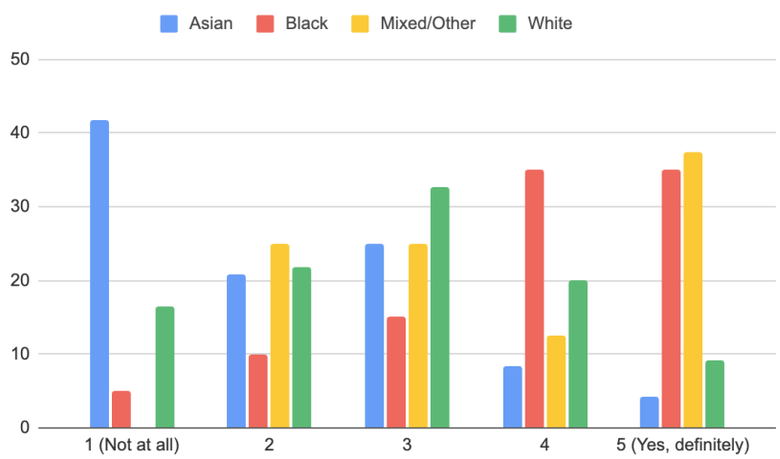


Fig. 18 Percentage of responses, by race, to "Would you like to work in television, film, animation, or games?"

However, the reverse is true for Black participants, with 70% of participants answering a 4 or 5. We note that not only were Black participants more likely to answer positively to this question, but that, like participants in the Asian group, their response did not appear to have any correlation to their answers to the previous question "If you could do any job, what would it be?" Black participants who answered 5 to "Would you like to work in television, film, animation, or games?" listed careers such as "Project Manager", "Tech Ops", "Business and finance", and "Mentoring" when asked what job, out of any, they would like.

There was a similar trend found in answers from the Mixed Race/ Other Ethnic Group participants, with 50% answering positively with a 4 or 5 and a further 25% answering moderately. Only 25% answered negatively; in these instances, this did roughly correlate to their answers regarding ideal jobs (e.g. "Actress", "UFC Fighter", "Musical Theatre", etc.).

Meanwhile, White participants' answers largely mirror the overall trend, with the largest percentage of participants (32.7%) selecting 3 (moderate/ ambivalent). Overall, slightly more White participants were negative than positive regarding working in the screen industries,

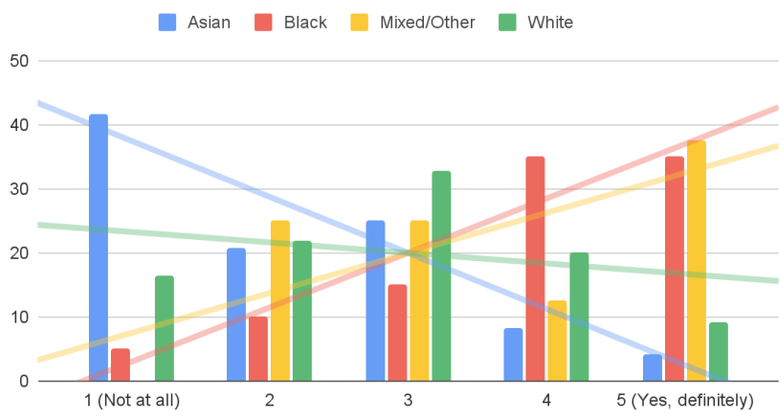


Fig. 19 Percentage of responses, by race, to "Would you like to work in television, film, animation, or games?" with trendline

with 38.2% selecting a 1 or 2, and 29.1% selecting a 4 or a 5. Additionally, more than any other group, participants with a positive answer to this question were more likely to list a directly correlating job title as their ideal profession (e.g. "Narrative Designer", "Director", "Film Director", etc.).

Participants' Self-Reflection in Existing Screen Industries

Participants were also asked how much they felt people like them worked in television, film, animation, or games. This question was designed to assess the level of self-reflection participants felt with careers in the screen industries. They were able to select one option on a scale of 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Yes, definitely).

On average, most participants responded moderately to positively to this question, with 85% of all responses registered as a 3 or higher and 53.2% of responses registering as a 4 or 5.

However, when these data are separated by race, there are notable differences in the average responses. Specifically, Asian participants were less likely on average to self-identify with people working in television, film, animation or games. Meanwhile, Black participants were the most likely to feel this, followed closely by Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group participants. White participants were, on average, moderately likely to see themselves reflected by people working in television, film, animation, and games.

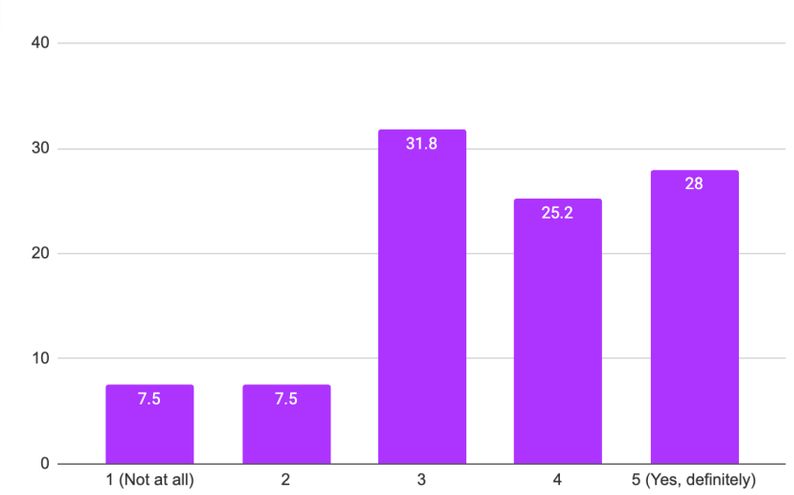
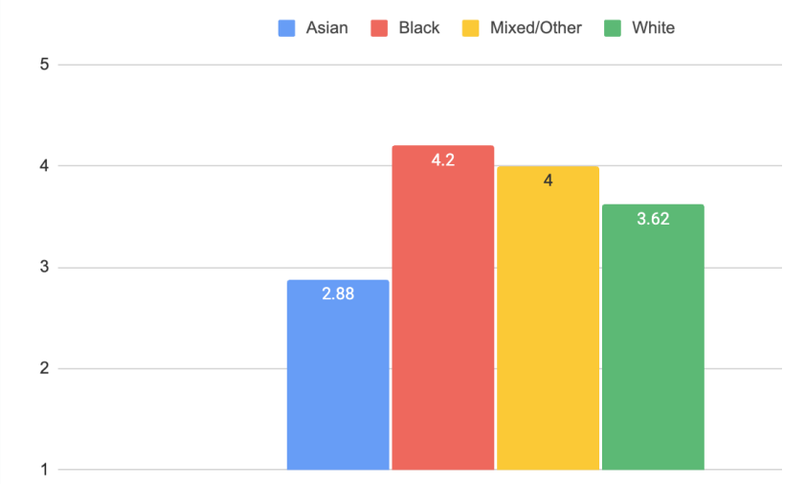


Fig. 20 Overall average response by percentage to "Do you think people like you work in television, film, animation, or games?"



This response somewhat correlates to the responses seen in the previously discussed question ("Would you like to work in television, film, animation, or games?").

Only 20.8% of Asian participants responded positively (either a 4 or 5) to this question. The largest response by percentage (50%) from Asian participants was a moderate one of 3, and an additional 29.2% responded negatively (a 1 or 2). Notably, this is the only group which was predominantly moderate and this group also had the largest percentage of negative responses. The trend line as seen on Figure 21 demonstrates how this is the only group of participants with a negative trend.

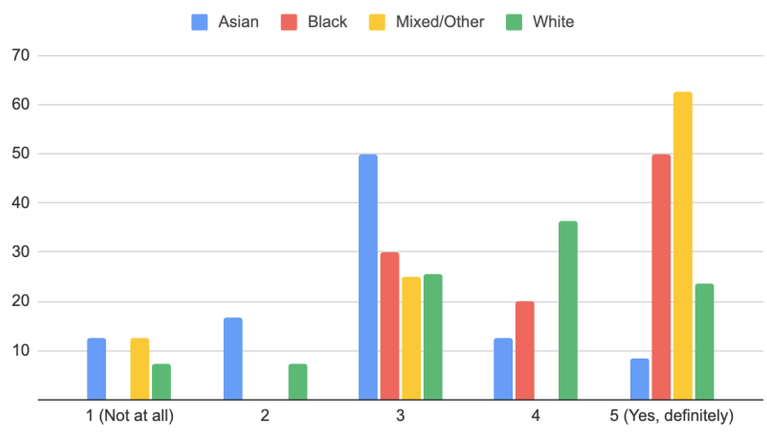


Fig. 22 Percentage of responses, by race, to "Do you think people like you work in television, film, animations, or games?"

Meanwhile, all other participant groups trend positively. Black participants responded the most positively, with 50% of responses registered as a 5 ("Yes, definitely"). A further 50% of Black participants responded with either a 3 or 4, meaning that 0% of Black participants responded negatively to this question. There is a potentially interesting correlation between this response and the higher influence of social media on Black participants.

Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group participants were even more likely to select a 5 as their response with 62.5% of that group doing so. However, while no Black participants responded negatively, 12.5% of Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group participants selected a 1, saying that they do not think people like them work in the screen industries at all. White participants were also more likely to register a positive response, with 59.9% of White participants selecting either a 4 or a 5 (though, interestingly, in this group, 4 is the more popular choice at 36.3%).

It is clear that the high percentage of Asian participants responding moderately (3) along with the same response being the second-most popular in all other groups affected the average, which is why it is important to consider the responses from each group individually.

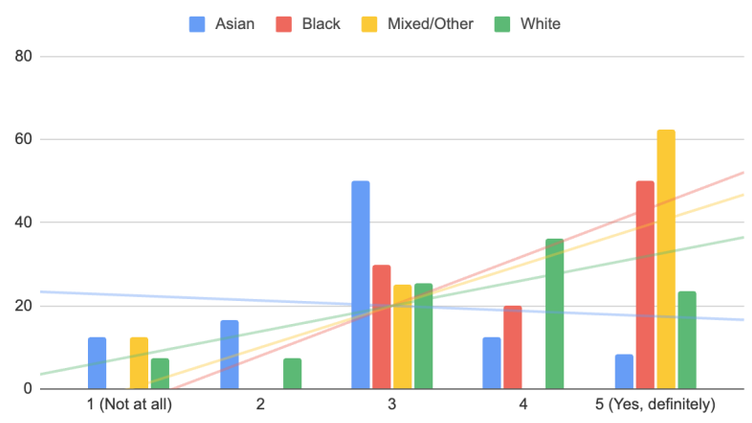


Fig. 23 Percentage of responses, by race, to "Do you think people like you work in television, film, animations, or games?" with trend lines

Participants were able to follow up on this response and elaborate on their reasoning with the following question, which was "Why do you think this?" This was not a required answer, but the responses to this question from the participants helps understand their reasoning.

