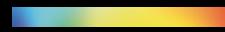




# BBC Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice Progress Report 2023/24



# Welcome to the BBC Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice Progress Report 2023/24

## OVERVIEW

[Television](#)[Children's](#)[Radio](#)[Sport](#)[Nations](#)[News](#)

## OUTCOMES

**Cover:**  
Gladiators, Hungry Bear,  
BBC One

**Right:**  
Doctor Who, Bad Wolf/  
BBC Studios, BBC One



# ABC FOR THE FUTURE



**C**reative diversity remains a priority for the BBC – we know that our unwavering commitment to represent and serve all audiences is integral as we build a BBC for the future.

Earlier this year, we set out three essential roles the BBC will prioritise to deliver value for all audiences: pursuing truth with no agenda, backing the best British storytelling and bringing people together. All three depend on the BBC setting the very highest standards for diversity and inclusion, on and off air.

We want all audiences to feel that the BBC is for them – authenticity in our output is crucial to that, as we continue to bring untold and diverse stories to our audiences. Our groundbreaking storytelling sets us apart, demonstrated by titles such as the Grierson and RTS award winning **Once Upon A Time In Northern Ireland** and **Rose Ayling-Ellis: Signs for Change**.

We're continuing to back the best homegrown stories, working with underrepresented talent on and off-air. In Drama, **Best Interests** written by Jack Thorne was BAFTA and RTS nominated and in Comedy, **Juice** won BAFTA and RTS awards. We're proud to be nurturing homegrown emerging British talent with both Gbemisola

Ikumelo (**Black Ops**) and Mawaan Rizwan (**Juice**) winning BAFTA and RTS performance awards.

We've also seen the impact of content which connects people, with titles such as **Gladiators** and **The Traitors** being applauded by audiences especially by families, for inclusive representation embedded throughout the cast and contributors.

We've also seen the significant impact of coming together as an industry through the TV Access Project, as we work together to drive greater representation and inclusivity of deaf, disabled and neurodivergent talent.

This year has seen the conclusion of our three-year Creative Diversity commitment to invest at least £112 million of existing commissioning budgets on diverse content (with on-air diverse portrayal, off-air diverse production leadership and/or diverse company leadership) across TV and Radio. This has been the largest financial investment in the industry to diverse content, looking holistically at representation both on and off air.

We're proud that we have not only exceeded our commitment, but doubled it over the three-year period, investing £243 million. It's important that we capture key successes as well as learnings to

help us go further to serve all our audiences and support underrepresented talent in the creative industry.

We have commissioned a review by the Lenny Henry Centre for Media Diversity as an independent third-party organisation to look at the impact of the three-year commitments.

It's key that our new creative diversity commitments build on the work achieved in the past three years. Our new commitments can look to further support underrepresented production talent in leadership roles and also support production companies led by those from underrepresented backgrounds to create authentic content for our audiences through a diversity of lived experiences on and off air.

By evolving a holistic approach that prioritises authenticity, inclusivity and belonging, our new creative diversity commitments will build on our work to not only reflect and represent the diverse communities of the UK in our programmes and services, but also create a truly inclusive industry for all.

**Jessica Schibli**  
BBC Head of Creative Diversity

# Overview

**T**his report highlights what the BBC and its suppliers have achieved in the financial year 2023/24.

We also conclude our three-year commitment to invest at least £112 million of our commissioning spend on diverse content across TV and Radio and will be highlighting our achievements over this period. Our ambitions continue to grow, and new creative diversity commitments will be outlined later in the year to build on accurately representing and authentically portraying diversity across the UK in TV, Children's, Radio, Sport, News and Nations.

## Leading the industry: content qualifying under the creative diversity criteria

**£243.3m**

Spent on qualifying content on TV and Radio over three years

**£105.3m**

Spent on qualifying content on TV in financial year 2023/24

**154**

Qualifying titles in TV 2023/24

**£7.4m**

Spent on qualifying content on Radio in financial year 2023/24

**300**

Qualifying titles in Radio 2023/24

## Support for talent behind the scenes

**12.8%**

Black, Asian and minority ethnic representation on production teams\*\*

**9.7%**

Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent representation on production teams\*\*

**17.6%**

LGB representation on production teams\*

**52.6%**

Female representation on production teams\*\*

**£2.3m**

Diverse Talent Development Fund

## Investing in access

**24**

Mid-career production placements for deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent talent through BBC Elevate

**3**

Access First Titles at the BBC

**10**

Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent writers supported through the BBC Writers' Access Group

**30+**

Productions supported by access coordinators

**9.2%**

Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent representation on-screen\*\*\*

\* Diamond currently monitors Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual representation

\*\* Diamond data: actual representation off-screen

\*\*\* Diamond data: actual representation on-screen

# Overview continued

## Investing in diverse content

2023/24 is the third and concluding year of the BBC's three-year commitment to invest at least £112 million on qualifying content across TV and Radio. A refreshed commitment, building on our success, will be outlined later in 2024.

### Our criteria

Our programme commissions must meet two of the following criteria to count towards the commitment. Each criteria is underpinned by detailed definitions as set out on our website.

#### 1 Diverse stories and portrayal on-screen

(landmark, incidental and/or on-air talent) assessed by the relevant commissioner and the Creative Diversity Team. This applies to all protected characteristics.

