

About CAMEo

CAMEo, the Research Institute for Cultural and Media Economies at the University of Leicester, was launched in 2016 to provide new understandings of the cultural industries, the 'creative economy', the arts and media, cultural policy, consumer culture dynamics, and the mediation and representation of cultural and economic life.

CAMEo is an interdisciplinary platform for academic research as well as for collaborations with culture and media practitioners. Together with a wide range of partners we explore the diverse and complex ways in which cultural and media economies are being defined, valued, enacted, experienced and represented.

We invite everyone interested in the cultural and media economies to join our conversations. Visit our website at www.le.ac.uk/cameo or get in touch via cameo@le.ac.uk

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of UK and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK – investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting UK film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

A Government arm's-length body and distributor of National Lottery funds for film, the BFI covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. The BFI established a National Lottery-funded Research and Statistics Fund to provide independent evidence available for the benefit of stakeholders and the wider public.

Visit www.bfi.org.uk

Workforce Diversity in the UK Screen Sector

Evidence Review for the British Film Institute



CAMEo Research Institute
University of Leicester
7 Salisbury Road
Leicester LE1 7QR, UK
e: cameo@le.ac.uk
w: www.le.ac.uk/cameo



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Workforce Diversity in the UK Screen Sector: Evidence Review

Workforce diversity in film, television, video games and other media has recently received considerable attention. While that attention is welcome, the debate has gained momentum and exposure so quickly that catchy headlines often blur the distinction between fact and opinion. This Evidence Review establishes the research base on workforce diversity in the UK screen sector at a timely moment. The BFI recently announced its Future Film Skills strategy, which is backed by £20 million of National Lottery investment, and is working with the sector to address the lack of representation and inclusion in the workforce. The BFI has also introduced Diversity Standards which guide its own activities and BFI-funded projects as well as provide a resource for the industry.

The Evidence Review was commissioned by the External Advisory Group to the British Film Institute's (BFI) National Lottery-funded Research and Statistics Fund, and undertaken by the CAMEo Research Institute for Cultural and Media Economies. The evidence review gives the most complete picture to-date of research into workforce diversity in the UK screen sector, including:

- the current state of workforce diversity;
- the complex causes of the lack of workforce diversity;
- interventions to increase workforce diversity;
- the evidence on positive social and business benefits of increased workforce diversity.

The evidence review considered all UK-focused research published in 2012-2016 investigating workforce diversity in the screen sector. Workforce diversity was considered in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, location, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex, sexual orientation and social class. The screen sector was defined as comprising film, television, video games, animation programming and visual effects.

Given the timing of the evidence review, issues arising from the Referendum on the UK's membership in the European Union did not yet feature in the evidence base. However, recent research on skilled migration suggests that the ability of screen sector companies to recruit skilled migrants from both within and outside the EU is likely to feature strongly in future discussions of workforce diversity.

Key findings

- Obtaining a nationally representative picture of workforce diversity from the available data sources is a challenge due to the different sector definitions, categories and methodologies employed by public and industry bodies (Creative Skillset, DCMS, ONS).
- While there are good sources of data on the demographic composition of some sectors (particularly film and television), little is known about workforce diversity in others.
- Research has predominantly focused upon issues surrounding gender workforce representation, and to a lesser extent ethnicity and disability.
- Women, disabled workers, workers from working class and ethnic minority backgrounds, carers and individuals living outside London/South East England are significantly less likely to establish and maintain a career in the UK screen sector.
- Particularly powerful obstacles to workforce participation are the screen sector's reliance on personal networks for allocating work and business opportunities.
- Challenges of reconciling childcare responsibilities with intensive, flexible working hours and a lack of access to maternity leave schemes make workforce participation and advancement particularly difficult for parents.
- Interventions in the form of training schemes and mentorship programmes can be successful in providing entry routes into the screen sector workforce for limited numbers of women, BAME people and disabled people. There is, however, little to suggest that these interventions have to date had any success at addressing the underlying causes of inequality.
- Understanding the effects of different kinds of interventions designed to increase workforce diversity is hampered by a lack of robust, independent evaluation.
- Within the screen sector there is a strong perception that barriers to greater workforce diversity are a 'lost opportunity' for companies, creative teams and audiences but there is a struggle to articulate what benefits greater workforce diversity might bring.
- The evidence for positive business benefits from increased diversity is lacking and advocates are compelled to rely upon anecdotes.

Key recommendations

The screen sector faces a double challenge. Firstly, it needs better research into workforce diversity. Secondly, it needs more diversity-related practice that can form the basis of such research. Investments in research and diversity-related practice should be closely aligned to use resources across the sector as efficiently as possible. Accordingly, this evidence review revealed the following key recommendations.

To improve the quality of research and evidence

1. Creation of consistent and sector-wide monitoring of key workforce characteristics to provide reliable sector statistics, preferably designed with a view to international comparability.
2. More explicit integration of quantitative and qualitative studies. Reliable workforce statistics would identify issues that qualitative studies could usefully explore.
3. Incorporation of rigorous evaluation into all interventions to improve diversity, preferably with a sector commitment to making evaluations publicly available.
4. Systematic research into key crosscutting themes:

- Empowering versus transforming interventions, i.e. initiatives designed to improve workforce participation for specific groups of workers versus transforming initiatives designed to change industry structures and remove existing barriers to workforce diversity;
- Interventions designed to persuade or convince versus interventions designed to regulate or incentivise;

- The effect of workforce diversity in terms of diversifying employment opportunities, transforming and improving processes and diversifying output and thereby business opportunity;
- Attitudes towards diversity, inclusion and diversity-relevant aspects of screen sector culture.

5. Closer collaboration between academic and industry research, both in terms of methodologies and research foci.

To improve the availability and dissemination of knowledge

6. Creation of a national and periodically updated database of research into workforce diversity.
7. Creation of a practitioner-facing database of interventions to increase workforce diversity, preferably including descriptions and evaluations of initiatives.

To increase workforce-diversity relevant sector practice that can be researched

8. Creation of a sector-wider funding programme supporting initiatives and projects relevant to workforce diversity in combination with research on these activities.

The full report *Workforce Diversity in the UK Screen Sector* is available from www.le.ac.uk/comeo and www.bfi.org.uk/workforce-diversity