A version of "I don't know" or "Not sure" was a somewhat common response to this follow up question in both Asian and White participants, with slightly more White participants responding in this way. The majority of participants who responded in this way were male (though not exclusively).

As a point of interest for this category: In both the Asian and White groups, approximately 70% of the negative responses were made by female participants.

"No idea just feel like it."

WHITE MALE, YEAR 12

Participants' View on Ease of Obtaining a Job in Creative Industries

We asked participants how easy they thought it was to get a job in the screen industries, allowing them to select a single option from 1 to 5 with 1 meaning "Very easy") and 5 "Very hard").

Response to this question revealed that, on average, participants believed it was relatively difficult to get a job in television, film, animation, or games, with 52.3% of all responses registering at 4 or higher and a further 30.8% answering with a 3, or a moderate response. Only 16.9% of all participants felt it was easy or very easy to get a job in the screen industries.

"It looks very competitive to get into films because of successful people pushing their kids into films."

ASIAN FEMALE, YEAR 11

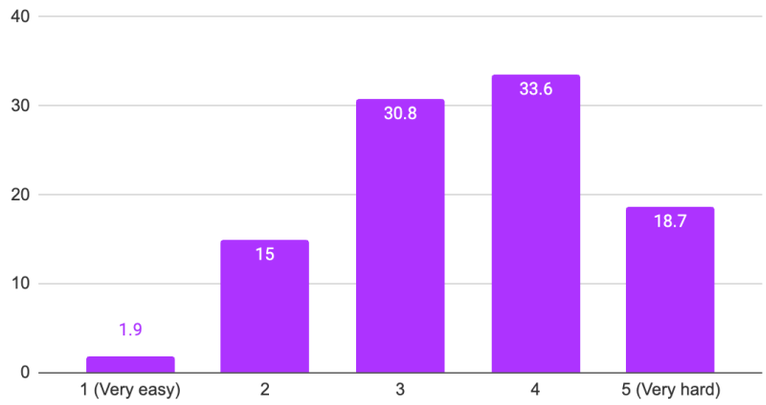


Fig. 24 Overall average response by percentage to "How easy do you think it is to get a job in television, film, animation, or games?

"These industries...are incredibly competitive and you need really good qualifications to do it. But also there isn't a large amount of job opportunities."

WHITE NON-BINARY/OTHER, YEAR 12

When separating groups by race, this trend continues across all racial identities, with White participants feeling most strongly that it is difficult to secure a job in the screen industries and Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Groups participants feeling the least strongly about this. However, all groups trend distinctively towards feeling that it is very hard to get a job in these industries.

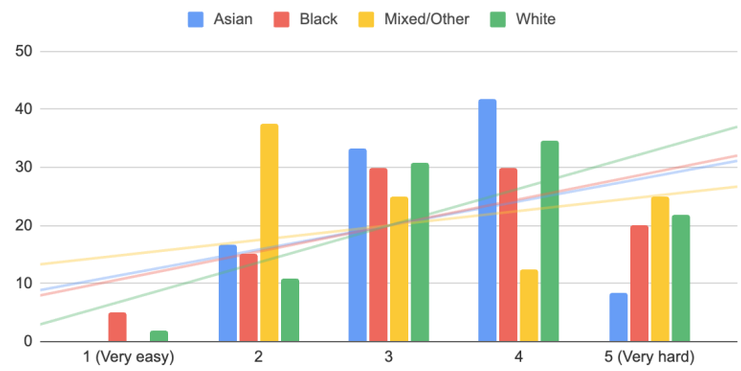


Fig. 25 Individual response percentage, by race, to "How easy do you think it is to get a job in television, film, animation, or games?" with trend line

MODERATE RESPONSES

A significant percentage of all groups (33.3% of Asian participants, 30% of Black participants, 25% of Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Groups participants, and 30.9% of White participants) responded moderately to this question, answering with a 3.

EASY RESPONSES

There were a limited number of "easy" or "very easy" responses (16.7% of Asian participants, 20% of Black participants, 37.5% of Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group participants, and 12.7% of White participants). There is also an indication that some participants misread this question and selected a lower number meaning they think it is easy to get a job in these fields when their written elaboration indicates they believe this to be difficult.

DIFFICULT RESPONSES

As stated above, the majority of participants from most groups (50% of Asian participants, 60% of Black participants, 37.5% of Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group participants , and 56.3% of White participants) indicated that they felt it was difficult to obtain a job in the screen industries. Across all groups, their elaborated reasonings behind this answer runs along a similar theme: high competition for jobs.

Participants' Views on Most Difficult Aspects of Job Acquirement

Part of the survey was to see if we could determine any specific areas that participants felt were more difficult than others regarding acquiring a job in the screen industries.

Participants were asked to pick up to three of the provided reasons for the question "What do you think are the hardest things about getting a job in TV, film, animation, or games?" The overwhelmingly most popular choice across all responses was "Having relevant experience." 69.2% of all participants included this choice in their answer. This indicates a clear need for university programmes to communicate the experiential value or their screen industries course offerings to prospective students.

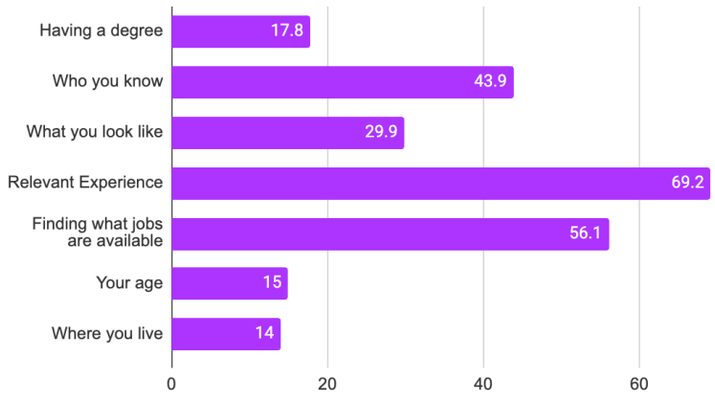


Fig. 26 Overall response from all participants to "What do you think are the hardest things about getting a job in TV, film, animations, or games? Pick 3."

"Majority of actors, film stars don't have degrees. Probably need creativity skills."

ASIAN MALE, YEAR NOT LISTED

"Experience/ connections help more."

MIXED RACE/OTHER ETHNIC GROUP FEMALE, YEAR 12

Additionally, the popularity of the choice "finding what jobs are available", second behind "having relevant experience" at 56.1% , indicates that young people are aware of the competitiveness of the screen industries and would likely place great value on accessible and successful career services at a university, or even career focused modules.

When considering responses broken down by race, there are two notable differences in how each group answered. First, Black participants placed more emphasis on "Finding what jobs are available", "who you know", and "what you look like" than they did "relevant experience". Second, Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group participants placed more emphasis on "who you know" than any other category, though "relevant experience" ranked second highest for this ethnic group.

Another thing of note when viewing the data broken down in this way is that all under-represented groups suggest that "what you look like" is a greater barrier to work than did their White peers. Only 20% of White participants selected this, while 35% of Black participants, 37.5% of Mixed Race/Other participants, and 45.8% of Asian participants selected "what you look like" as one of their three options.

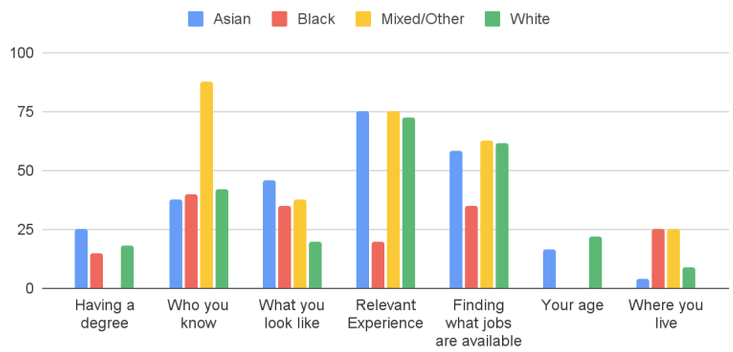


Fig. 27 Individual response percentage, by race, to "What do you think are the hardest things about getting a job in TV, film, animations, or games? Pick 3."

"...ultimately the portfolio is the most important in my opinion."

WHITE MALE, YEAR 12
(NOTABLY, THIS PARTICIPANT WANTS TO BE A FILM DIRECTOR)

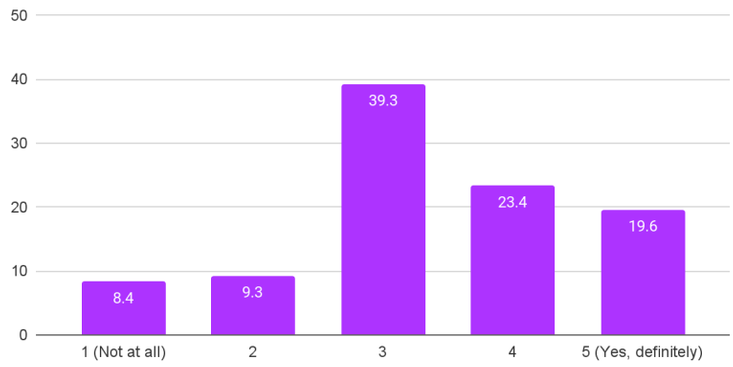
Participants' Opinion of a Degree for Screen Industry Careers

Part of the survey was to see if we could determine any specific areas that participants felt were more difficult than others regarding acquiring a job in the screen industries.

Participants were asked to pick up to three of the provided reasons for the question "What do you think are the hardest things about getting a job in TV, film, animation, or games?" The overwhelmingly most popular choice across all responses was "Having relevant experience." 69.2% of all participants included this choice in their answer. This indicates a clear need for university programmes to communicate the experiential value or their screen industries course offerings to prospective students.

"Higher level of education in these field[s] helps have [a] better performance."

MIXED RACE/OTHER ETHNIC GROUP MALE, YEAR 12



Breaking these responses down by race, we can see that, for the most part, this trend carries across racial boundaries, with most participants from each ethnic group choosing the moderate option of 3. A notable exception for this is in the Mixed Race/Other grouping, which was, as a whole, slightly more negative about the value of a degree for a job in the screen industries. However, due to the small sample size of this group in particular, it is difficult to determine whether this is an anomalous result or statistically accurate.