#### 2 Diverse production leadership

verified by the supplier in the End of Production report. This includes ethnicity, disability and lower socio-economic backgrounds.

#### 3 Diverse company leadership

verified by the supplier via the Company Leadership Survey. This includes ethnicity, disability and lower socio-economic backgrounds.

# £243.3m

Spent on qualifying content in TV & Radio in the last three years (2021/22 – 2023/24)

### Television

This year the BBC has spent £105.3 million on TV commissions meeting the criteria. Cumulatively, over the last three years, the BBC has spent £228.5 million on qualifying content in TV.

2023/24	Programmes	% Programmes
Qualifying (meets at least 2 of the 3 criteria)	154	100.0%
Portrayal criteria met	90	58.4%
Production leadership criteria met*	126	81.8%
Company leadership criteria met**	109	70.8%

\* At least two of the decision-making roles on a production team must be from the three underrepresented groups

\*\* i.e. at least two of the leadership roles in a production company must be from the three underrepresented groups

The BBC is using improved reporting systems to monitor qualifying content; independent production companies are asked to submit a Company Leadership Survey and an End of Production report.

This has enabled us to understand more about the production teams and production companies making our television programmes.

Of the programmes that met our diverse production leadership criteria, 47.1% did so because they had leadership positions held by people from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background, 28.6% had people who were deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent and 84.6% had people from a low socio-economic background. Intersectionality was also a consideration – most people who qualified did so by meeting more than one criteria.

The Company Leadership Survey means we have more understanding on the companies that make



The Weakest Link, BBC Studios, BBC Two

our programmes. Of the programmes that met our diverse company leadership criteria, 27.5% had senior leaders from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background, 25.0% had senior leaders who were deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent and 88.8% had senior leaders from a lower socio-economic background. As above, most of the roles that qualified did so by meeting more than one criteria.

### Radio

This year BBC Radio spent £7.4 million on content which met the qualifying criteria. In total, 300 commissions qualified. Qualification against the portrayal criteria is assured through conversations between commissioning teams and the supplier. As with TV, BBC Radio uses a Company Leadership Survey for independent production companies to complete. We are actively investigating how to do the same for

production leadership with an End of Production report for Radio. Cumulatively, over the last three years, Radio has spent £14.8 million on qualifying content, meaning we have exceeded the three-year target spend of £12 million in Radio.

	Programmes	% Programmes
Qualifying (meets at least 2 of the 3 criteria)	300	100%
Portrayal criteria met	272	90.7%
Production leadership criteria met*	176	58.7%
Company leadership criteria met**	245	81.7%

\* For smaller companies with fewer than four of the listed roles, a 50% target will apply for example, in a company with three of the roles, two will have to meet the criteria

# Overview continued

## Supporting talent behind the scenes

The BBC continues to build an increasingly diverse and inclusive organisation, reflected in its workforce, culture and output. The Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice embeds diversity throughout the BBC's commissioning processes and is in its sixth year of reporting.

### Diverse Talent Development Fund

The Diverse Talent Development Fund of £2.3 million supports production companies to develop underrepresented on- and off-screen talent, including writers, actors, presenters, and contributors, through targeted initiatives.

We also use the fund for specific targeted BBC initiatives such as BBC Elevate, some of our comedy bursaries, and the BBC Writers' Access Group.

### Creative Diversity Team

An established and integral team that is embedded in the Content division of the BBC working closely with commissioning, audience insights and business teams within the organisation as well as production partners, pan-industry bodies and community organisations. The team is involved at every stage of the production process, working together to ensure our creative diversity commitments are met, by supporting underrepresented talent on- and off-air, ensuring authentic representation in our content, leading the industry, and holding ourselves accountable through data analysis and measurement.

### Achieving 20% diverse production teams

Putting diversity and inclusion at the heart of production, we asked production companies to commit to at least 20% of their production teams being from the following underrepresented groups:

Black, Asian and minority ethnic, deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent and low socio-economic backgrounds. This is discussed at the point of commissioning and captured through the End of Production report. In 2023/24, 82% of productions met the 20% diverse production teams target, showing a year-on-year increase.

## Celebrating talent on-screen and on-air

### Programme highlights

This year the BBC has produced award-winning programming that has inclusion and authenticity at its core. A multitude of productions demonstrated high standards of diversity and inclusivity, with increased representation off-screen and on-screen, including titles such as **Darren McGarvey: The**

**State We're In** from BBC Scotland and **Black Music Wales** from BBC Wales.

Our Unscripted genres have prioritised inclusion both on- and off-screen, by ensuring our popular and returning series, such as **The One Show**, **Morning Live**, and **Glow Up** have embedded inclusive practices in the programmes.

Authentic documentaries such as **Rose Ayling-Ellis: Signs for Change** and **Inseparable Sisters** reflected a range of stories and experiences.

In Scripted, BBC Comedy produced shows that portray characters and situations that are funny and challenge stereotypes; including **Dreaming Whilst Black**, **Juice**, **Mandy and Man Like Mobeen**. These titles have been renewed, highlighting our commitment to comedies telling underrepresented stories. Scripted drama titles with diversity and authenticity at their

core include, but are not limited to; **Champion**, **Waterloo Road**, **Best Interests**, **Grime Kids** and **Boiling Point**.

