

## **An Ethnically Inclusive, Creative Recovery**

### **Recommendations for ethnically diverse inclusion in the arts and cultural sector**

**September 2020**

*“If you are the only black person in an organisation it feels very tokenistic. It has to start at the very top and values have to work through as much as possible.”*

*– respondent, Inc Art report, ‘Career Progression in the Arts’, July 2020*

**This document sets out recommendations for the UK’s cultural sector recovery that embeds ethnic diversity at the core of our return to artistic and cultural engagement.**

UK guidelines for the return to workplaces post-COVID-19 have thus far focused on health and safety.

The following of these recommendations will successfully embed in the UK’s national and regional arts and cultural sector recovery the government’s key principles of equity of access and opportunity.

These recommendations also positively support government’s commitment to ensuring economic growth, particularly in areas of high socioeconomic need.

They are applicable to all aspects of cultural engagement, from audience and participation, through to learning and skills development. It is pertinent to workplaces across all contract types and levels of seniority.

#### **Terminology: ‘ethnically diverse people’**

Following wide and robust consultation, Inc Arts eschews the acronym ‘BAME’, as those most affected by the term have reported high disapproval of its use. This report and our future communications will use the term ‘ethnically diverse’, which includes

- African diaspora people in the UK
- South Asian, East Asian and South East Asian diaspora people in the UK
- People living in the UK (and including migrants) who experience racism.

#### **Key principles for an ethnically diverse return for the cultural sector**

- 1. Embed ethnic diversity as a condition of funding and government support**
- 2. Embed ethnically diverse decision-making, representation and evaluation at the heart of artistic and cultural production**
- 3. Support an independent national action plan for ethnic diversity in the arts and cultural sector.**

## Protecting the ethnically diverse arts and cultural sector workforce

- The UK's arts and cultural sector is under-representative of the UK's ethnic diversity: 12% of the UK's arts sector workforce is ethnically diverse.
- The UK's arts and cultural sector is one of the most significantly affected by COVID-19, with high and widespread levels of redundancy.
- The ethnically diverse workforce is disproportionately affected by redundancy.

Ethnically diverse people working in the arts and cultural sector face multiple challenges of **under-representation in the workforce, and higher likelihood of redundancy**. This informs and underpins this set of recommendations for an inclusive recovery that has ethnic diversity at the core.

Emerging data from arts organisations is evidencing the disproportionate impact of redundancy in the arts and cultural sector on the ethnically diverse workforce. Those on casual contracts, and in public facing roles including Front of House and hospitality, are more likely to be ethnically diverse. These roles have been significantly affected by lockdown and ongoing redundancies.

## Key Principles

### 1. Embed ethnic diversity as a condition of funding and government support

- 1.1 Recession disproportionately affects the ethnically diverse workforce. The Institute of Social Research study of the 2008 recession evidenced the disproportionate impact of redundancies on African diaspora people<sup>1</sup>, data which is confirmed by the current impact of redundancy on public-facing roles including hospitality and Front of House.
- 1.2 The UK's largest arts organisations are in the UK's most ethnically diverse regions.
  - 38% of London's population is ethnically diverse.
  - 33% of Manchester's population is ethnically diverse
  - 40% of Birmingham's population is ethnically diverse

However, 12% of the arts workforce is ethnically diverse. Both because of their scale and share of funding allocation<sup>2</sup>, many of the UK's largest arts organisations are critical to the sector's successful recovery, through their reach in local communities and through their engagement with the freelance sector arts workforce.

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<sup>1</sup> Li, Y. and Heath, A. (2008) 'Ethnic Minority Men in the British Labour Market (1972- 2005)', International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy 28(5/6): 231-44; and Data from presentation by Richard Exell, TUC at the Financial Inclusion and Equality Conference, held 20 October 2000

<sup>2</sup> London receives 30% of Arts Council England funding, [ArtsProfessional, July 2020](#)

- 1.3 Prioritising funding to organisations that can actively demonstrate a minimum of 15% ethnic diversity in their operations and activity will boost recovery in a way that is equitable and allows the sector to build on the valuable equality, diversity and inclusion gains made in recent years.
- 1.4 Diverse-led organisations have a vital role to play in ensuring the growth of an ethnically diverse arts and cultural sector recovery. With strong local and community links, expertise and experience in developing skills of young people from marginalised communities, diverse-led organisations contribute to equitable skills development in areas of high socioeconomic need.
- 1.5 Section 159 of the Equality Act (2010) allows employers to take active steps to increase the ethnic diversity of their workforce. The Act does not explicitly refer to considerations of ethnic diversity in redundancy decisions, or dismissals.  
**Amendment of the Equality Act** will provide a clear and supportive message to employers wishing to ensure their organisations remain ethnically diverse.