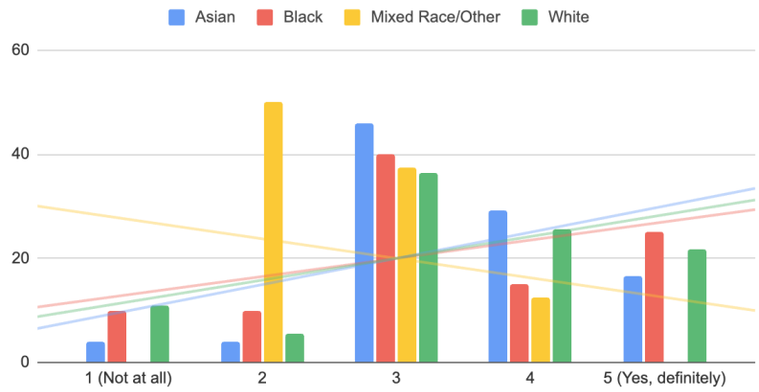


Fig. 29 Percentage per response, by race, to "Do you think a university degree helps you get a job in television, film, animation, or games?", with trend lines

PREDOMINANT RESPONSE: MODERATE

The largest percentage of responses for a single option (39.3%) was registered at a 3, which could be interpreted as ambivalent towards the need for a degree for such careers. This is reflected in some of the comments of those who answered a 3:

"Depends on [the] type of job within the industry. Some may prefer experience over degree."

ASIAN FEMALE, YEAR NOT LISTED

"There's skills you can learn from uni but also lots of other avenues to learn and gain experience."

BLACK FEMALE, YEAR 12

Many additional comments for those who selected a 3 for this question were simply "I don't know".

POSITIVE RESPONSES

Even though the single most popular option was moderate (3), the majority of participants answered positively to this question, responding with either a 4 or 5.

A predominance of students commented that their reasoning for this was the experience provided by a university course and this is reflected in other responses to the survey, explored in sections above.

NEGATIVE RESPONSES

While fewer participants answered negatively (either a 1 or 2) to this question, there was enough of a negative response (17.7%) to be statistically significant. It is notable however, that Asian participants were proportionally more positive in general than all other groups.

Participants' reasoning for choosing 1 or 2 varies, though many of these participants did not provide an answer to the follow up question asking why they answered the way that they did. However, a theme appears as many seem to highlight the need for "skills" and "experience".

Findings

The findings of this survey indicate that there are significant differences in attitudes towards and perceptions of the screen industries across different racial groups. In particular, this research has revealed the following key points:

- All groups agree in their opinion that getting a job in the screen industries is very difficult
- Most groups agree that a degree is useful for obtaining work; however, participants in the Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group categories were less likely to think this
- Asian and White participants both felt that "Relevant Experience" is significantly more crucial when it comes to acquiring a job in the screen industries; Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group and Black participants, however, felt that "Who You Know" was more important.
- Participants from Asian, Black, and Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Groups all ranked "What You Look Like" as a significantly larger barrier than did White participants, with Asian participants in particular being twice as likely to be concerned about this as compared to their White peers
- "Finding What Jobs Are Available" ranked highly among all groups as a significant barrier to obtaining work in the screen industries
- Interest in the screen industries in general is significantly lower in the responses of Asian participants than all other groups, while it is significantly higher in the responses of Black participants than all other groups.
- Asian participants were much less likely to identify themselves within the existing screen industries than all other participants, while Black participants were much more likely to do so.
- Black participants were more influenced by social media than any other group, rating it almost twice as influential as White participants (the next highest group for this particular marker). Black participants also rated social media as more influential than both "Friends" (the only group to do so) and "Teachers"
- The largest influence across all groups on career choice was "Likes/Interests", except for Asian participants. In the case of Asian participants, the largest influence on career choice was "Academic Ability"
- Family" was the third largest influence on career choice over
- White participants were much less likely to say they were influenced by "Family" than any other group, while Asian and Mixed Race/Other Ethnic Group participants were the most likely
- Both Asian female and White female participants were least likely to feel that people like them work in the screen industries

Conclusions & Recommendations

Improving the diversity of the screen industries' workforce is crucial to ensure that the sector accurately reflects our society and flourishes both creatively and economically. Wider diversity brings better representation and inclusion, authentic storytelling, creative innovation, expanded audiences, social impact and cultural enrichment.

It is apparent from the host of initiatives aimed at building a more representative workforce that many in the sector recognise the need to change but this study suggests that a broadening of participation needs to start much sooner than post-16.

The findings of this research indicate that there are very specific things which the majority of students, and in particular the majority of under-represented students, feel are most important for pursuing careers within the screen industries. Namely, participants valued "Relevant Experience" most highly, followed closely by "Finding What Jobs Are Available". The sector and educational establishments need to focus on and highlight these two areas.

Furthermore, if the sector hopes to attract new entrants from under-represented backgrounds, it must be aware of the different attitudes and barriers, both real and perceived, affecting those groups and be willing to address those concerns head on. All staff should not only be aware of these barriers but should engage in education and training in order to fully understand and be able to help young people who are facing a variety of different barriers to entry to careers in the screen industries.

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sign_ Screen Industries Growth Network

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF DIVERSITY SCHEMES ON CAREER TRAJECTORIES

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Dr Anna Einarsdóttir

University of York

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About SIGN

The Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN) is a unique, business-facing initiative supporting the TV, film and games industries in Yorkshire and the Humber. SIGN aims to make this region the UK's centre for digital creativity, and a model of diverse and inclusive activity. In order to do this, SIGN connects companies, support agencies and universities through a programme of training, business development, research and evaluation.

SIGN is a £6.4m project, starting in summer 2020, and funded by Research England, the University of York and its partners. The University of York leads the initiative, working with Screen Yorkshire and eight other Yorkshire universities. An extensive network of collaboration ensures that SIGN is equipped to deliver maximum impact across the region.

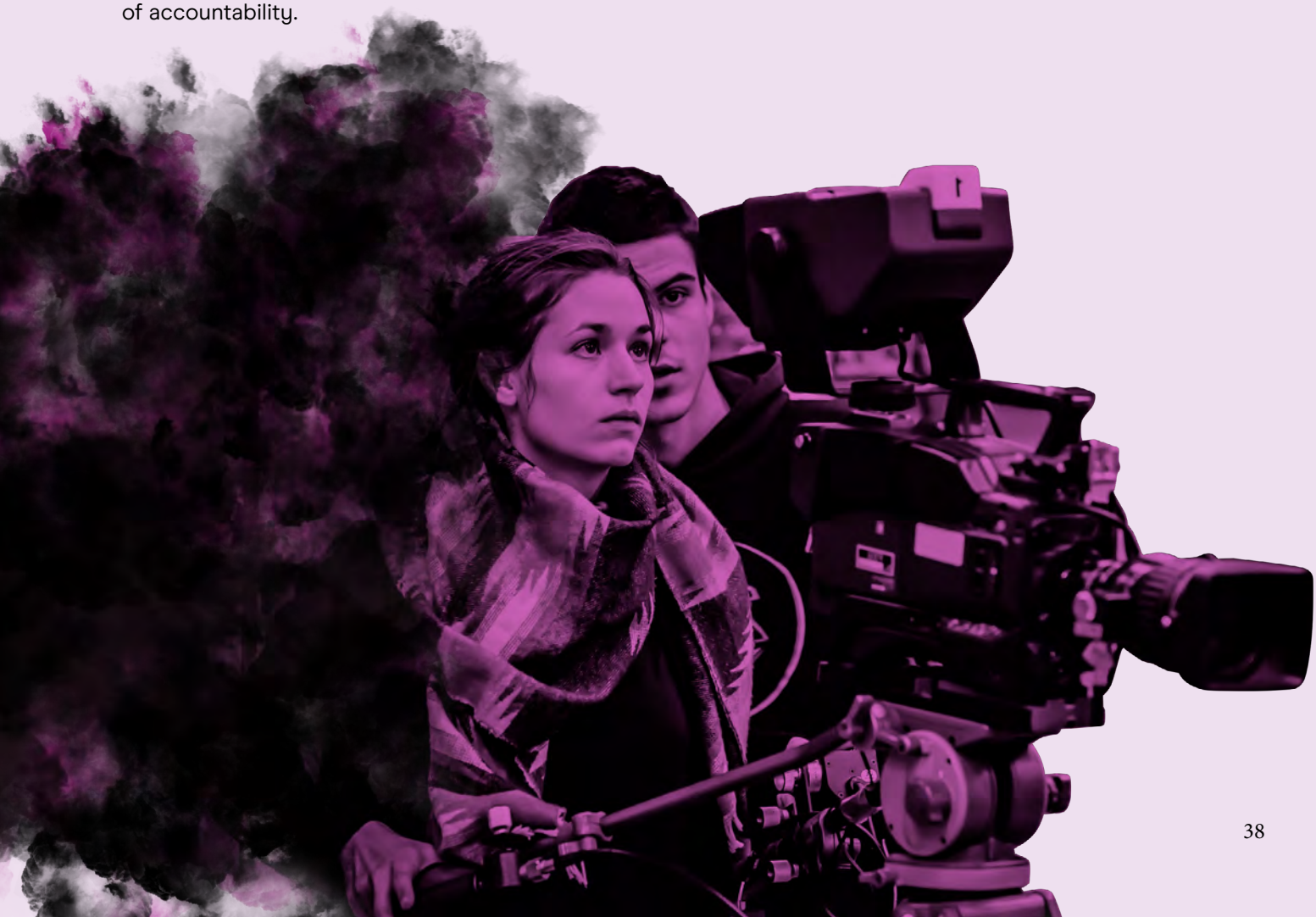
Report published summer 2023

Executive summary

This report summarises the findings of a study into the impact of diversity schemes on career progression in the screen industries. Funded by Research England, the research was carried out by the Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN), based at the University of York. The report draws on interviews with organisers (eight) and participants (27) of four diversity schemes (two entry-level and two mid-career) in the Yorkshire and Humber region. Interviews focused on how schemes helped participants from under-represented backgrounds to overcome barriers to access and progression in the screen industries, exploring the extent to which schemes were responsible for outcomes since they took place.

Our report shows:

- Schemes, when run well by people committed to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles, provide valuable experiences that can positively impact people's immediate career trajectories. However, structural inequalities continue to exist, limiting career progression.
- Access to work and successful career advancement in TV and film are shaped by enabling factors. Participation in individual diversity schemes is only one of them, alongside a wider set of interventions, and personal circumstances such as proximity to work, employment status, financial resources and existing networks.
- Schemes have the potential to improve industry cultures and practices by promoting supportive and inclusive values. However, to be meaningful, this work needs to be accompanied by a culture of accountability.



Diversity schemes in the screen industries

Building a career in the screen industries can be hard. Firstly, the range of job opportunities available is often not understood beyond those in a show's title sequence. Next, it is not always clear what training is required for entry: employers often expect a university degree and commonly a work placement, but universities are expensive and good placements are rare. Even when someone has the required skills, informal hiring practices exclude those who do not know the right people to get them through the door, and progression depends on who you have worked and socialised with. Finally, hours are long and intense, with those unable to commit being stigmatised and/or excluded.