BBC Radio & Music continues to champion diverse British culture across our Music and Speech content, such as **Radio 2 Remembers Windrush** and BBC Radio 3's **Round the Horn**. BBC Sounds **Audio Lab** is an award-winning training programme which helps amplify the next generation of podcast producers and audio creatives across the country.

BBC Sport continues to lead the way with prime-time coverage of women's sport, including the **FIFA Women's World Cup** and **Women's Super League** alongside a new deal with the **Netball Super League**.

Children's and Education shows our youngest audience the power of diversity and inclusivity in its commissions with long-running titles such as **The Dumping Ground** and the highly successful **CBeebies Bedtime Stories**, showcasing a diverse range of readers and stories, representing a range of different backgrounds.

### 50:50 The Equality Project

Working across News, Nations, TV, Radio and Children's content, the 50:50 Equality Project is an important measurement tool to track and improve on-air representation in the BBC's output in an agile and informative way, monitoring ethnicity, disability and gender. In 2023, 166 teams were monitoring ethnicity which increased to 242 by 2024. In 2023, 128 teams were monitoring disability which increased to 186 in 2024.

A new 50:50 Tracker has provided teams with a dynamic tool to track representation in real time. Productions can use the data to see whether they are meeting targets for representation across gender, disability and ethnic diversity. The tool is easy to use, and teams can see where they can make changes to improve on-screen representation.



Boiling Point, Ascendant Fox/Matriarch Productions/It's All Made Up Productions, BBC One

# Overview continued

## Representation recognised

The BBC is proud to have commissioned and produced award-winning programmes with authenticity, representation and inclusion at their core, recognising our commitment to serving all audiences with high-quality innovative content. There were RTS awards for *Juice* (Best comedy drama), *Sort Your life Out* (Best formatted popular factual), *A Kind of Spark* (Best children's programme), *EastEnders* (Best soap and continuing drama), Chris Packham (Best presenter for *Inside Our Autistic Minds*), and Alex Scott (Best sports presenter, commentator, or pundit).

The BBC is proud of the performance wins for home-grown British comedy talent: RTS Programme Award wins for the comedy



Rose Ayling-Ellis: Signs for Change, Rogan Productions, BBC One

performances of Gbemisola Ikumelo and Hammed Animashaun in *Black Ops*. Gbemisola Ikumelo also won a BAFTA for Best female performance in a comedy, and Mawaan Rizwaan (*Juice*) won a BAFTA TV award for Best male performance in a comedy. *Mobility*, a BBC Comedy Short Film, won a BAFTA in the short form category applauded for its on- and off-screen representation of disability.

At this year's ARIA awards, the late Rob Burrow CBE received two gold awards – for Best New Podcast and The Creative Innovation Award – and two silvers – for Best New Presenter and The Impact Award with outstanding recognition for his BBC Local podcast Seven showcasing inspirational stories from sporting greats.

The BBC Asian Network was crowned Station of the Year at the ARIAs, recognising the range of content, music and culture showcased by the network.

## A focus on improving access

Over the last three years, the BBC has focused on improving both access across all of its productions and the representation of deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent people on- and off-air.

The BBC has focused efforts to improve access across all of its productions to improve inclusion and representation of deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent talent on- and off-air. The BBC is a key member of the TV Access Project, supporting its vision for a television industry where no deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent talent is excluded because barriers have been removed and equity is created.

Looking at the Creative Diversity Network's Diamond data, there has been a year-on-year increase in off-screen actual representation

of disabled talent from 8.9% in 2022/23 to 9.7% in 2023/24 and also in on-screen actual representation of disability (from 8.8% in 2022/23 to 9.2% in 2023/24) and ethnicity.

### TV Access Project (TAP)

TAP is an alliance of ten of the UK's biggest broadcasters and streamers who have pledged to work together to create a substantive and permanent structural shift in the TV industry to ensure access provision for disabled talent. The BBC is a key member.

Its vision is to see full inclusion by 2030 – that is to say, a television industry where no deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent talent is ever excluded because barriers have been removed and equity created.

In order to ensure the full and equal inclusion of deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent talent, both behind and in front of the camera, TAP has produced the 5 As: Anticipate, Ask, Assess, Adjust, Advocate.

- **Anticipate:** We fully expect to work and continue to work with disabled people on a regular basis
- **Ask:** We avoid assuming anything, of anybody, so we have sensitive conversations about access as standard with everyone
- **Assess:** We value self-reflection, so are clear and transparent about how accessible we are
- **Adjust:** We deliver what is needed, consistently and ahead of time, to ensure the full inclusion of disabled talent
- **Advocate:** We set high standards for everyone, celebrating disabled talent and actively championing them

### BBC Elevate

The Elevate scheme runs for two years at a time and matches mid to senior level, deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent programme makers with production roles in independent production companies. Over the past two years we have matched 24 deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent talent in Unscripted, Scripted, Children's, Audio and Sport productions. The scheme has been extended beyond editorial and production to include craft roles, such as a camera assistant and an art department assistant. 50% of the roles sit outside of London and 25% have an intersection with coming from a lower socio-economic background. Roles have included production co-ordinator to researcher, PD to edit producer and two permanent scripted roles.

