

Creative Access impact report

2021 – 2022





Introduction.

This year is a significant milestone for Creative Access as we celebrate 10 years of driving equity and inclusion in the creative industries.

I am incredibly proud of all Creative Access has achieved over the past decade and wanted to mark this moment by sharing the impact of our work during that time, in particular over the last year, as well as our goals for the future.

In those 10 years, Creative Access has, in partnership with some of the leading names in the industry, not just changed the face of the creative industries, but the faces within it, through our unique combination of mentoring, training and a progressive approach to recruitment.

But most of all I'm incredibly proud of our alumni and their achievements. Through their creative brilliance, hard work and relentless determination to realise their own career ambitions, and those of others, they have changed this industry for the better and continue to do so. They have made it more diverse, inclusive, representative and a culturally richer place to work; and impacted significantly on the output and bottom line of the creative economy. To them and all of our employer partners over the past ten years, thank you.

There is though still so much work to be done, from supporting people with the high cost of living, to addressing the stark lack of diversity which remains at senior levels within the industry. We must keep challenging ourselves and each other to do more, to do better until the creative industries represent the society they are there to serve.

Josie Dobrin
Founder and CEO, Creative Access



Our mission.

We aim to see a day when the UK's creative economy will truly reflect and represent our society.

Our mission is to enable people from communities that are under-represented in the creative industries, in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic background and disability or those facing significant barriers to employment, to access careers, progress and reach leadership.

Our values.

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to access careers and thrive in the creative industries, regardless of their background or beliefs. We ask our employer partners to commit to bringing in and uplifting talent from communities under-represented in the sector by:

- Widening the talent pool to include candidates from all backgrounds
- Investing in staff from communities that are under-represented in the creative economy to enable them to thrive and progress to senior positions
- Creating an inclusive workplace where everyone, whatever their background, feels welcome and valued

"Faber's partnership with Creative Access has been a cornerstone of our commitment to transform our company to one that represents our society. Their trailblazing work in recruitment, training and supporting communities that the industry was failing to reach, has given us a route to begin to progress this essential work."

Stephen Page, executive chair, Faber



"Creative Access have a proven reputation for their work in the industry and White Cube's partnership with Creative Access has been one of the most significant developments in the gallery's history. It has been so rewarding and insightful working to develop our staff through their training, mentoring and recruitment programmes."