Together, these conditions mean that the sector is rife with inequalities. Previous research tells us that those who can meet the demands of work in the screen industries are more likely to be white, male, middle class and without caring responsibilities (Friedman and Laurison, 2020; Brook et al., 2020). People outside of this norm – the working class, women and people of marginalised genders, people of colour, those with disabilities and those with caring responsibilities – struggle to access and progress in the screen industries. Consequently, it proves harder to address the industries' critical skills gap and shortage of culturally diverse products.

these conditions mean that the sector is rife with **inequalities**

In an attempt to address this lack of diversity, organisations use varied interventions, generally referred to as diversity schemes. The schemes tend to focus on addressing individuals' lack of resources and connections, while not tackling more entrenched problems. As a result, diversity schemes are criticised for failing to challenge the 'structural dimensions of exclusion and inequality that remain the underpinning factor in film and TV diversity' (Nwonka and Malik, 2021, p.5).

However, in a report commissioned by SIGN, Ozimek (2020) underlines the difficulties in assessing such claims, given the lack of evidence. The report further highlights shortfalls in research such as these: it tends to be limited to issues of gender and race and is not intersectional; it is focused on career entry as opposed to issues over the life course; it provides limited evidence on the regions outside London/the South East; and it lacks qualitative data that centre the experiences of workers.

To address the evidence gap and gain a more nuanced understanding of what diversity schemes are able to achieve, SIGN commissioned research into the impact of diversity schemes on participants and their career trajectories. This report explains how we conducted our research, details the schemes and discusses examples of good practice in the running of schemes. The report also looks at the activities employed by the schemes, highlights the challenges faced by participants once schemes are completed and shares success stories. Finally, a number of recommendations are made for future interventions.

What we did

We interviewed a total of 35 people running or taking part in four diversity schemes[1] for TV and film[2] in the Yorkshire and Humber region. Five interviews (with a total of eight people) were conducted with scheme organisers to understand the values, experience and organising principles behind the delivery of the schemes. Participants of schemes were initially recruited via the scheme organisers,[3] with those interviewed early encouraging others to take part, instigating a number of additional interviews. These 27 interviews looked to understand participants' backgrounds and employment history, their experiences of taking part in the schemes and the outcomes of taking part, especially the ways in which the schemes helped them access and progress in work in TV and film. Several participants had already worked in the screen industries for some years and many had taken part in multiple diversity initiatives. This offered extensive insight into this field of research. Overall, the participants were highly reflective about their place in the screen industries.

Together, organiser and participant interviews were designed to explore whether and how the interventions addressed a lack of training; limited or no access to social networks; and financial hardship faced by participants, and, as a result, the extent to which interventions improved career prospects. Other findings reveal more detail about what makes a diversity scheme impactful.

This offered **extensive** insight into this field of research

[1] Two entry-level and two mid-career schemes.

[2] No diversity schemes in other screen industries were suitable for study at the time of research.

[3] Scheme participants were offered payment for taking part, in the form of a £20 voucher. The decision to incentivise interviews was made in response to our experiences of recruitment in previous research, and advice from a scheme organiser who indicated that without payment people would be reluctant to volunteer their time.

Who was involved

The research concerned two entry-level and two mid-career schemes from the Yorkshire and Humber region, with a total of 27 participants interviewed. Each of the four schemes is described below, with details of its aims, target group(s), content, format, duration and (ongoing) support.

The schemes

'Get into TV'[4] is a six-month programme designed for 18–30-year-olds in a specific area of Yorkshire and the Humber. The aim of the scheme is to tackle the 'actual and perceived barriers' that young people face when considering a career in TV and film. The programme covers information about the industries, skills training, and support to build confidence and resilience. Participants are mentored and have the opportunity to apply for a paid placement at a production studio. An alumni network is active in supporting participants after course completion.

'Screen Industries Grad Scheme' is a six-month programme for recent university graduates who are based in the Yorkshire and Humber region and are from one or more under-represented groups. The aim of the scheme is to 'furnish participants with some tools and techniques to help them feel more confident pushing into the screen industries'. This is achieved by developing participants' transferable skills, building their understanding of what personal capacities are needed to operate in the screen industries and informing them of the range of roles available. There is no alumni network.

'Career Accelerator' is a six-month programme that targets those in mid-career who have developed skill sets and experience but struggle to break through and/or achieve financial stability. The programme is focused on supporting teams of content developers to come up with ideas that are then pitched to industry. This is facilitated by a range of activities including workshops, keynote speakers, interaction with industry (including experience of pitching), mentoring, and a £5,000 development bursary for each team. An alumni network is active in supporting participants after course completion, and a grassroots network has developed.

'Balanced Sound' is an eight-week programme for people of marginalised genders who want to transition to/return to working in sound in the screen industries and radio/podcasting. It looks to address lack of opportunities in sound, providing experiences of the different aspects of sound production. There is no alumni network.

[4] Names of schemes are pseudonyms.

The participants

Despite the small sample, the data presented below give some indication of the diversity of participants. For clarity, information is sometimes split between the entry-level and mid-career schemes to indicate the differences in cohorts, and, whenever it proved possible and meaningful, presented intersectionally.

Table 1. Gender composition

	Female	Male	Non-binary
'Grad Scheme'	2	3	0
'Get into TV'	6	1	0
'Career Accelerator'	5	4	0
'Balanced Sound'	4	N/A	2
Totals	17	8	2

Of the early-career schemes, 'Get into TV' initially targeted those between 18 and 24 but later expanded to 18–30. 'Screen Industries Grad Scheme' was available to those over 30, but the sample did not include anyone over 34. In contrast, those on mid-career schemes range more in age.

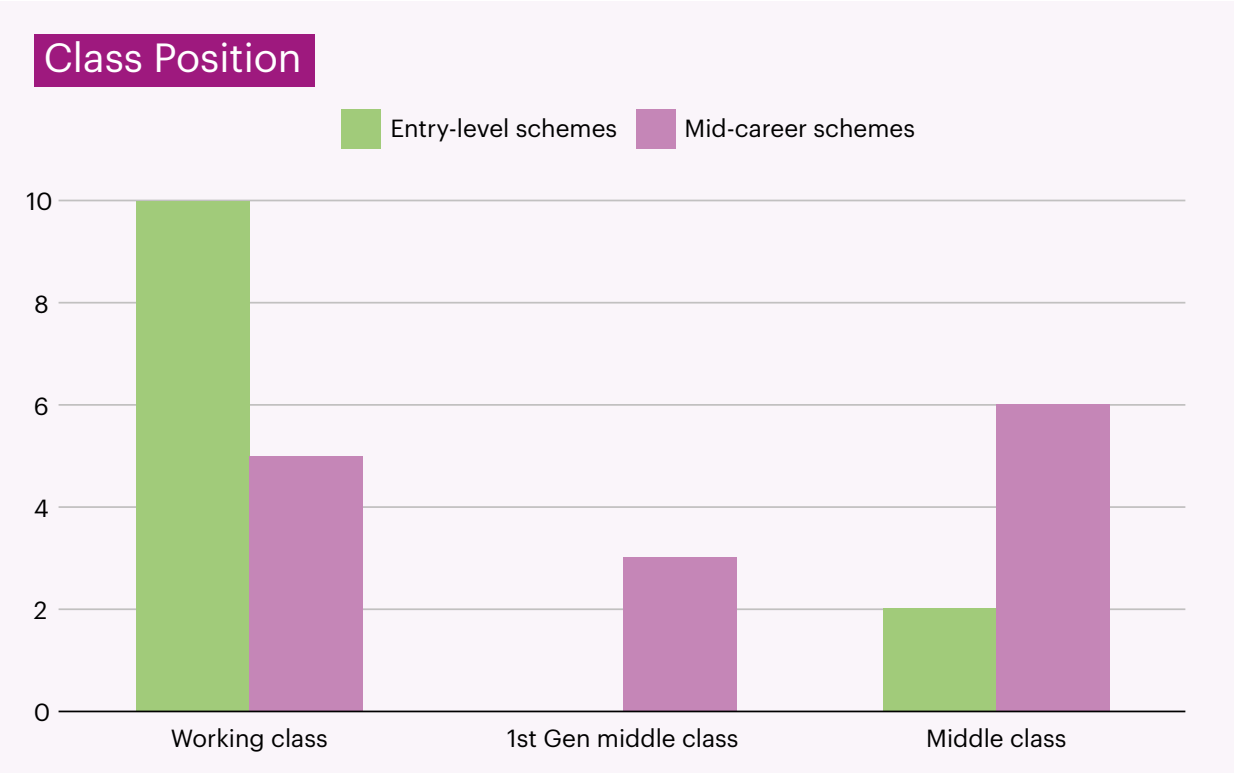
Figure 1. Age of participants in entry-level and mid-career schemes

Compared to the workforce average of 19%, and for TV just 7%[5], the sample has a higher disability rate of 33% (9 out of 27 participants).

Four participants reported some form of caring responsibilities for adults. Interviews revealed that the degree of care required varied, but in each instance the ability to commit to work has previously been affected. Two male participants have dependent children. Interestingly, no women in the sample have dependent children. This could potentially indicate that those who do may not be able to undertake screen industry work.

Self-described class categorisations indicate that while the majority of participants of entry-level schemes were working class, those from mid-career schemes were predominantly middle class. This suggests both that the entry-level scheme organisers have made efforts to recruit from under-represented groups and that by mid-career working-class people may not be able to sustain careers, issues we return to later.