Programmes with Elevate placements have included: *Silent Witness*, *Show Trial*, *Survivor*, *RuPaul's Drag Race UK*, *Pointless*, *Inside Our Autistic Minds*, *Best Interests*, *Morning Live*, *Sports Personality of the Year*, *CBBC's My Life*, *Michael McIntyre's Big Show* and *EastEnders*.

### Access coordinators

Access coordinators ensure that access requirements on productions are met, so that actors, contributors and crew members can give their best work. Productions will vary but an access coordinator can be brought in from greenlight to post-production, and they become the bridge between production, cast and crew. The role is essentially one of problem solving, working with everyone to find solutions and remove access barriers.

Over 30 of our titles have worked with an access coordinator in 2023/24, including *The One Show*, *The Apprentice* and *Doctor Who*.

# TELEVISION

**Every genre across Television has its own unique way of resonating with our audience, to tell stories that reflect the lives of our diverse audiences with truth and authentic representation.**

Comedy, Drama, Entertainment, Factual and Daytime content can have a large impact on the audiences we serve. Commissioning teams, supported by the Creative Diversity team, work closely together to meet those high expectations.

**BBC on-screen actual  
Diamond data for 2023/24**

**50.7%**

Female representation

**29.3%**

Black, Asian and minority ethnic representation

**9.2%**

Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent representation

Right:  
Dreaming Whilst Black, Big Deal Films/A24, BBC Three



# Television

## Leading by example

### Supporting production partners

We hold ourselves and the production companies we work with to account to embed our diversity commitments. Commissioners engage with suppliers when approving the commissioning specification, and where required we take appropriate action to escalate discussions with senior leadership within production companies to ensure expectations are continually met. BBC-funded training is provided for producers through PACT, along with online guidance and resources, as well as the ongoing support of the Creative Diversity team.

### Improved representation across the industry

**Ambulance** is a series that has been purposely moved to different regions in the UK to include a wealth of real-life stories and incidents

authentically reflecting the audiences. The 12th series is based in Greater Manchester, and the show's authenticity comes from having a diverse production team and developing off-screen talent. The Editors scheme involved junior editors gaining experience to step up to editor roles, including several on future series of **Ambulance**; the success of the scheme means we will be replicating it on other BBC titles.

**The One Show/Morning Live** are leading by example as our Access First Titles. They have engaged with an access co-ordinator who is there to support on- and off-screen talent. They have developed accessible recruitment processes and increased their off-screen representation. **Morning Live** has regular deaf and disabled presenters. Yvonne Cobb is the only regular deaf presenter on a daytime show. The **Morning Live** team has received disability confidence training and were nominated this year at the RTS North

West Awards for 'most inclusive programme for Deaf, Disabled and/or Neurodivergent Talent'.

The BBC Comedy Collective launched in 2023/24 is a supercharged bursary scheme that offers ten places to the next generation of comedy writers, producers and directors who would like to develop their careers in scripted comedy. Previous bursary winners have benefited from cash awards to develop scripts and pilots, guidance and mentoring from industry professionals, including the BBC Comedy commissioning team, placements on BBC Comedy productions, and masterclasses and workshops to help hone their craft. Our bursary winners have gone on to make award-winning TV series, win TV and radio commissions and gain agents. The cohort for 2023/24 was made up of two directors, two producers and six writers all placed with different indies working on BBC scripted commissions, including **Alma's Not Normal**, **Dinosaur** and **Peacock**.



Ambulance, Dragonfly Film and Television, BBC One

### Case study Grime Kids

**Grime Kids** worked in partnership with We are Spotlight – a youth organisation in Tower Hamlets that gives young people first-hand experience in the film and TV industry. They created a year-long initiative during which participants were given the opportunity to visit the set of **Grime Kids** and various other BBC/ITV sets, as well as producing an Electronic Press Kit (EPK) which is an integral tool used in the industry. The programme taught transferable skills in media, public speaking, IT, creative writing and storytelling.



Grime Kids, Mammoth Screen, BBC Three

# Television continued

## Case study

### David & Jay's Touring Toolshed

Liska Pleines joined the **David & Jay's Touring Toolshed** production as her first role within the TV industry. Placed predominantly in the casting team, Liska's warm and professional manner helped contributors feel at ease. Liska learned the entire casting process alongside invaluable production skills and contributed significantly to the team, bringing energy and enthusiasm. The executive producer noted that Liska has great potential to grow and develop and that they would be keen to employ Liska as a junior researcher in any of their teams.



Liska Pleines, Junior Casting Researcher

The Diverse Talent Development Fund has supported 122 production titles in 2023/24, including individuals in 2023/24 on productions such as **The Responder**, **Blue Lights**, **Doctor Who**, **Such Brave Girls**, **David & Jay's Touring Toolshed**, **Bridge of Lies**, **Have I Got News For You**, **Homes Under The Hammer**, **Man Like Mobeen** and **Juice**.

“

**I just wanted to thank you for this traineeship. It isn't lost on me what an opportunity it is to work on a show like Have I Got News For You. For someone who is just starting to make their way in the world of television, this experience is one that I will remember fondly.”**

**Zubeda Mir**

is a production trainee partially funded from the BBC Diverse Talent Development Fund and topped up by Hat Trick Productions for **Have I Got News for You** in 2023. She thrived and grew in her role which impressed production.

## Authentic portrayal

We want to create authentic content for all audiences and, to do that, you need to tell authentic stories with authentic voices behind the camera.