Jay Jopling, founder, White Cube

WHITE
CUBE

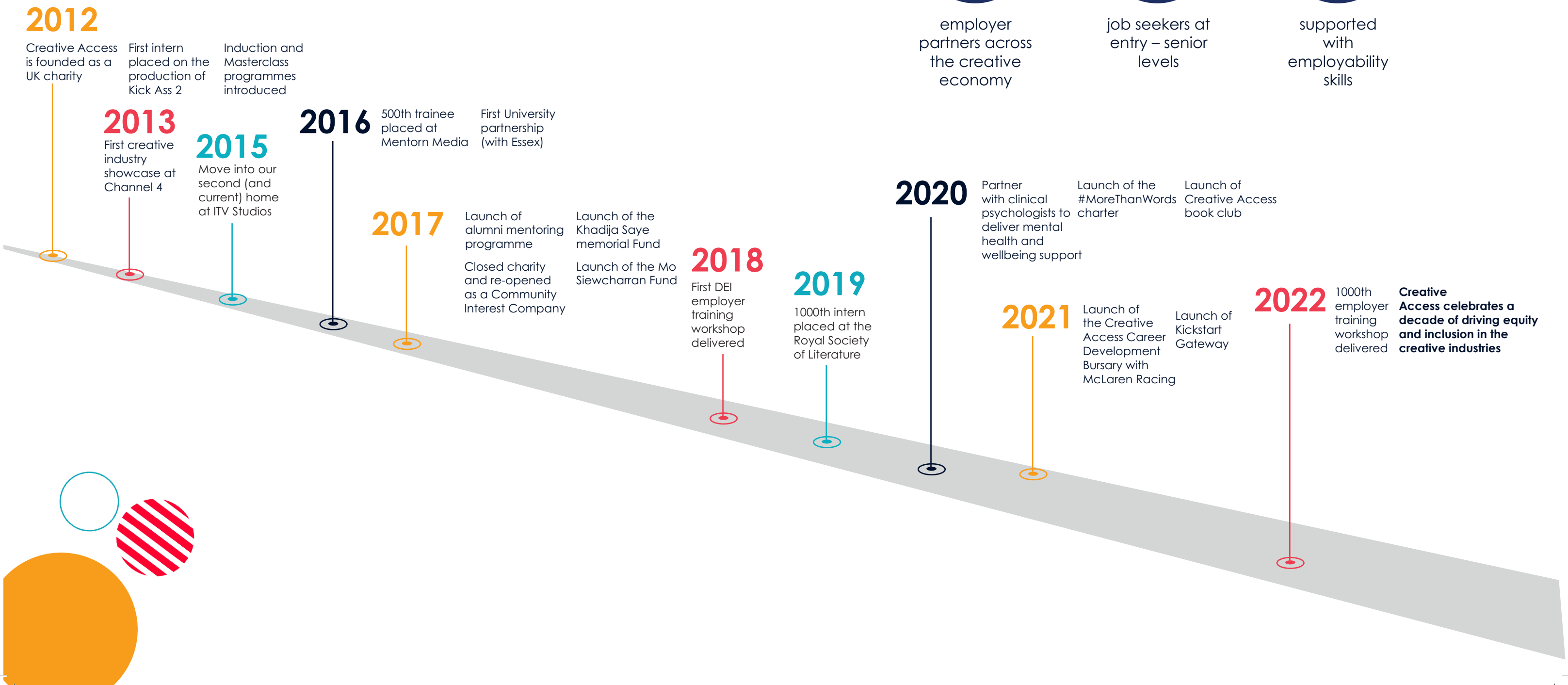
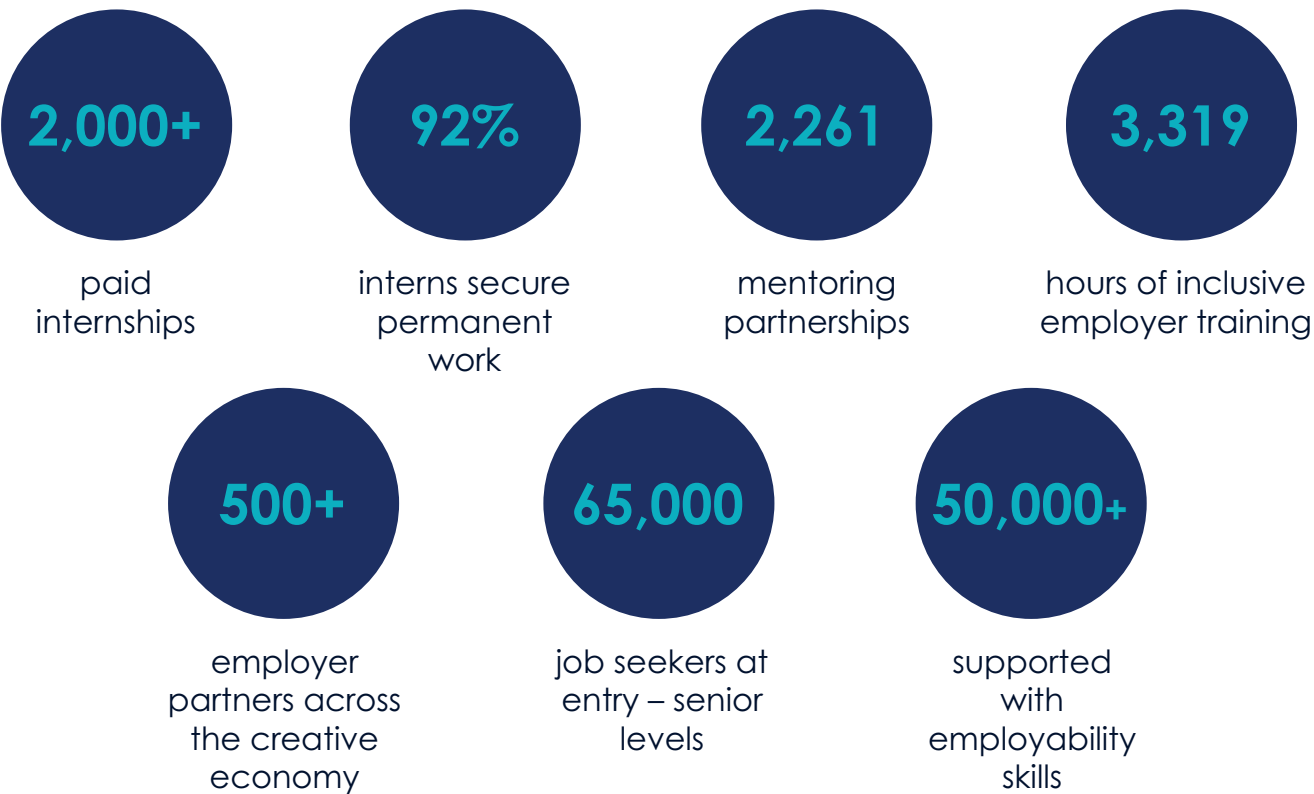
Our story.