#### **1.6 Embedding ethnic diversity: Case Study, The Albany, London**

The Albany is a community theatre based in South East London. According to their website, Of the 300,000+ people living here, 46.5% are ethnically diverse, of which 27% are African diaspora people.

Arts Council England diversity data 2018/19 showed the Albany had the highest level of Black and minority ethnic staff for any organisation in the country at just over 40%. This was broadly reflected in figures for the Board, artists and audiences.

However, this representation in the workforce is not reflected in senior management: the current senior artistic team of three are all white.

The Albany has published a commitment to:

At least 50% of new freelancers appointed will be ethnically diverse, with pay scales and procedures reviewed to ensure people are paid fairly, consistently and promptly

Appointing an ethnically diverse artist to a new paid Associate Artist role, as part of their 'Artists of Change' programme

Appointing a new Senior Producer to join the creative and senior management teams, with the aim of diversifying our knowledge and perspectives.

To do so they have reallocated funding and restructured the team, with the current senior management team agreeing to reduce hours if required to make a new role possible.

## Key Principles

2. **Embed ethnically diverse decision-making and evaluation at the heart of artistic and cultural production**
  - 2.1 A robust monitoring and evaluation system will support the UK government's ambitions for regional and socioeconomic equity. This proposal builds on Arts Council England (ACE)'s diversity action plans, complementing ACE's objectives and current practices and augmenting its ambitions for an ethnically diverse arts and cultural sector.
  - 2.2 The monitoring of ethnic diversity in the sector currently sits within Arts Council England, unlike the sector-wide monitoring of environmental sustainability (undertaken by Julie's Bicycle) or monitoring of audience data (undertaken by The Audience Agency).
  - 2.3 Arts Council England's ability to gather complete, comprehensive and robust data on ethnicity is negatively impacted by
    - the nature of its relationship with the organisations required to provide data, and
    - inconsistency of reporting by organisations.
  - 2.4 By providing an independent evaluation and monitoring process, that focuses on the data gathered by individuals most affected by exclusion (as opposed to the organisations in which they work), government will provide an effective means to ensure that arts organisations make ethnic diversity a condition of funding.

### **Best Practice Case Studies: The Academy of Motion Picture Awards**

The Academy of Motion Picture Awards has introduced eligibility reforms to the best picture category to encourage diversity and equitable representation on screen and off. The reforms cover training, opportunities and other aspects of the film's development and release. Over the last three years, the Academy has also recruited an additional 189 new ethnically diverse members to the membership, which has increased ethnic diversity of its membership from 8% in 2015 to 16% in 2018.

To be considered for best picture, films will have to meet two of the four new standards, which include creative leadership and crew.

#### **Theatre Call to Action**

In April 2020 the diverse-led lobbying group [Theatre Call To Action](#) asked theatre organisations to publish on social media the ethnic breakdown of their workforce. The campaign received a strong response from the sector and has provided a catalyst for sector engagement with diversity.

Theatre Call to Action continues to work with sector advocacy bodies to hold organisations accountable to diversifying the sector.

**A robust, independent evaluation process will ensure that the data gathered also includes the freelance sector workforce, which comprises up to 77% of the sector's workforce.**

## Key Principles

### 3. A National Action Plan for ethnic diversity in the arts and cultural sector

The embedding of ethnic diversity in the UK's cultural recovery will help the country rebuild and recover in a way that is inclusive and equitable.

The creation of a government sponsored, **National Diversity Action Plan for Culture** will provide a framework for arts organisations to meet diversity requirements through nationally created terms of reference and guidance, identifying best practice through a set of national criteria.

An independent body will be responsible for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the National Diversity Action Plan for Culture, reviewing and rating an organisation on its ethnic diversity across audience, programme, workforce and strategic leadership. Such an approach supports Arts Council England's ambitions for increased ethnic diversity in the arts and cultural sector.

Working across sector initiatives, a National Diversity Action Plan for Culture policy framework will amplify best practice, from which it will outline the conditions for ensuring inclusive compliance, cutting across art form and programmes. It will support government's ambitions for equity of access and opportunity in a way that is robust and supportive of the sector.

The action plan will

- create national registers of ethnically diverse networks to help facilitate greater inclusive engagement and transition into workforce numbers
- require national funding to identify and retain key talent in light of arts redundancies
- provide assistance to both the ethnically diverse workforce and organisations seeking to make their practice more diverse.
- support local authorities in best practice placemaking and community building with ethnic diversity at the core.

The National Diversity Action Plan for Culture allows for government to make a clear and positive statement that black lives matter in the arts and empowers *all* people who experience racism to have an active role in holding organisations to account, whilst celebrating where best practice is found.

Inc Arts is in discussion with ethnically diverse practitioners to pilot a National Diversity Action Plan for Culture in the North of England.

This document has been developed by Inc Arts through consultation with ethnically diverse arts practitioners during August 2020.



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