**Dreaming Whilst Black** is a scripted comedy testament to our aims. Written by and starring Adjani Salmon, this multiple-award-winning comedy with a majority Black production team has now been commissioned for a second series.



Man Like Mobeen, Tiger Aspect, BBC Three

# Television continued

## Case study

### Boot Dreams: Now or Never

16 footballers aged 18 – 26, all rejected by top clubs, arrive at a unique training camp set up by former Premier League player Gifton Noel-Williams, to have a second chance to play professionally. Gifton wants to see whether one-to-one mentoring, both on and off the pitch, can get them back in work and into the game they love. The young 'ballers' are the

stars of this series, as is Gifton, and his coaches Jordan Broadbent and Lola Ogunbote. This series appealed to a younger underserved audience with a real genuine purpose and authenticity. **Boot Dreams: Now or Never** had a diverse production team and quickly gained the trust of the participants to keep the series authentic and relatable.



Boot Dreams: Now or Never, Expectation Entertainment, BBC Three

## Case study

### I Kissed a Boy

**I Kissed a Boy** is the UK's first-ever gay dating show. No small talk, no swiping – it's all about the first kiss. The contestants represent and reflect the Gay, Bisexual and Queer community and are unapologetic as to who they are, with their sense of entertainment, raw emotion and fun. The series cleverly captures the science

of attraction through a kiss. The production team had a duty of care executive to guide production and be an essential support for the contributors.



I Kissed a Boy, Two Four, BBC Three

# Television continued

## Casting should be open and fair

Open and fair casting continues to be a priority across Television, to ensure we provide equal opportunities to attract the broadest range of talent and contributors. The suppliers we work with understand not only the necessity of making casting open and fully accessible but also the benefit of doing so.

**Bring the Drama** created a casting process which removed all access barriers from casting calls with accessible venues for auditions. They worked with an access co-ordinator throughout the casting process and a welfare executive. This resulted in a cast which represented our diverse audiences. In this series, we had two contributors who were disabled.

“

**When I saw the casting call, I was encouraged by the fact that the show was willing to embrace disability rather than see it as a reason to exclude potential contributors.**

**The welfare executive went over and above to make sure the needs of all contributors with disabilities were met, which was very reassuring.”**

**Rehanna Bernard**

Actor and contributor on **Bring the Drama**

**Sort Your Life Out** is a returning series, highlighting our commitment to diverse content. Stacey Solomon challenges families to sort their life out in seven days. Embarking on a mammoth declutter, the family let go of half their possessions so that their home can be beautifully reorganised. Diverse casting teams have resulted in a diverse range of families, in ethnicity, disability and socio-economic backgrounds. The show received a RTS Programme award in the Formatted Popular Factual category and has resonated well with C2DE\* audiences, 23% more than the average C2DE audience for a BBC One factual show.

\* C2DE is a National Readership Survey (NRS) social grade, originally used to classify readers in the UK. It commonly refers to consumers and their buying behaviour. C2DE is the three lower social and economic groups in a society.



Gladiators, Hungry Bear, BBC One

## Case study Gladiators

**Gladiators**, the iconic competition show, has been reimagined for BBC One and BBC iPlayer. An exciting mix of classic, action-packed battles alongside jaw-dropping new events and a brand-new generation of superhuman **Gladiators** to compete against a brave set of contenders in the ultimate test of speed and strength. These ‘superhumans’ come from a range of backgrounds representing and reflecting our diverse audiences.

The audience response to the return of **Gladiators** in its new home on the BBC has been phenomenal. We launched with 9.8 million viewers and are currently averaging 8.3 million over the series to date – with iPlayer accounting for nearly 40% of this viewing figure.

Amongst those we’re reaching are 1.2 million (15%) 16 – 34s, 3.2 million C2DE viewers – accounting for nearly 40% of the audience – and some of the highest numbers for children across all genres at 1.8 million (22%).

“

**The response I've had in particular from young deaf kids and parents has been incredible. Representation and role models are so important, kids being able to 'see it' allows them to feel like they can 'be it' which is so very powerful. They are able to see being unique is pretty cool!"**

**Gladiator – Fury**

# Television continued

## Case study

### The Rap Game

**The Rap Game** This series featured the brilliant Lickz who is autistic. “Being autistic, I feel like there’s a lot of people who don’t really understand me,” she says. “And when I try to communicate certain things, it takes a while to get there.”

Lickz, who describes her music as “love songs on drill beats”, shares her experiences of autism on the show, even rapping about it to judges Krept and Konan, and music legend DJ Target, along with the other contestants. The crew and cast worked with an access co-ordinator to ensure access was met and this meant that Lickz could concentrate on her music and performances without any barriers.



The Rap Game S5, Naked TV, BBC Three

## Case study

### Windrush – Portraits of a Generation

**Windrush – Portraits of a Generation** marks the 75th anniversary of the arrival of HMT Empire Windrush to British shores in 1948. The documentary follows ten leading artists from Britain and abroad commissioned to create portraits of ten pioneering members of the Windrush Generation.

Endorsed by the King, the completed portraits are to be part of the Royal Collection and stand as a lasting memorial to all the men, women and children who came to Britain from the Caribbean and gave so much of themselves to rebuild a nation devastated by war.