Creative Access was co-founded in 2012 by three people – including current CEO, Josie Dobrin – out of a frustration at the lack of representation in the creative industries.

Conscious of the positive impact they could have, the group set out to change the conversation around diversity and inclusion in the sector. They persuaded leading employers in publishing, TV, film, theatre and beyond to partner with Creative Access and invest in talent from communities under-represented in the sector.

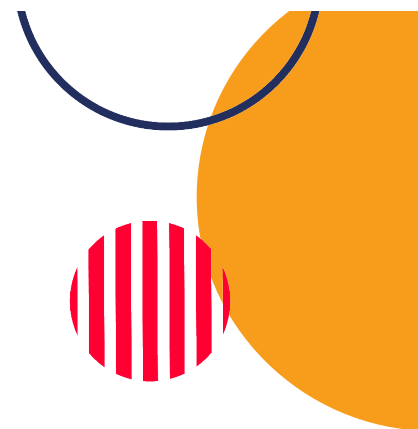
Now 10 years on, we work with employers across all sectors of the creative industries and now the wider creative economy – from leading, household names to small, independent organisations and start-ups the length and breadth of the UK.

A decade of impact.



2021 – 2022 highlights.

Against a turbulent geo-political backdrop and huge changes in the sector, Creative Access has seen significant growth in the last year as organisations continue to invest in diversity and inclusion post-covid. This has enabled us to continue to invest in our social mission, to be able to increase the number of people we support and launch new initiatives, such as our first Career Development Bursary.



Over 400
new employers
joined us

111%
increase in
activity

238
people placed
in paid internships

1,000
people participated
in mentoring
programmes

47%
profits
re-invested

Recruited for
cohorts **13**

1,147
employers trained
via 227 bespoke
workshops

Launched
development programme
for senior TV talent with
Nutopia



Rebranded,
launched new website
and jobs board

Held 10
masterclasses, and hosted
18 CV clinics

Became a
**disability
confident**
employer

Launched
first Career Development
bursary

Mentoring.

Research shows that people from communities that are under-represented in the industry who advance the furthest in their careers, all share one characteristic: a strong network who nurture their professional development. This year we have run 15 mentoring programmes with different organisations, including universities, industry bodies and companies, such as Hearst and ITV. Over 1,000 people (mentees and mentors) have participated.

"Creative Access has an incredible mentorship programme in which I was able to be both a mentor and mentee in 2021. Occupying both of these positions allowed me to learn from an incredible individual in my field, and also pay it forward to an up-and-coming designer. I can't sing loudly enough of the benefits of Creative Access!"

Charlotte Gray, creative designer



Case study: ScreenSkills mentoring partnership

This year we ran a second programme in partnership with ScreenSkills, the industry-led skills body for the screen industries, giving 50 people the opportunity to be mentored by an experienced professional for 6 months. We received over 250 applications and delivered over 300 hours of mentoring.

100% mentees said this programme had:

- Improved their knowledge and understanding of the screen industry
- Boosted their confidence

83% mentees said it had:

- Expanded their screen industry contacts and networks
- Supported them with applying for new roles in the screen industry

"This mentoring scheme allowed me to gain a full-time job in production at the BBC straight out of University due to the confidence, skills, and knowledge my mentor provided me with."

ScreenSkills x Creative Access mentee

"This has been a unique experience from my perspective as a mentor, helping me gain an understanding that I didn't have before, not just of the industry, but of my role, wins and losses within it."