Figure 2. Class position in entry-level and mid-career schemes

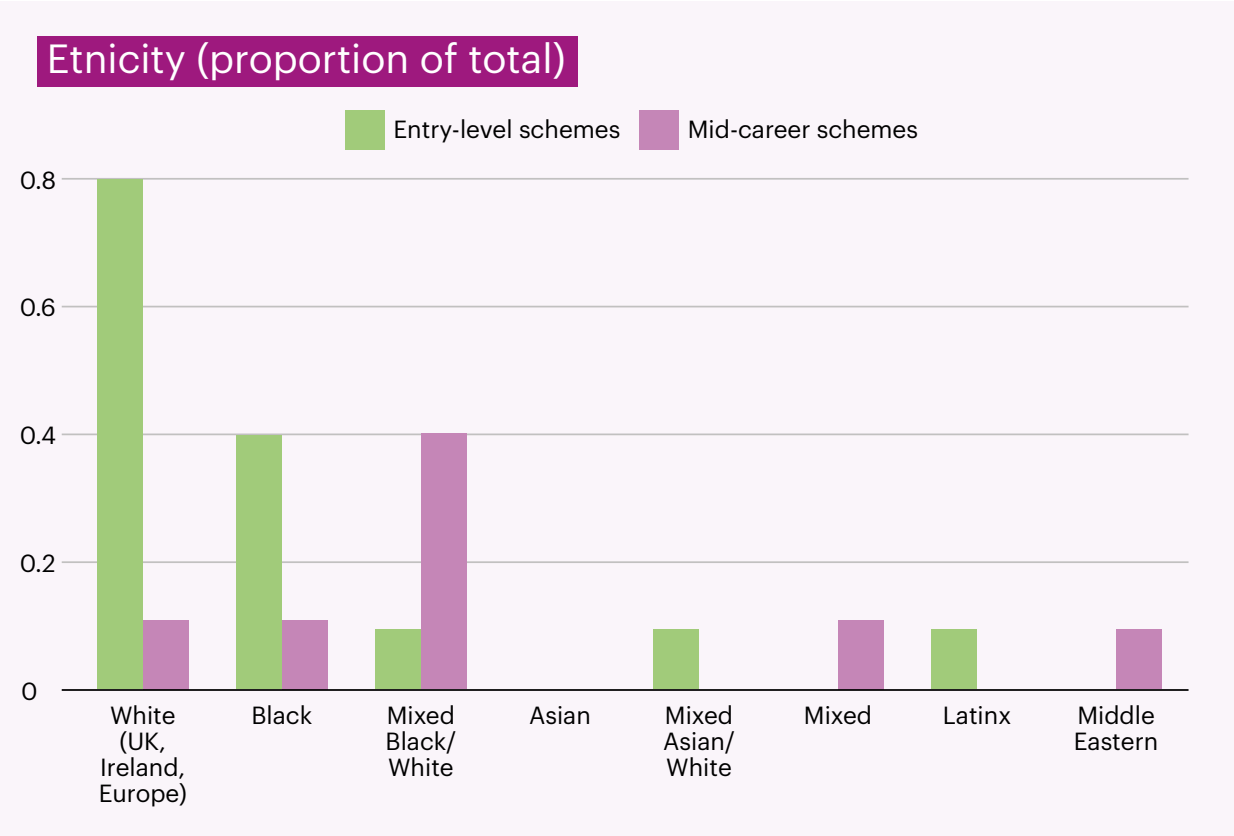


The sample is less white (66%) than the population of Yorkshire and the Humber (85.4%[6]) or the TV and film workforce (86%[5]). However, given that 8.9%[6] of the region's population is of Asian heritage, there is under-representation in those interviewed, with just two participants identifying as having a mixed ethnicity. Similar to the trend in class position, there is a greater proportion of white people in the sample on the mid-career schemes, potentially indicating that by mid-career more people of colour have been excluded or driven away from the screen industries.

[5] Ofcom (2020). *Diversity and equal opportunities in television and radio 2019/2020.*

[6] 2021 Census data.

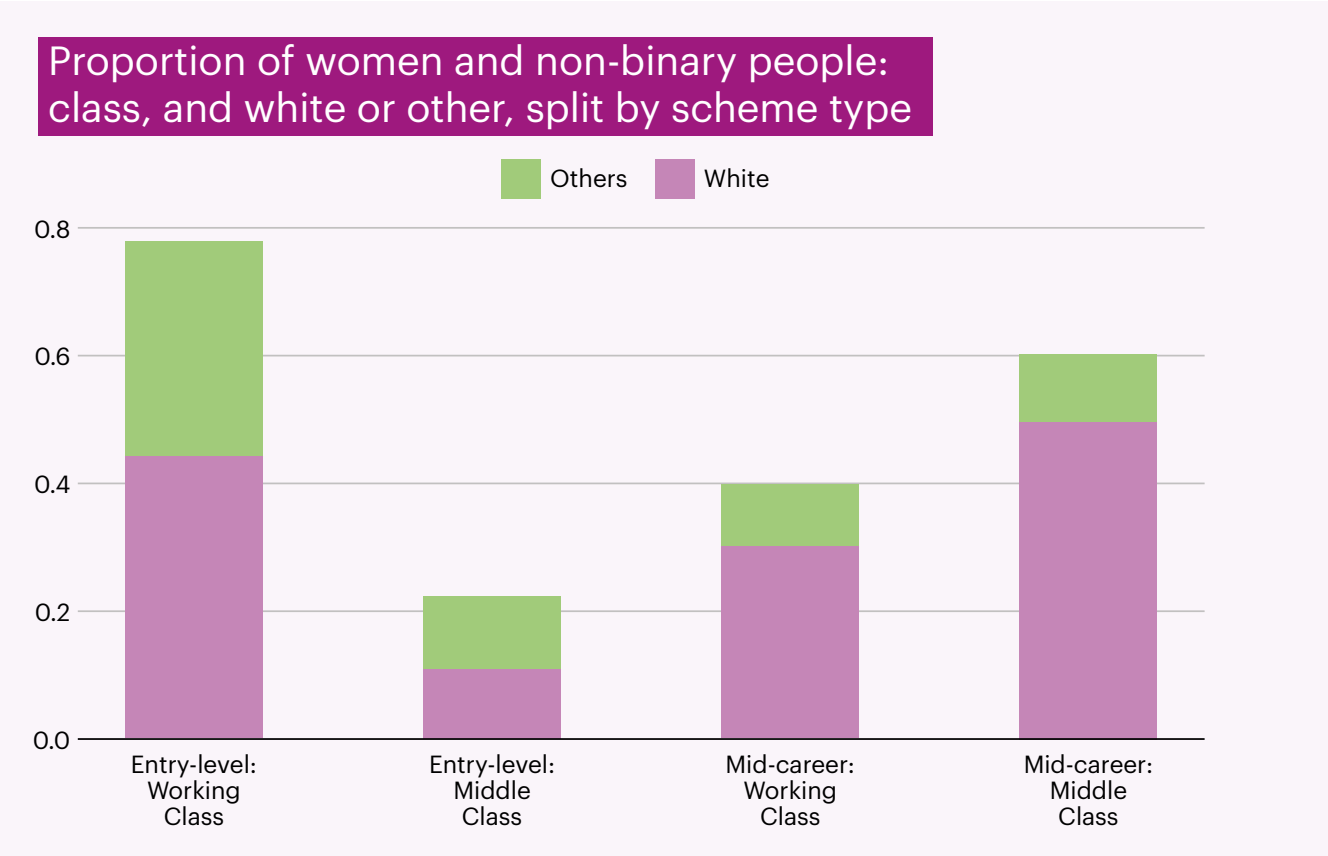
Figure 3. Ethnicity in entry-level and mid-career schemes



Comparing gender, class and ethnicity (white and all 'others'), we can see that the sample becomes more middle class and more white as it moves from entry-level to mid-career (a proxy for age). While the sample size means these figures are not statistically significant, the data indicate that by the time people reach mid-career, those from working-class and non-white backgrounds are increasingly under-represented.

Figure 4. Proportion of white or other working-class men by scheme type

Figure 5. Proportion of white or other working-class women and non-binary people by scheme type



Findings

Schemes are not the answer to structural inequalities. Nevertheless, schemes offer valuable experiences that can have positive impacts on careers after completion. Furthermore, our findings show that by fostering supportive and collaborative values and nurturing new regional networks, the schemes have the potential to move beyond supporting individuals to addressing industry cultures and practices. That said, entrenched barriers to access and progression in the screen industries should not be underplayed, with our findings highlighting a range of challenges that diversity schemes fail to address.

In the following section we discuss planning, recruitment, delivery and overall impact of the four schemes.

Foundations for impactful diversity schemes

Diversity schemes are often sold as addressing the lack of skills, networks and money that people from under-represented backgrounds need in order to pursue a career in the screen industries. However, the research identified a number of other key elements of the preparation and delivery of schemes that have a big effect on their impact, in relation to both participants' experiences and the 'return on investment' for organisers.

Scheme personnel: values and experience

Different personnel brought a variety of experiences and expertise to the planning and delivery of their programmes. This had an impact on the quality of the experience for participants.

While all the schemes aimed to improve diversity in the screen industries, there were noticeable differences in what drove the formation and delivery of the schemes. Three of the four schemes had a clear social justice focus, shaped by the organisers and their experiences of marginalisation in the screen industries. Personal investment of this kind shone through in their delivery, which, to various degrees, communicated issues of inequality and the scheme's mission to tackle them alongside participants. In contrast, the fourth scheme was developed by career specialists who had an interest in expanding career options for recent graduates but were less focused on issues around social justice in the industries. Participant interviews suggest that this lack of focus on tackling issues of marginalisation meant the scheme felt less supportive and less personal.

Who planned and delivered the programme of activities was significant. When this was done by industry professionals with a focus on EDI, the programmes seemed both more relevant and more impactful. In contrast, when activities were outsourced in order to access relevant experience, the training turned out to be of variable quality, with some trainers displaying attitudes that seem to clash with the values of the intervention. One of the participants explained:

> ***I felt that some of his [the trainer's] opinions were quite dated. Like telling ladies that they should smile. I thought that was something just weird to say, like, 'Oh, you should always be smiling, because if you are smiling, everyone will enjoy working with you.' I just thought, that is an odd thing to say, you know.***
>
> 1-P-2

Even in those schemes organised by industry experts, some sessions that were run by external facilitators did not live up to the values that the schemes espoused, a point we return to later. Clearly, to ensure that the planning and delivery of activities echo the values of the scheme, employing the right people is key. When schemes capitalise on the expertise and experience of industry professionals who are committed to EDI principles, this appears to improve the overall experiences of participants. However, reliance on a few exceptional individuals, as had been the case with the schemes researched, is a risky strategy and means that the sustainability of schemes is threatened when people move on. We agree with Marsden et al. (2022), who argue that to address this and to maintain good practice, institutional knowledge needs to be developed so that others can continue when individual personnel leave.

to **ensure** that the planning and delivery of activities echo the values of the scheme, employing the right people is key

Recruiting the right participants

The value of the schemes is determined by whether they recruit those who would benefit most from interventions and who have an interest in pursuing a career in the screen industries once the schemes are over. However, findings indicate that there has been varied success in recruiting participants who are in most need of this support and who do indeed want to pursue screen industry roles.

How schemes are marketed is critical, especially when engaging with hard-to-reach groups. All schemes used mailing lists and/or social media to advertise. As a result, the promotion was limited to those who had already signed up for the mailing list and those following specific social media channels. However, one entry-level scheme, 'Get into TV', adopted the principle that 'if someone is already on the mailing list, they're not people that we need to target for this programme'. In fact, they went to extra lengths in their outreach efforts:

> ***We didn't advertise in* The Guardian *or anything like that. I went out in my car with leaflets and put them in cafes, and libraries, and places where people from working-class backgrounds would go. For instance, in [suburb], there was a cafe in the middle … The local library, that's got a job shop in there. We even did sessions in a Jobcentre and got people who were unemployed to come to tell them about the scheme, to say, this won't affect your benefits if you do it, but it's going to give you another skill, why not? If you've never thought about it, do it. So it was just important that we got out there to marginalised groups the best that we could to introduce them to something that they'd never had before.***
>
> 3-O-2

Consequently, their cohort captured more of the diversity that it intended to than other schemes' cohorts did.