Windrush Portraits of a Generation, BBC Studios, Arts BBC Two

## A diverse workforce makes for better content

The £2.3 million Diverse Talent Development Fund supports our commitment to make authentic content with a diverse workforce. The Assistant Commissioners initiative has also been extended in Television and Radio, to support the development of future commissioners.

**Silent Witness** is an Access First Title. The production received funding and support to increase their deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent off-screen talent in the form of a shadow director, second unit director, production assistant, and an access co-ordinator.

Duly Noted is a Script Editor Training programme that we support with Sony, run by Eleven Film. The scheme consists of a fully funded week-long training boot camp followed by a paid 12-week placement on one of our productions to help bed in the training. We have a great success rate with this scheme, with the majority of our placements being extended in contracts or retained in permanent roles. We are about to launch the fourth year of the programme.

# £2.3m

Diverse Talent Development Fund

# Television continued

## Case study

### Best Interests

**Best Interests** is a critically acclaimed fictional drama about a family driven apart by having to make choices no parent would ever want to make. Marnie has a rare form of muscular dystrophy which becomes life-threatening; the doctors believe it is in her best interests to be allowed to die, but her loving family disagree. The four-part drama is a landmark portrayal of disability and was written by BAFTA-winning writer, Jack Thorne. Jack is an advocate for deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent representation and it was Jack's MacTaggart speech at Edinburgh in 2021 that led to the formation of the TV Access Project. It's clear the experience and authenticity Jack brings to the script makes for such a compelling story.

The BBC co-funded roles on the production via BBC Elevate, including a shadow director and an art department assistant to ensure deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent talent were represented off-screen, as well as supporting accessibility costs throughout production.

“

**Our country has a very troubled relationship with disability and these cases put a spotlight on that. But our drama is first and foremost a love story and it needs incredible actors to bring it to life.”**

**Jack Thorne**



Best Interests, AC Chapter One/ One Shoe Films, BBC One

## Case study

### Champion

**Champion** is the first TV project from Candice Carty-Williams, author of *The Sunday Times* bestselling novels *Queenie* and *People Person*.

A love letter to Black British music set in South London, **Champion** is a celebration of a sound that has long been the beating heart of Black culture. Featuring original music written and produced by some of the leading musicians this country has to offer, including Ray BLK, Ghetts and more.

“

**For me, it's called Champion and it is about fighting because Vita is the person constantly fighting to be seen and to be heard – not just in family but in music, life and as a Black woman, this is really important. Champion is about fighting just to exist and exist comfortably and happily.”**

**Candice Carty-Williams**



Champion, New Pictures/Balloon Entertainment, BBC One

## Television continued

### Supporting diverse talent on-screen

**50.7%**

Female  
Diamond data: actual on-screen representation

**29.3%**

Black, Asian and minority ethnic  
Diamond data: actual on-screen representation

**9.2%**

Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent  
Diamond data: actual on-screen representation

**17.7%**

Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual\*  
Diamond data: actual on-screen representation

### Supporting creativity off-screen

**3**

Writers room schemes to support new and underrepresented scriptwriters

**91**

Writers supported through the schemes, half of which were female

**27.4%**

Black, Asian and minority ethnic writers supported

**28.8%**

Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent writers supported

### Supporting the next generation of talent

**20**

Scholarships provided for students from underrepresented backgrounds to attend National Film and Television School courses

**20**

NFTS placements funded, to train female self-shooters

**£2.3m**

Ringfenced through the Diverse Talent Development Fund, across all genres

**122**

Programmes supported through the Diverse Talent Development Fund

### Working with partners across the industry

**The BBC supported ScreenSkills Unscripted TV Skills Fund**

**21%**

Of those participating were Black, Asian and minority ethnic

**22%**

Of those participating were deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent

**18%**

Of those participating were from lower socio-economic backgrounds

**The BBC supported PACT diversity and inclusion workshops**

**332**

Individuals attended 9 workshops

\* Diamond currently monitors Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual representation

# CHILDREN'S

**Diversity and inclusion are key to representing and serving this audience in the most authentic and relevant way. BBC Children's is proud to be there supporting and enriching the lives of children and families from the very beginning.**

**BBC Children's on-screen actual  
Diamond data for 2023/24**

**59.5%**

Female representation

**39.3%**

Black, Asian and minority ethnic representation

**8.8%**

Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent representation

**Right:**  
Blue Peter, BBC Studios, CBBC



# Children's

## Leading by example

Diversity and inclusion are integral to our commissions, which has been demonstrated by exceeding our £15 million target for commissioning diverse content over the past three years.

The Children's and Education Diversity Fund continues to support diversity off-screen, funding underrepresented groups to excel in roles from researcher to series director. This fund invests in people, and we make sure to follow and support the careers of these individuals, so the value of our investment is realised.

BBC Junior Virtual In Person sessions continue to be run to connect us with our young audiences and listen to their direct feedback on our content and ensure it resonates.



The Dumping Ground, BBC Studios, CBBC

Commissioners and production teams have engaged in Disability in Action training to support them in finding, supporting, and representing Disabled people both on- and off-screen.

Ignite was launched in 2021 as an unprecedented initiative to uncover diverse UK animation talent to develop the next hit. The BBC created an equitable process for individuals looking for their first break into the industry as well as established independent production companies to submit ideas.