ScreenSkills x Creative Access mentor

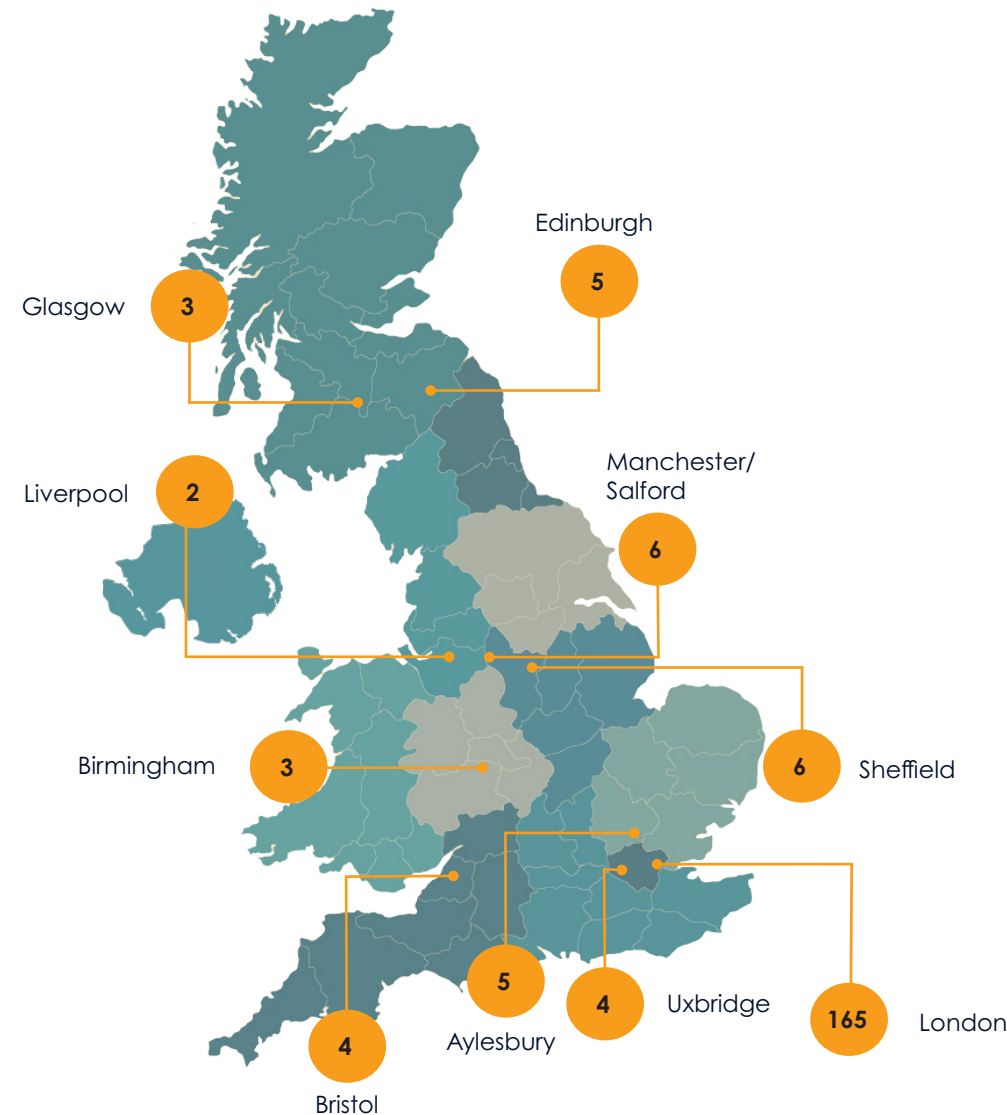
ScreenSkills

Recruitment.

This year we have placed 238 people from communities under-represented in the creative industries into paid internships.

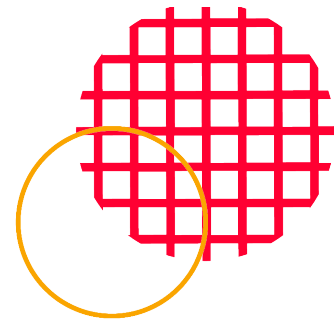
We have also recruited for 13 intern cohorts for employer partners across the sector, including Sky, ITV, Pan Macmillan and Aardman Animations. We have also placed 54 people at entry and mid-level into new roles.

