

Everyday Diversity: Principles and values

Everyday Diversity is an applied research project at the CAMEo Research Institute at the University of Leicester and undertaken in partnership with two key industry partners, Creative Diversity Network and the British Film Institute. The CAMEo project team comprises Dr Doris Ruth Eikhof (lead), Dr Stevie Marsden and Emma Sainthouse.

This document outlines the intentions that drive *Everyday Diversity*, how we understand diversity and how we approach collaborative research. It is an evolving document: started at the beginning of the project in spring 2019, it will be revisited and revised as our learning, reflections and concerns evolve during the project. This document is written to introduce *Everyday Diversity* to others and to anchor the research team's practices, reflections and learnings over the course of the project.

Intentions

Everyday Diversity aims to improve opportunity and inclusion in screen workⁱ in the UK. Its primary benefactors are (a) individuals who would like to establish and maintain a career in screen work but currently face diversity-related barriers to successfully doing so, and (b) the wider screen industries community, from businesses and sector organisations to policy-makers, stakeholders and audiences.

The project is driven by our recognition that opportunity and inclusion in the UK's screen industries are currently inequitably distributed; that opportunity and inclusion are influenced by individuals' age, caring responsibilities, class, disability, gender, geographical location, pregnancy, race, religion or sexual orientation; that inequitable access to opportunity and inclusion is socially, culturally and economically undesirable as well as morally unjust; and that new insights and practices are needed to improve access to opportunity and inclusion.

Everyday Diversity will create new knowledge and change practice. It is not intended to result in commercial benefits for the research team, the University of Leicester, or the project partners.

Our approach to diversity

We believe that opportunities for work, employment and careers in the UK screen industries should be allocated on the basis of talent, skills and experience. We recognise that there are social, cultural and economic arguments for equitable access to these opportunities. And we recognise that access to these opportunities is, currently, not equitable, and that the screen industries lack diversity.ⁱⁱ

Opportunity and inclusion are rarely ever influenced by only one individual characteristic, e.g. only race or only disability. *Everyday Diversity* is therefore based on an intersectionalⁱⁱⁱ understanding of diversity. We take into account that several diversity characteristics interact to affect opportunity and inclusion. Moreover, we view intersectionality as non-hierarchical, i.e. we do not assume that one diversity characteristic is more important, valuable or worthy of attention than another.

Everyday Diversity starts from the assumption that to understand exclusion or lack of opportunity we need to look beyond the individual experiencing them. Age, caring responsibilities, class, disability, gender, geographical location, pregnancy, race, religion or sexual orientation matter in relation to opportunity and inclusion because the way our society thinks and (inter-)acts makes them matter. Our focus is thus at least as much on the structures that shape opportunity and inclusion as on the individual. Also, we consider diversity characteristics relevant to screen work, including those not explicitly covered in relevant UK legislation (e.g. the 2010 Equalities Act).

How we approach collaborative research

Everyday Diversity is a collaborative, industry-facing research project. The CAMEo project team will work with two lead industry partners, Creative Diversity Network and the British Film Institute, a Steering Group of screen industry experts and various other academic and industry stakeholders.

Everyday Diversity aims to benefit to the communities it engages with. We are committed to making a positive contribution to the UK screen industries: through improving practices, diversifying thinking and building capacity for inclusion. Legacy and sustainability will be ongoing considerations.

Everyday Diversity is intended to be mutually beneficial. Through open conversations we will actively seek to understand everyone's interest in the project and their experience of *Everyday Diversity* as the project progresses.

We are committed to transparency and accountability. Wherever possible we will explain, concisely and in non-specialist language: why we are undertaking certain activities; why decisions were taken (and by whom); which inputs we are asking for and from whom; and how we incorporated those inputs.

Research projects are dynamic processes, and *Everyday Diversity* is intended to be responsive to new insights and developments. To ensure that the project is both responsive and delivers tangible benefits, the workplan staggers outcomes and outputs over the course of *Everyday Diversity's* lifetime. The Steering Group will monitor how *Everyday Diversity* delivers on outcomes and outputs.

Research projects involve reducing complexity and context, and making choices about interpretations and priorities, for instance when recruiting collaborators, designing research methods or analysing data. We recognise that historically these tasks have – consciously or unconsciously – often reproduced problematic exclusionary practice, for instance through excluding minority views or perpetuating discriminatory definitions. Throughout *Everyday Diversity* we will actively seek to question our approaches, methods and interpretations to facilitate inclusivity of thought and participation.

Project funding

Everyday Diversity is funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The AHRC pay the University of Leicester directly for the research team's time and for costs directly relating to the research (e.g. travel to meetings, transcription of interviews). The research team, research participants and Steering Group members do not receive any payments for their time or expertise dedicated to the project. Steering Group members will be offered a reimbursement of expenses for travel to steering group meetings. The project is intended to comprise the building of a digital toolkit, and a fee of £10,000 is currently budgeted for a subcontractor to provide this service.

Project activities and expenditures have to adhere to the AHRC's conditions of the funding award.

For all research activities, the project team will obtain research ethics approval from the University of Leicester.

A few explanations

ⁱ **Screen work:** *Everyday Diversity* focuses on those working in the UK's screen industries. Working in screen is not always undertaken within employment (e.g. it may be part of training, an internship or unpaid project development time), so we have opted for the broad term 'work' here.

The **screen industries** comprise animation, film, TV, special effects and video games. Over the course of the project we will explore to what extent productions centred on immersive technologies can usefully be understood as belonging to the screen industries as well.

ⁱⁱ Throughout the project we will create documents that explain in detail how we use terms such as **diversity**, **opportunity** and **inclusion**. For the purpose of this document, useful working definitions are

- **Diversity:** the degree to which a group of people varies with respect to certain characteristics (e.g. race, caring responsibilities, disability – see list above); in *Everyday Diversity* usually the variance of characteristics within a group of workers.
- **Opportunity:** generally an opening to do/experience something; in *Everyday Diversity* specifically an opening for work, employment or a career.
- **Inclusion/inclusiveness:** describes a state (of a group, an organisation, an industry etc.) in which individuals' likelihood of participating is not influenced by their diversity characteristics.

ⁱⁱⁱ The term **intersectionality** was first introduced by Kimberley Crenshaw (1991) to explain why black women's experience of exclusion and discrimination differed from that of white women. It is now used to highlight that different individual characteristics (e.g. someone's class, physical ability, race) combine to shape someone's experience and opportunities. An intersectional analysis explicitly acknowledges that to understand diversity and inclusion we need to embrace complexity – in our debates, analysis and solutions.