Our second BBC Ignite programme reaffirms our continued commitment to develop the UK animation industry, support diverse UK creative talent and uncover the next animation hit that celebrates great British storytelling. We had 1,622 submissions this year, which was a significant increase on the previous year.



CBeebies Bedtime Stories with Lenny Rush, CBeebies

“

**One of the main reasons I was so drawn to Ignite was because it was for absolutely anyone in any walk of life. That level of openness completely eliminated so many barriers for people, and it was heart-warming to see that carried on throughout the whole process.”**

**Sam Shaw**

Creator of BBC Ignite project **Duck and Frog**

## Authentic portrayal

**Tracy Beaker** is a legacy brand for BBC Children's, and **The Dumping Ground** is a returning series from that world. The comedy drama authentically represents the experience of children in care, with a very diverse cast and has been doing this for 11 years.

**CBeebies Bedtime Stories** continues to show the strength of representation in reaching our diverse audiences with readers such as Abtaha Maqsood, Mr Motivator, Carlos Gu and Lenny Rush. This year they celebrated Deaf awareness week with new reader Rayane Cordell from **Dog Squad** and his hearing dog. BSL and Makaton signed stories featuring Rose Ayling-Ellis. Romesh Ranganathan and Justin Fletcher were also featured that week. Justin Fletcher delivered a Christmas story to children at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital and a story called 'The Invisible String' was read by members of the armed forces across the world to bring families together.

The **My Life** documentary series features children from across the globe who are living remarkable lives – from a Canadian first nations climate change campaigner to a young snooker champion, and a rapping duo in Kibera, to a group of children who have overcome bullying in the UK. Each story is told by the child themselves. These one-off documentaries are all made by different production companies and are a great entry level opportunity for new independent companies with a passion for authentic storytelling.

# Children's continued

## Case study Phoenix Rise

The role of Daisy in **Phoenix Rise** was written as Darcy's love interest. The production wanted to cast a disabled actor, but the specifics of their disability were led by casting the right actor for the role. Eloise Pennycott, a deaf actor, got the role, and the script was adjusted to include the nuances and details

of Daisy being deaf, using BSL and having a cochlear implant. Funding was ringfenced to support BSL interpreters on-screen and an additional interpreter off-screen, as well as having a BSL consultant on set when Daisy was filming.



Phoenix Rise, BBC Studios, BBC iPlayer

## Casting should be open and fair

Children's titles are at the forefront of open and fair casting. Our long-running dramas, such as **Jamie Johnson** conduct street casting. Jean's character in **Malory Towers** was written without any specific characteristics and Beth Bradfield, who has a facial difference, was cast in the role.

An open casting for CBeebies title **Yukee** led to Nina He from County Fermanagh landing the lead role. Her parents Becky and Tony He said it was great to have Nina's Irish and Chinese heritage represented in the cartoon which is set in Northern Ireland.

**BBC Teach Live Lessons** bring school subjects to life and are broadcast to classrooms across the UK. Lessons this year included The Romans, Remembrance Day, and British Science Week. Casting a diverse range of talent, experts and child contributors was achieved across all lessons.

## Diverse workforce makes better content

The BBC Children's & Education Diversity Fund investment of £200,000 has supported 23 roles from writers and researchers to producers and series directors. Awardees worked both in-house at the BBC and for indies across the UK. We invest

“

**It was one of my favourite career experiences. The producers were supportive and open to my ideas. I felt I could bring myself to the work without it feeling tokenistic. It was a baptism of fire and very exciting. I felt very proud to have been part of the team. As a Black female director, it was important to me that the young Black on-screen cast could see themselves reflected behind the camera.”**

**Carla Henry**  
Director on **Odd Squad**, BBC Studios



Yukee, Score Draw Media, CBeebies

in individuals so that we can support them now and in the future.

The 50:50 tracker is used across an array of teams and productions in BBC Children's and Education, including **Newsround**, **Blue Peter** and **Saturday Mash-Up!** to monitor its on-screen representation of gender, ethnicity and disability. This is to ensure both talent and contributors are representative of the audience we are serving. The tracker is used dynamically, as opposed to at the end of production. This is so we can make changes to improve our representation in an episode or series, rather than see how we did after broadcast. More and more titles in Children's and Education are signing up to the tracker.

# RADIO

**BBC Radio continues to champion diverse British culture across our Music and Speech content. Sustained growth in our Across the UK activity has amplified voices from all corners of the country. We continue to support new talent through a number of schemes including the BBC Radio & Music Indie Development Fund, BBC Open Music and BBC Sounds Audio Lab.**

**£7.4m**

Spent in 2023/24 on qualifying radio content

**£250k**

Ringfenced annually to back independent production companies across the UK

Right:  
Brown Girls Do It Too, BBC Sounds



# Radio

## Leading by example

BBC Radio continues to lead by example across the industry providing value for all. **BBC Bitesize** revision podcasts, launched on BBC Sounds and BBC Bitesize, help students prepare for their Science and English Literature GCSEs. A range of diverse hosts, including new presenting talent Tulela Pea, scouted via the Black Women in Science Network, reflects the diversity of educational communicators in the UK. We are proud to give Tulela and these brilliant communicators a platform on the BBC.

**Asian Network Motivation** was launched to help motivate British Asian audiences. Presenters from diverse backgrounds such as Shani Dhanda, a disability influencer and inclusion advocate, cover themes from depression to boosting confidence.