Location of interns placed



"Through Creative Access I was able to secure my first paid role in the industry with The Times. That opportunity then opened doors. The chance to intern at an established paper can be very hard to come by, but I'll always be thankful to Creative Access for giving my career the best start I could have asked for."

Ahmed Shooble, sports journalist



Opportunities board.

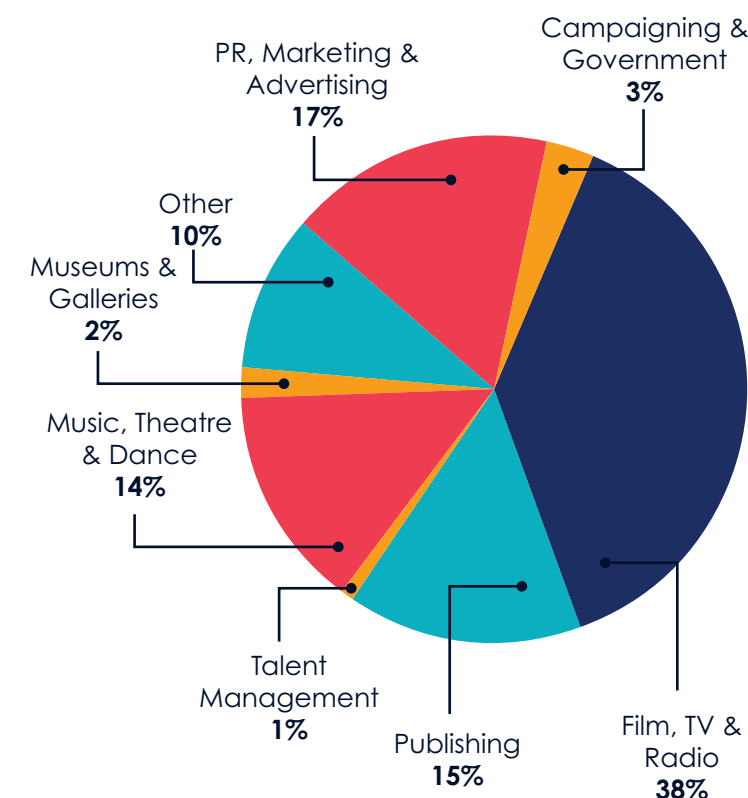
In December 2021, we re-launched our opportunities board to improve accessibility and enable employers to share more about their organisations and roles. Since launch, over 1,000 roles have been listed on the site across 11 different creative economy sectors.

"As one of the longest standing partners of Creative Access, we've seen first-hand the impact. They supported us to bring hundreds of new trainees into the group, from communities that are under-represented in television, many of whom are still with us as they progress their careers and take on more senior roles or through the ITV mentoring programme."

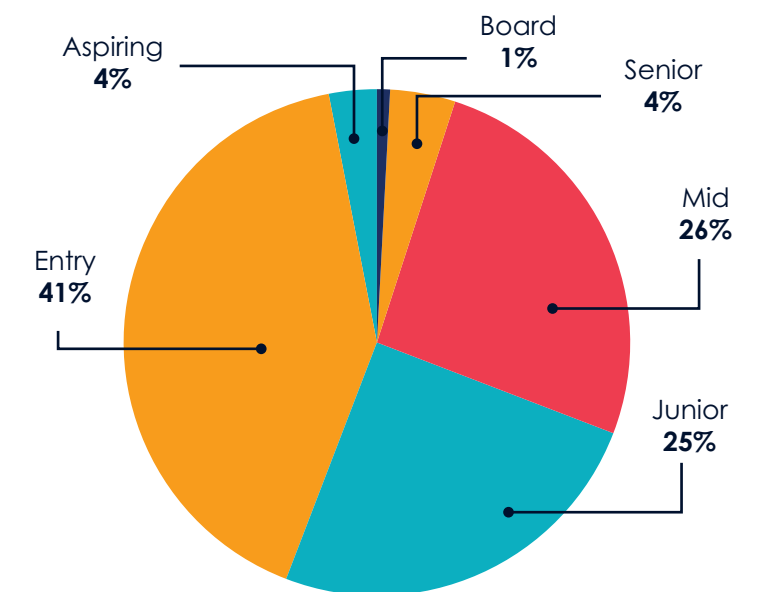
Julian Bellamy, managing director, ITV Studios



Recruitment by sector



Listings by role level



Training.