How applicants are selected is also important: firstly, to make sure that participants with targeted backgrounds are included, and secondly, to check whether they are interested in pursuing work in the screen industries.

Two schemes relied solely on online forms with no follow-up interviews. This approach appeared to be ineffective at teasing out how suitable and motivated applicants were. As a result, a number of participants had little or no interest in pursuing careers in the sector. In contrast, the two other schemes used some form of discussion or workshop process to understand the suitability and aptitude of participants, thus achieving recruitment of highly invested participants.

Finally, it was clear that there were a number of participants across all schemes who, other than having marginalised status as women or LGBTQ+, had a range of privileges and prior successes. This suggests that selecting applicants can be tricky: if the aim of the schemes is to better reflect the general population within the screen industries workforce, then diversity criteria need to be considered intersectionally, to include factors such as socioeconomic status. However, getting this right presents challenges as multiple checks would be needed that would be both labour-intensive and intrusive.

complimenting online accessibility with some element of face-to-face would be **beneficial**

The pros and cons of online versus face-to-face delivery

Various iterations of schemes have, initially due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, been conducted online. Online delivery allowed those with limitations related to travel, caring responsibilities and health issues to take part. Participants from 'Balanced Sound' found that the online format was more inclusive for these reasons. After Covid, two schemes, 'Get into TV' and 'Career Accelerator', continued to offer participants access to the sessions online. One adopted a hybrid format and the other allowed participants to 'Zoom in' if they were unable to attend the face-to-face sessions.

Yet there was a downside to online delivery. Many participants found it somewhat awkward. One participant explained that online communication made it harder to engage with other people, and made them less confident to contribute:

> ***When it's online it's sometimes a little bit – it's not the same as being in person. It's always a little bit harder … With the online stuff, I always feel a little bit more shy and reserved than I would do if I was in a room with people, but that's just the nature of online, I think.***
>
> 4-P-6

Others found it challenging to develop connections with other participants, especially in the absence of 'in-between time' when sessions were online only and run as lectures, as explained here:

> ***I think it's difficult [to make connections] when you've got to do the course over Zoom, and you don't get that sort of in-between time, kind of socialising with people, and maybe there wasn't as much of a camaraderie as there would be if we'd been doing that in person.***
>
> 4-P-3

In contrast, in-person activities were, without exception, welcomed by the participants. In fact, being in the same physical space seemed especially rewarding:

> ***I really enjoyed it at the beginning … like, meeting everybody. We had a day [where] all the cohort got together. I really enjoyed meeting everybody and having the opportunity to just meet with no pressure.***
>
> 2-P-6

Having dedicated time for people to get to know each other was seen as valuable, particularly in relation to developing a sense of belonging. This not only improved the overall experience of schemes but also helped to build foundations for horizontal networks that supported careers once a scheme had finished. Given the central role of networking in the screen industries, our findings show that complimenting the advantages of online accessibility with at least some element of face-to-face events, that dedicates time to cohort bonding, would be beneficial for participants' careers.

Facilitated discussion on marginalisation

Despite the positive experiences of getting to know each other, some of the participants felt that there was a missed opportunity to discuss experiences of marginalisation, which could have developed deeper bonds. When asked about whether there was any affinity between participants, this participant compared their experience to that of taking part in another scheme:

> ***No. I felt it just felt quite distant between us, especially as opposed to [a different] course that I was on where we discussed a lot of difficult stuff. We were discussing very openly barriers and difficulties in trying to learn or achieve what we wanted in our careers, and so that leaves a certain air of vulnerability and opens the floodgates into communication and bonding. We didn't have that on the course.***
>
> 4-P-1

It was noted that in 'Career Accelerator' people shied away from difficult discussions about differences and inequalities. One participant with a wealth of experience in working in diversity issues in another industry explained:

> ***I really wish they'd really got into the under-representation conversation. We kind of pussyfooted around it, but we need to really … talk about it. Because everybody in that room has a possibility of change … If they're all booking people and training people or building teams, every single one of them has a responsibility to change. And chatting around it is not going to help us change.***
>
> 2-P-7

Considering the shared experiences of under-representation among the cohorts, facilitating discussions on marginalisation and solidarity, while challenging, could have been rewarding, and could have galvanised people into working together and supporting each other once the scheme was finished. For this deeper cohort development to be achieved, the capacities of organisers and facilitators need to be enhanced so they can support these discussions.

Programmes of activity

The main programmes of activity focused on addressing the perceived 'deficits' in individuals' capacities that are thought to limit their ability to succeed in the screen industries. These capacities include skills training, industry knowledge, networks and financial resources. In addition, this section considers another aspect of schemes, which is the work done on promoting supportive and collaborative values. This work, alongside the new regional networks that some schemes have formed, has the potential to move beyond the individual to influence organisational cultures, breaking down barriers to participation for marginalised groups. The degree to which this work is successful is discussed.

Free access

The financial cost of training and other career development activities, whether via university or other paid courses, excludes many from participation in the screen industries. To remove this impediment, the schemes were offered free of charge. However, participants highlighted how taking part in a scheme meant that they had to turn down work to attend sessions or spend time on development tasks. This was especially challenging for those on 'Career Accelerator' because their programme was more intensive than the others, and they were the most reliant on their own earning power.

Developing industry knowledge

Scheme organisers recognised that careers services and universities do not do enough to inform people about the range of roles and modes of working in the screen industries, an issue echoed in other research (ScreenSkills, 2022a; Jones et al., 2023). To address this, trainers, guest speakers and mentors were brought in to share insights and inform participants of available opportunities. For many, this proved to be an 'eyeopener', and for others, it helped to broaden their horizons:

> ***Being exposed to those kinds of worlds … we didn't even know those career paths existed, that these people existed, these companies existed. So that was all really cool … Yes, they tried to really diversify it. They were very interested in showing us that it's not just about writing and directing and acting, that there are all these other routes that you can take into it.***
>
> 3-P-6

Skills training

Critical skills shortages have been reported in the screen industries (ScreenSkills, 2022b). At the same time, accessing skills training can be tricky, especially if you are not doing a specialist degree or do not have the ability to pay for other courses (Jones et al., 2023). Moreover, there is an acknowledgement that a university degree does not always sufficiently prepare people for work (Carey et al., 2017). Consequently, skills development played a major role in each scheme. Skills development focused on a combination of the soft skills needed for navigating the industries and technical skills, with different schemes offering different emphases on each. Soft skills training involved communication skills, help with CVs and interviews, and resilience training. Technical skills support ranged from camera training to help with editing. This participant indicated what she gained from the experience of being given free access to a prestigious film course as part of the scheme:

> ***I did get to do a film course, so it's how to use a camera and how to shoot and stuff … that was really helpful and beneficial [for] learning and developing skills.***
>
> 3-P-7

Mentorships

Three of the four schemes offered mentorships with industry experts. Different mentors offered different things, ranging from opportunities to chat about work – where mentors provided insights into the industries, structured skills training such as pitch development, useful contacts to get work, and signposting – to other help. When mentorships went well, participants were noticeably enthusiastic about the benefits that they brought, clearly being inspired by experienced professionals. For some, help has also extended beyond the schemes, providing continued value to participants' careers and, as described below, a foothold in industry:

> ***We were all assigned a mentor. My mentor … I still talk to [him] now. It was only meant to be your six-month mentorship but he helped me. [After] I did my internship with [mentor's company], which was an edit assistant thing, he helped me … get on their books as an actual freelancer. He got me six weeks of work, paid. He really helped with advice and stuff, and gave me CV tips. We still chat now. He's still interested and everything.***
>
> 3-P-3

However, not all experiences were as positive. Some participants felt that their mentor was not as committed as they would have liked, or that sessions were not as focused on development as they could be. In some cases, the sessions felt like a chat over coffee. With clear guidelines for mentors, training and examples of good practice, these disappointing experiences could have been prevented.

Developing networks

Given the importance of networks to attaining work in the screen industries, gaining access to existing networks and developing new ones are valuable outcomes of diversity schemes. Over and above contact with industry professionals, the schemes have developed networks in two ways. Firstly, horizontal networks were developed between participants on Facebook and WhatsApp, which were used to exchange knowledge, provide support and offer work opportunities. This participant discusses how they have been able to pass on job opportunities to fellow participants when they personally have not been available:

> ***Whenever I get offered a job and I can't make it I will always turn it down and recommend someone else to help them out. On this particular occasion I recommended this person and they got the job through that. You help each other out through that, really.***
>
> 3-P-3

Another participant discussed how valuable this mutual support is, indicating both the closed nature of the industries and consequently the positive impact that having someone offering access can have on participants' careers:

> ***I think one of the biggest issues for me, personally, is a lack of a network and a lack of access … Sometimes it feels like there's a wall, you just need one person to welcome you through the wall and then you're on the inside. So I think building those networks has been really, really valuable to me and it's something that I need to continue to do, and the experience of it has been great.***
>
> 2-P-6

Secondly, where available, top-down alumni networks have shown to be valuable sources of ongoing support and opportunity. Scheme staff's roles included providing support to these networks through regular emails, phone calls and drop-ins. These have been greatly appreciated by entry-level and mid-career participants alike. Early-career participants from 'Get into TV' have benefited from additional training and work experience through the alumni network. This participant from 'Career Accelerator' indicated the value she places on the lasting support provided to help maintain the connections developed on the scheme:

> ***We've already arranged a meeting at BAFTA in November … so we're all regrouping in London to ensure we continue that relationship and to touch base, which I think is great … Yes, it hasn't just ended because the programme has ended, we are still in contact. I've met [organiser] since. I think that's the great thing. The cut-off point wasn't the cut-off point. It doesn't feel like that … It doesn't feel like the programme's ended, it still feels like there is this group of people who have got each other's backs, still with the support of [scheme and funder] on the back, which none of the other schemes I've ever been involved in has lasted this long once a scheme has ended. It [normally] very quickly drifts, whereas this still feels like, yes, there's still a connection.***
>
> 2-P-3

In contrast, for participants involved in schemes without alumni networks, there was a strong sense that once the scheme was over, any support was withdrawn. This participant highlighted what they thought was missing.