Training continues to be a critical part of the work we do. In the last year, we have trained 1,147 people through 227 bespoke employer training sessions and open workshops. We have also expanded our team of expert consultants who deliver our training to include clinical psychologist, Fabienne Palmer and employer trainer, Colleen Harris.

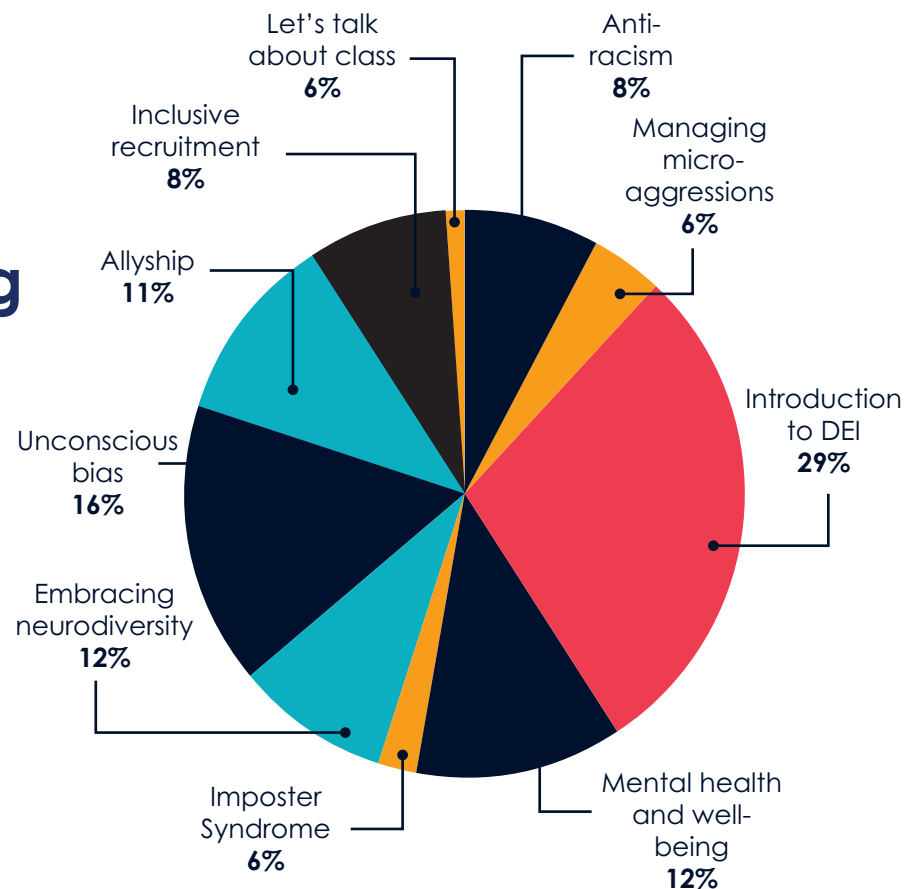
We have also launched a new series of "Open Workshops" which are held regularly and are open for anyone to join. These were devised to improve accessibility to training for smaller organisations, freelancers and individuals. 94% of this training was virtual and 6% was in-person.

"The Creative Access workshops have been deeply useful and genuinely helped shift our thinking about diversity, to tackle prejudice and create an action plan."

**Catherine Bourke, HR manager,
Opera North**

**opera
north**

Employer training workshops by theme



Funds & bursaries.

Career Development Bursary

This year we launched our first Career Development Bursary in partnership with McLaren Racing, providing £20,000 of funding to help overcome the financial barriers to career progression. We received over 200 applications, from which 25 were awarded funding to purchase new laptops, driving lessons and photography and film equipment.



Mo Siewcharran Fund

In 2018, Mo Siewcharran's husband, John Seaton, launched a memorial fund to support internships for young talent from ethnicities that are under-represented in the theatre, publishing and music industries. The Fund contributes to the salary for a six-month traineeship and a full programme of support is provided by Creative Access. Since 2018, the Fund has supported 27 trainees. In 2021, £60,653 in funding was awarded to 9 organisations.



Khadija Saye Fund

Khadija Saye and her mother Mary Mendy tragically died in the fire at Grenfell Tower on June 14, 2017. Khadija had been a Creative Access intern at London-based gallery, PEER UK. The Fund was created in her memory to raise money to establish internships to encourage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue a career in the Arts. The Fund raised £20,783 in total which has funded 7 individuals to undertake internships at PEER UK.



Masterclasses.

Creative Access masterclasses are free events, held monthly for our interns, alumni and wider community. They feature alumni and other industry role models sharing advice and insights into how to navigate a particular industry or on how to develop a key skill.

Since April 2021, we have held 10 masterclasses, attended by over 1,000 people working in or aspiring to work in the creative industries. Highlights include sessions on navigating the animation industry with the Aardman Academy, how to get into TV with ITV and how to improve your networking skills with LinkedIn.

"Creative Access masterclasses provided me with a space to connect to other publishing professionals, and this was especially helpful when I first moved to London and didn't know many people."

Leanne McNulty, publishing account manager



Employability support, training & skills.

In our last financial year, we held 43 employability sessions at universities attended by almost 1,500 people. These sessions providing a mixture of employability support, training and skills sessions on topics including how to write a covering letter, create a CV and how to navigate the creative industries. We also held a further 18 CV clinics open to anyone within our community to attend.

"Really inspiring to hear from women who look like me, and how they overcome the barriers that are evident in the creative industries, especially within diversity. I learnt that no matter what, I have to make sure that I am always excelling."

Student feedback from Kent Showcase

Trainee & alumni impact.

Our annual impact data shows the unique combination of training, mentoring and career development support is having a significant impact on the career progression and optimism of people from communities under-represented in the creative industries.

Career progression.

66% of our alumni report progress in their career in the last 12 months

90% say that at least one area of support from Creative Access has had a 'significant' or 'very significant' impact on their career progression

Industry retention.

Overall 92% of our alumni are still working the creative economy 2 years after completing a Creative Access programme. This number is fairly consistent for people from all backgrounds.

"Creative Access helped me get my first role in visual effects. At the time, their scheme opened the door for a role at Framestore, one of the big London visual effect studios. Without it, it would have been next to impossible for me as someone with no industry contacts to get my foot in the door."

Umar Hussain, visual effects producer



"Having had no contacts, the in-built community of interns and alumni was a great source of encouragement and helped with building an understanding of the different areas of the creative industries. I have now encountered a number of other Creative Access alumni, having a sounding board when looking for advice and even been able to offer paid opportunities to some people through some of my roles."

Antony Lee, music marketing




Employer impact.

Since April 2021, we have started working with over 400 new employer partners across all of our service areas. In the last 12 months, we have seen a sharp increase in employers putting in place inclusive recruitment practices, with 45% having taken Positive Action and 36% started working with a partner, like Creative Access. Although just over a quarter have put in place training for staff, a third of organisations are yet to do this, showing the significant opportunity we have for increased impact in this area.

82% of our employer partners attribute their progress against their diversity, equity and inclusion goals to their work with us.

“Creative Access has been great to work with and has helped us to find talented journalists who might not otherwise have been on our radar.”

Zanny Minton-Beddoes, editor in chief, The Economist



“We have taken in 22 interns, of whom twelve stayed on beyond their internships, and four remain with us in permanent long-standing roles today. Creative Access has been a generous, proactive and creative partner to Pan Mac as we have worked to build a more diverse and inclusive team.”

Anthony Forbes-Watson, managing director, Pan Macmillan



“HarrisonParrott is delighted to work with Creative Access – from the training in diversity and inclusion we have engaged with, through to our ongoing relationship with them through the paid intern recruitment programme we have seen such a positive benefit for our company from our partnership.”

Lorna Aizlewood, chief operating office and general counsel, HarrisonParrott



Some of our employer partners.



Creative industries data & insight.

We are continuously working to improve understanding of the creative economy and the people who work or aspire to work in it. This year, we have commissioned four pieces of research with our community and taken part in a project with the Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE) at the University of Manchester. This insight helps improve our own services and is a free resource for the wider industry, media and other stakeholders.

Impact of Covid-19.