> ***It would benefit from having some kind of follow-up support, really, just like a mailing list or something that makes people aware of other opportunities coming up that are related to that. Or maybe having some kind of social check-in after we've finished, see how people are doing.***
>
> 4-P-3

When horizontal and alumni network development has been successful, participants have felt a lasting connection with the schemes. More importantly, schemes that facilitated the development of these networks have generated a greater impact on short-term career trajectories because barriers to access have been broken down and opportunities for work have been shared. While it is too early to say whether these opportunities will have a lasting impact on participants' access to work in the screen industries, the data from schemes without good networks signal less chance of career progression.

the most engaging and impactful **experiences** came from work placements

Placements

Far and away the most engaging and impactful experiences came from work placements. These opportunities incorporated acquisition of industry knowledge, skills training, development of networks and that all-important CV-boosting 'credit'. This hands-on experience also provided the best opportunity to develop the 'cultural fit' that enabled participants, to some extent, to integrate themselves into the workforce.

Only one of the three early-career schemes, 'Get into TV', offered placements. These were paid. The following quotes indicate the benefits for participants.

First, the benefits of practical experiences were explained:

> ***I did manage to get a placement on a three-day film set, which was probably the most useful thing for me because I actually was able to get onto a set and see how it worked. That was really useful … What I got from it was that practical experience.***
>
> 3-P-2

Participants from 'Get into TV' would often continue in paid work for the company after the scheme stopped paying for them, indicating that placements are an effective way of getting participants into work, at least in the short term:

> ***The first month I actually did as a traineeship through 'Get into TV'. So 'Get into TV' essentially paid my first month's wage, and then I carried on working with them. I were there for ten months, I think. Yes, I definitely wouldn't have found out about that job role without 'Get into TV'.***
>
> 3-P-7

The connections made on set with those established in the industries have been valuable for participants, with this participant discussing how she developed a mentor relationship with someone from her placement:

> ***The third AD on that film, I'm still in touch with, because she kind of agreed to be my mentor after the work experience had ended, and we still keep in touch. I would say that was really pivotal.***
>
> 3-P-5

While placements were undoubtedly a strength of 'Get into TV', their cost to the scheme must have been considerable, and participants had to interview for a limited number of roles. This cost makes scaling these opportunities up to more people a major challenge.

Promoting supportive and collaborative values – benefits and challenges

Beyond supporting participants' individual development, two of the schemes included activities that had the potential to change wider organisational cultures. These related to actively promoting supportive and collaborative values that worked to counter the individualised and highly competitive culture of freelance work within the TV and film industries.

'Get into TV' did this by promoting a culture of care and support through its activities that implicitly communicated values that challenge the dominant culture. This quote is indicative of the support that was offered:

> ***[Organiser 1] would say, 'If you want help with CVs or anything like that,' to always drop her a message, or … she'd do practice interviews and things like that… They weren't just trying to get [us] in the industry. They also tried to better us as people … so that was really nice … I know I wouldn't have been where I am now if it wasn't for [Organiser 1] and [Organiser 2].***
>
> 3-P-1

As discussed earlier, the alumni network of 'Get into TV' remains a way for participants to benefit from ongoing support.

While the values of 'Get into TV' were expressed implicitly through organisers' actions, 'Career Accelerator' did explicit 'values work'. A day was devoted to creating a manifesto intended to shape how people treated each other throughout the programme. A number of participants found this work engaging and valuable, discussing how they would carry it forward into their professional lives:

> ***It felt really, really good, like this is actually really important, I wish people did more of this … I think about how I want to do things on my own projects, and it reassures me of the things that I want to do, [and how] others out there in the industry believe in the values I believe in … I've turned down a few things just because people aren't aligned with my values***
>
> 2-P-8

Another participant discussed the potential legacy of the scheme:

> ***If it keeps forming these networks of people who have all signed up to this manifesto of nurturing and kindness, then maybe it would have an impact … I definitely think there's the potential for it to change the way that we're working … The industry is made up of individuals and if those individuals are valuing kindness and compassion and collaboration, then that's a good thing.***
>
> 2-P-5

This quote highlights that 'values work' has the potential to move beyond just individual outcomes, to include/address wider industry culture: not through individuals' careers, but through a 'critical mass' of people striving to improve cultures and practices of work.

Despite this good work, there were times when 'values work' was undermined, compromising the experiences of the schemes and perceptions of industry. As previously mentioned, the trainer who suggested that women 'should always be smiling, because if you are smiling, everyone will enjoy working with you' (1-P-2) was not using language that one would associate with an EDI intervention. The damage this sort of stereotyping/sexualising of women can do to the experience of a scheme, and its reputation, should not be understated.

More fundamental concerns were voiced by a couple of participants. One shared their misgivings about doing 'values work' when people were not held accountable to the agreed values:

> ***It's bullshit! … Because [they're] not carrying it through! You talk [about values] one day, and then everyone leaves that [behind] … People behaved in a very different [way] … [T]here's some unpacking to do for some people's language and behaviours … they were never challenged.***
>
> 2-P-7

These misgivings extended to the actions of scheme organisers. Another participant highlighted how these values were not upheld by organisers when guest facilitators behaved inappropriately:

> ***I did my pitch … and they said that instead of doing queer content, I should make it more relatable by making it straight because then everyone could relate to it, and it felt a little bit like, 'that's homophobic' but okay … and no one from [the scheme] said anything or interjected … and then the next group after me who pitched, [the facilitators] also said some weird stuff about trans and race because that's what theirs was about – and again, no one intervened.***
>
> 2-P-4

Without accountability, 'values work' risked being undone. Therefore, schemes need people who have the capacity and confidence to challenge poor behaviour, as well as the time and space to make sure lessons are learned. This way, the intervention becomes meaningful.

Summary

Overall, participants found great value in participation in the schemes. Interviews suggest that the aims of the schemes have been met. Activities have raised awareness of the range of roles available, helped participants develop soft and technical skills, provided an element of practical experience and developed networks to support participants going forward. Despite some misgivings by participants, two of the schemes have shown promise in effecting wider cultural shifts within the industries that could lead to more sustainable work practices. While there is room for improvement on a range of elements, the evidence suggests that the good practice shared in the interviews goes a long way to addressing the 'deficits' in skills, networks and income that are barriers to participation in the screen industries.

However, it is worth noting that three of the four schemes were completed within the past year, meaning that we do not know whether the positive initial outcomes will stick. Evidence from the fourth scheme, which has been running for over three years, indicates that despite early successes in getting people into work, longer-term positive outcomes have not been seen. Continued barriers to access and progression mean that many participants' careers have stalled, or participants have stagnated in entry-level roles, revealing the limits of what a diversity scheme can achieve in the face of pervasive inequalities.

Challenges that limit impact

Buoyed by the support and encouragement offered by the schemes, many participants left them excited about what the future might hold for them in the screen industries. However, for most, the sobering reality of work in this highly competitive and unequal sector has meant that their work towards a career in TV and film has been compromised by practical and cultural barriers. This section brings to the fore those challenges that the diversity schemes could not address, indicating the limits to the impact that schemes can have and therefore why more transformational change is needed to make the screen industries equitable.

participants found great value in **participation** in the schemes

Exclusionary cultures

Despite the schemes going some way to preparing participants for work in the screen industries, organisational cultures and informal hiring practices that rely on old networks continue to exclude participants of diversity schemes from equal participation in the workforce. Of those who have gained access to the industries since completing an entry-level scheme, the vast majority have remained at junior level, sometimes for two or more years. This suggests that the help that the schemes have been able to provide does not seem to extend beyond entry-level roles. Participants have expressed frustration at the nepotism that they have encountered, witnessing how this has helped better-connected colleagues who started at the same time as they did. Participants from working-class Northern backgrounds have felt out of place in industries that are still middle class and London-centric, even when shows are produced in the North:

> ***I've worked on shows where I have felt like the odd one out … I did a show, it was filmed up here, but they brought all the crew from the South and they were all private school crew. It was a bit weird because they didn't understand my accent for a start.***
>
> 3-P-3

Another participant reflected on what this sort of marginalisation means for the cultural outputs:

> ***I've sat in roundtable situations where, one, I've been the only person who talks like I talk; two, I've been the only person who is an older female; and, three, I've been the only person who's not really middle class … That is reflected in a lot of the content that is being produced…***
>
> 2-P-9

Experiences such as these, which leave participants feeling marginalised by people from outside the region, are not conducive to the development of a thriving regional industry that is representative of the regional workforce. In the wake of the relocation of broadcasters and the work that local initiatives like SIGN have engaged in, it remains to be seen whether a shift to using local, representative talent will follow.

Black participants discussed their experiences of feeling out of place as the 'only Black person in the room' (3-P-5) or being stereotyped based on their appearance:

> ***You might want to get to know me rather than the person that I remind you of because of my skin and my race.***
>
> 2-P-7

Being a 'visible minority' affects employability. This participant contrasted his experience of being pigeon-holed with how someone from a white middle-class background is perceived as being able to apply their talent universally:

> ***If you come from a certain background, you have the proximity to direct anything you want and make anything you want, whereas, I can almost self-niche myself out, just by default, just by existing. I can't do these shows... [They think:] How would I know what a white [experience] is like? How would I know what a white working-class family thinks like? ... So that's where [prejudice] comes into play, I think.***
>
> 2-P-8

From everyday experiences of feeling out of place to hiring and commissioning, work cultures that exclude people from diverse backgrounds remain stubbornly present, despite any differences that schemes have made.

Low pay and precarious working conditions

While the schemes offered free training, paid for expenses and provided paid placements, once the schemes ended this economic support dried up. Participants, having gained a foothold in the industries, struggled with the conditions of precarious and short-term work. Without financial support, this concern was pressing:

> ***I'm a bit worried about the next couple of months because I have actually been struggling already ... There can be weeks or months at a time [without work] ... It can be quite stressful, the constant searching for work. At the moment I'm really trying not to have another job but instead I'm just being very frugal because I don't want to make myself unavailable.***
>
> 3-P-6

The need to be available for work puts pressure on people to not earn money elsewhere, causing stress and limiting the viability of pursuing screen industry roles. For young working-class people, these conditions can push them out of the industries:

> ***I have tried living at home and trying to do film and TV full-time, and I just found it wasn't sustainable for me to do that ... Because I do come from a working-class background, that money situation, as much as I would love not to think about it, is a very real situation ... So I did try that for about a year before I started getting into [another industry]. It wasn't sustainable.***
>
> 3-P-5

The industries are missing out on talent because precarious employment conditions make the pursuit of this work extremely difficult. Without major improvement of working conditions in TV and film, working-class people are likely to be filtered out of the industries before they can properly establish their careers. With the relatively low numbers of working-class people on mid-career schemes compared to early-career schemes and the population as a whole, there are signs to suggest that this filtering may already be happening.