The second phase of our 'The Verge' research in December 2021 looked at changes in financial and job stability for people working in the creative industries as a result of the pandemic. Key findings included:

- Financial stability has declined - in May 2020 53% said they had enough money to live on versus 42% in 2021
- 45% said their mental health had been negatively impacted – rising to 64% amongst those with a disability
- Over 10% have had to re-locate due to Covid-19 to find work

We also partnered with the **Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE) at the University of Manchester** to look at the impact of Covid-19 and BLM on Black, Asian and ethnically diverse creatives and cultural workers.

Financial barriers.

Our research with 1,500 candidates into the financial obstacles to career development revealed:

- 68% of people have had their career progression impacted by financial barriers
- More than 50% of candidates have refused job offers because of financial obstacles, rising to 79% for those from communities under-represented in the sector

We launched our first Career Development Bursary in partnership with McLaren Racing to help candidates overcome these financial barriers.



Thrive survey.

In February 2022, we commissioned our first Thrive survey to provide a snapshot of candidates' confidence and optimism about their career progression and to understand what stage employers in the sector are at in their diversity, equity and inclusion plans. The survey was conducted across our own Creative Access community, employer partners and the wider industry. Key findings included:

Candidates:

- 69% of candidates report seeing opportunities for career progression
- 85% report having the necessary skills and knowledge to progress their career

Employers:

- 69% employers reporting an increase in representativeness of workforce
- 36% reporting increased equity in progression and rewards

Generation post-pandemic.

We conducted research into the expectations and ambitions of over 800 people in our community who are due to enter the workplace post-pandemic – the first generation to do so. The research revealed:

- When considering where they would like to work, this generation claim to be more influenced by an organisation's reputation and how well they look after employee wellbeing rather than the salary they are offering (12%)
- When looking at specific roles, the job description sounding inspiring and challenging is more important than salary
- 82% of respondents are expecting to be promoted within the first year of their first role
- Just a quarter are quite or very optimistic about finding a role post-education, with well over half (57%) who are not optimistic

*Access to all of our research can be found on our website

Creative Access team.

We continued to grow the Creative Access team and now have 25 full-time team members and work with 7 consultants to deliver training and other services. Significant hires this year include:



Elonka Soros

Ex-BBC journalist and leading DEI consultant, Elonka, was hired into the newly created role of development director.



Becky Smith

Ex-Salesforce consultant, Becky, joined in the newly created role of systems and impact manager.



Sabmitar Bal

Sab joined as our new opportunities board manager to oversee the launch of our new board.

Creative Access brand identity & website.

To coincide with our 10 year anniversary, we launched a new brand identity and website. Created pro bono by the team at McCann Health (including one of our alumni who is now a junior designer at the agency) the new identity reflects our commitment to action, rather than mere words.

The new website, created by female-lead web design agency A+F, improves access to resources, opportunities, mentoring and training that support career progression.



Future goals.

We know from experience how quickly the zeitgeist can shift in the world of diversity and inclusion. Through our constant liaison with candidates and employers we will be doing our best to stay ahead of the conversation and implementing new initiatives that best serve our communities. With the rising cost of living we anticipate that salary equity will be a huge priority for individuals and organisations alike this coming year.

During the early part of 2022, we piloted two internship programmes where accommodation and travel costs were included for candidates within communities that are under-represented in the creative industries. We will be advocating for others to follow suit. From January 2023 we will also be mandating the disclosure of salaries and salary bands for roles listed on our opportunities board. From a candidate perspective it supports greater transparency and therefore inclusivity, but from an employer's perspective, this action alone generates up to 50% more applications to a role.

For an organisation to hold itself to account it really needs to be able to create a benchmark for future success and to set clear goals each year. We have developed an annual survey that looks both at hard DEI metrics and at softer measures, like staff satisfaction. This way we can identify any particular individuals or groups of people who feel they are less likely to progress - to get access to pay rises, training or promotions. Not only do we use this framework ourselves, but this year, we will be working with our partner organisations to facilitate this on their behalf; holding independent results and creating corresponding action plans to go alongside the survey results. Given how quickly the DEI landscape is evolving and it's important to have the confidence to navigate the issues and to understand how to take both individual and collective responsibility for making a change to make the workplace a more inclusive environment.



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