Work/life balance

Issues of poor work/life balance within the screen industries are both well documented (for example, Swords et al., 2022) and of concern for participants, who, even from an early stage, feel that the time pressures of work are unsustainable:

> ***It is really long hours, but if you're doing dailies, you do get some time off here and there so it's more maintainable. Whereas I'm not sure how the people who I work alongside who … have been doing five or six days a week [for months], I'm not really sure how they're still alive because it is so intense. I don't know if I would make it … I don't know how they do it because you are getting up at four in the morning sometimes and not finishing until ten at night and then doing the same thing the next day for five days and being on it the whole day, working at one hundred the whole day. It is just intense.***
>
> 1-P-1

A mid-career participant discussed how these pressures of high-intensity work continue into more senior roles, where burnout is a common concern:

> ***I think every producer I speak to [who's] my age … you go for a coffee with them all and they're like … I feel like I'm going to be burning out very soon! I think our industry has a real problem with that in terms of how people sustain themselves. Particularly when you're a woman.***
>
> 2-P-5

This nod to the gendered nature of the problem echoes research on how women are unequally affected by childcare responsibilities, which adds to their workload (Raising Films, 2016). The concern about work and parenthood is shared by early-career participants who recognise how inflexible working conditions limit careers for those who one day wish to start a family.

For those with medical conditions that require a combination of medication and rest, the inflexible, long and intense working hours are often unworkable. One of the participants explained that this, coupled with a lack of understanding from production companies, has meant that she has effectively been excluded from freelance work. Considered alongside the stigma associated with mental illness (Film and TV Charity, 2022), production practices and cultures of work do not support those who have health issues that limit full participation. Given this, schemes are of little help to participants unless they address these fundamental issues.

Location and access to reliable transportation

The patchy provision of public transport in the region makes it hard for people who live in remote areas to access work. This is especially difficult for participants who do not have access to their own transportation, which is often a reflection of their class position. This quote is typical of the frustration felt about the state of public transport and how this affects their ability to access work:

> ***We have one of the worst [public transport systems]. It's really bad. The amount of times that a bus just doesn't turn up, and then they put the bus fare up ... There's certain areas that I can't even get a bus to, or if I do, it's one bus, and if it doesn't turn up, I'm screwed.***
>
> 1-P-5

While schemes have been able to signpost people to bursaries for driving lessons, they cannot address the more fundamental issue of a lack of money to invest in a car and its upkeep. This participant highlighted how this problem constitutes a barrier to work:

> ***I'm already getting a little bit worried about what I am going to do once I pass because I'm probably going to have to get a car. How am I going to afford to keep a car? ... Not having a car is potentially stopping me from getting work.***
>
> 3-P-6

Poor connectivity is a feature of life in the region that is not experienced by those in areas where public infrastructure has been maintained, such as London. Without improvements to infrastructure or more support for people to have their own transportation, people in the region who cannot afford a car will have limited access to work.

the success stories illustrate the extent to which schemes can shape careers ...

What creates successful outcomes?

Having taken into account the schemes' interventions and the challenges that limit impacts that stick, the report now turns to examples of participants doing particularly well following their participation in the schemes. These 'success stories' highlight where schemes have helped people to get a foothold or make progress in the industries. Yet they also point to factors that have provided additional support for these outcomes. In essence, the success stories illustrate the extent to which schemes can shape careers and what else might be needed to bolster their impact.

Becca[7]

For Becca, a working-class woman in her late twenties, the experience of 'Get into TV' was very positive. Having already completed an undergraduate degree in film production, she joined the scheme and was successful in gaining a couple of paid placements, first with a production company and then a locations company. She also had a successful mentor relationship, and got funded to do a camera operator course via the alumni network once the scheme had finished. She really valued the networks that developed throughout the scheme.

That said, after the scheme, Becca struggled to get jobs as a runner in an extremely competitive field where she did not have the contacts to break in. Therefore, she decided to use her non-screen industry work experience in digital marketing to aim for a related role promoting content on social media. Becca eventually got a job at a large broadcaster with an office in Leeds.

Over and above her experience at university, making the most of the opportunities provided by 'Get into TV', and her other work experience, Becca's success is due to two key reasons. Firstly, as an employee, Becca has managed to avoid the precarity of freelance work. She has indicated that freelancing is something she would find very stressful, especially when thinking about starting a family. As we have seen from other scheme participants, freelance work is very insecure, and only a few people we interviewed have been able to build a career in this way. Those who have tried have often struggled financially. For someone like Becca, who is from a working-class background, having a secure contract has been essential. Secondly, the location of the role has meant that she is able to continue to live in the town she grew up in. Not having to relocate for a role, and being able to rely on her family support network, has been really important to her.

... and what else might be needed to bolster their **impact**

Becca's abilities and aptitude, coupled with the two 'enabling conditions' of employed status and proximity to work, have been essential in allowing her to pursue a career in the screen industries once her participation in the diversity scheme was over. These conditions are not available to many people, due to the prevalence of freelance work and the dominance of a handful of 'creative hubs'.

7 Names used in this section are pseudonyms.

Adrianna

Where Becca's story is of a working-class person able to succeed due to a set of supportive conditions, Adrianna's story is an example of challenging conditions being overcome with economic and social capital.

Adrianna is a middle-class woman in her mid-twenties who went to a private school in Yorkshire before completing an undergraduate degree and starting a master's in media production. Having completed the scheme, she was offered a placement in an art department via the alumni network. She took a break from her master's in order to do the placement.

At this point, Adrianna's class position became crucial to her ability to make the placement work. The financial support of her parents meant that she could move to a different city and rent a flat, as well as making use of a family car.

Once Adrianna completed her master's, she secured a series of TV and film entry-level roles from her contacts in industry, made while at university, which underlines how important these connections are. To pursue further work, Adrianna has relocated to an area nearer to London, again with the financial support of her parents.

Adrianna's story reinforces the findings from the previous section, that low pay and precarious conditions are only manageable by those with the financial support to compensate for this, and that many roles require their own transport. While 'Get into TV' was important for Adrianna to gain a placement that has set her on her career path, the necessity of financial support is evident. Ongoing financial support into mid-career was also shown to be important in another case: it helped a participant from 'Career Accelerator' to make it as a writer, in the form of her parents providing her food and accommodation while she worked on projects with little income.

Joseph

Joseph is a gay mixed-heritage working-class man. He recently completed a degree in filmmaking, after which he had no success in applying for roles through traditional routes. However, Joseph has since made use of a series of different diversity schemes and paid placements to help build his early career.

Soon after graduating, Joseph took part in 'Get into TV', where he got a paid placement with a production company. As that placement ended, he joined 'Screen Industries Grad Scheme'. He then proceeded to get a placement through the alumni network of 'Get into TV', after which he found out about a 12-month diversity-focused training scheme through a contact at 'Screen Industries Grad Scheme'. He is currently working there as an employed member of staff on a fixed-term contract.

Joseph has discussed his unease at using diversity schemes to build his career, but he does recognise that it is his background that is preventing him from accessing certain opportunities. While one scheme has not given him enough support, through the use of multiple schemes, a practice that we have termed 'scheme hopping', he has been able to make some good progress in starting his career.

Others have had similar experiences with multiple schemes that have provided extended access to industry professionals and opportunities to develop the right 'fit' for work in TV and film. Further help, such as bursaries for driving lessons, have been signposted while on the schemes, with participants going on to take advantage of these. Those from 'Career Accelerator', who have often already had a lot of previous experience of diversity schemes, have been able to use this scheme as a springboard for accessing well-established development programmes from the likes of BAFTA.

Considering the challenges set out earlier, the practice of scheme hopping is helpful, and even necessary, as participants try to build their careers. Nonetheless, this raises the question: if people are taking advantage of multiple schemes and other sources of help such as bursaries, are they crowding out other people? This presents a dilemma. Should scheme hopping be encouraged so that a select number of people are able to succeed, or should places be limited to those who have not had access to previous schemes? Are those who 'scheme hop' the people who are more able to make the necessary social connections and successfully navigate application processes? If so, are they the people most in need of the interventions?

Recommendations

Based on the report's findings, the following recommendations are made for participants, organisers and funders.

Participants

- Make scheme organisers aware of your needs.
  - Despite the best efforts of organisers, they might not understand what support you might need. Speaking to them could help.
- Make the most of the opportunities presented to you.
  - Attend as many of the activities as you can, ask questions, and put yourself up for extra opportunities such as placements.
- Network with other participants as much as possible.
  - Networks are key to finding work.
- Support each other.
  - Being willing to offer help to others can help you in the long run.
- Understand that one scheme is unlikely to provide all that you need in order to access and progress in the screen industries.
  - Continue to look out for fresh opportunities, which might include bursaries, placements and other schemes.

Organisers

- Ensure effective recruitment.
  - Invest in robust recruitment practices so that suitable candidates, who wish to pursue careers in the screen industries, are selected.
  - Where practical, target resources at people who would get the most benefit from schemes, considering applicants' backgrounds, including socioeconomic status.
  - Ensure all staff and guests adhere to good EDI practices.
    - Use interviews to recruit the right people.
    - Provide training so that the values of the scheme are both understood and supported.
- Provide opportunities for the cohort to bond.
  - A balance of online and face-to-face sessions aids accessibility while allowing for informal interaction.
  - Dedicate time for participants to get to know each other.
  - Include discussion of experiences of marginalisation and under-representation in order to build cohort solidarity.

- Provide a space to develop shared values that participants agree to be held accountable to.
  - Run dedicated sessions to discuss and agree a set of shared values of support and collaboration in order to support each other, during the scheme and going forward.
  - Ensure there is time to maintain a focus on values beyond the initial session, such as follow-up group work, and ad hoc time to address issues as they arise.
  - Develop the capacity of organisers and facilitators to hold people to account to agreed values by challenging inappropriate behaviour/language.
- Offer access to a range of industry professionals who can provide skills training, share industry knowledge and act as inspiration for participants.
- Develop more formalised mentor programmes.
  - Provide guidance and training for mentors where the parameters of mentoring and expected engagement levels are explained.
- Offer paid work placements as part of the schemes.
  - Funding for paid placements provides the best experiences for participants, and often leads to paid work and useful contacts.
- Maintain alumni networks.
  - This ensures further opportunities and ongoing support for scheme participants, following the initial programme.
- Diversity schemes should be complemented by more transformational interventions that look to professionalise the industries with more transparent and formalised training requirements, hiring processes and progression avenues. This would help to remove some of the entrenched barriers to participation and ensure the schemes are more effective.

Funders

- Allocate long-term investment to diversity schemes.
  - This allows schemes to plan ahead and recruit the best staff in a timely fashion.
  - This will facilitate the development of large regional networks of ex-participants, help a diverse regional workforce to find work and, with time, support a shift in organisational cultures.
- Success criteria should include the impact that schemes have had on regional networks and cultures of work, not just immediate outcomes for individuals.

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