BBC Radio 1's social action campaign, Being Real, encouraged listeners to take the filter off and be more themselves by tackling pressures such as body image, mental health and social media. As part of this campaign, an episode of **Life Hacks** focused on celebrating our differences and embracing disability.

We continue to tell stories which have not been given a platform before. BBC Radio 4's **Three Million** (BBC Audio) is an account of the Bengal Famine. During the Second World War, at least three million Indian nationals under British rule died in the Famine. It is one of the largest Allied losses of civilian life and there is no memorial to them anywhere in the world. And BBC Sounds and 5 Live's true crime podcast **Gangster Presents... Catching the Kingpins** documents the biggest organised crime bust in British policing history and addresses institutional racism within the police.

## Supporting new talent

Over the past three years, BBC Radio has introduced new ways to champion new diverse talent through a variety of schemes:

- **BBC Open Music**, now in its second edition, welcomed 30 new trainees from diverse backgrounds. The aim is to bring creatives and musicians of all genres, styles and backgrounds from across the UK to the BBC.
- **Shared Training and Employment Programme (STEP)** offers 12-month paid entry-level experience in the creative, cultural, and digital sectors to East Londoners aged 18 – 30. The BBC is involved in STEP as part of our commitment to diverse talent in East London as we look ahead to our move to East Bank, a new cultural quarter at the heart of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. A previous STEP trainee, Gabrielle Chudi, has been announced as one of the National Youth Choir's Young Conductors.
- **Audio Lab** is a BBC Sounds accelerator programme of training and development which amplifies the next generation of underrepresented podcast producers and creatives to transform their fresh ideas into podcasts that better reflect the UK. Audio Lab podcasts have won the following awards – Gold ARIA, Silver British Podcast Award and Silver Audio Production Award.
- **New assistant commissioner roles** are one-year posts, which BBC Radio introduced to increase levels of experience and widen the talent pool for future commissioning editor roles. Some of these roles were ringfenced for **Extend** applicants, the BBC scheme that creates more opportunities for disabled people across the BBC.

## Authentic portrayal

Across BBC Radio, authentic portrayal is central to everything we do. BBC Sounds' **Brown Girls Do It Too** (BBC Audio) is a celebration of Brown girls' identities through honest, unfiltered and funny conversations about sex which defy expectations around what Brown girls can and can't talk about.

Authentic portrayal of disability is an integral part of our content. Radio 4's **Ability** (Funnybones Production), a sitcom written and performed by disabled actors and comedians, tells the story of Matt, who has cerebral palsy and can only speak using an app on his tablet. BBC Radio 3's Disability Awareness Season as part of UK Disability History Month included a three-part series **Round the Horn** with Felix Klieser. Felix is an international horn player, who plays the instrument with his feet. Also included in the season was an edition of **Music Matters** which explored adaptive instruments and music education for disabled musicians. After the finale, **The Traitors** stars Mollie Pearce and Andrew Jenkins joined **Life**

**Hacks** to discuss body image and the impact the way we look can have on our mental and physical health. Mollie has a limb difference on her right hand and lives with a stoma. Andrew was involved in a car crash, which left him with scarring across his face, neck and body.

Radio 1Xtra continues to champion Black British culture. **The Carnival Family**, produced by diverse-led indie Playmaker Group, celebrated the unsung heroes who make the Notting Hill Carnival what it is. **1Xtra Trailblazers: Giggs**, produced by Unedited, tells the story of the life and times of UK rapper Giggs.

As part of BBC Music's celebration of Hip Hop at 50, BBC Radio 6 Music hosted four hour-long **Hip Hop Soundscapes**, produced by The Playmaker Group, showcasing the influence and impact of the genre. Each soundscape focused on the journey and the changes within the music, the widening of the culture from its roots to the golden age, conscious rap, and female Hip Hop.



BBC Bitesize, BBC Sounds

# Radio continued

## Case study

### Indie Development Fund

BBC Radio has committed at least £250,000 annually to developing the indie sector via the **BBC Radio & Music Indie Development Fund**, now in its third year. The fund was set up specifically to support the BBC's strategic priorities, with a current focus on our Across the UK plans and diversity commitments.

In Music, Pop continued its focus on Asian Network and 1Xtra growing their Birmingham bases, selecting three indies from the Midlands and one diverse-led indie from London.

In Speech, Radio 4 selected five indies, including one from each nation, which pitched to create traineeships for diverse new talent. BBC Radio 5 Live selected two indies that committed to hire development producers to help make content with a focus on their Beyond the Heartland strategy.

This year, we have supported:

- 13 independent production companies
- five of which have diverse company leadership
- 11 of which are based outside of London

#### Music recipients:

- Glenvale Media – Birmingham
- True Thought Productions – Birmingham
- Moving Water Media – Wolverhampton
- Unedited – London
- Overcoat Media – Cardiff
- Reform Radio – Manchester

#### Speech recipients:

- Bespoken Media – Edinburgh
- The Foghorn Productions – Belfast
- Little Wander – Brecon
- Hill 5.14 Media – Bedfordshire
- Essential Radio – London
- Bite Your Tongue Productions – Bristol
- Bengo Media – Cardiff

## Measurement

For on-air radio talent on BBC staff contracts (i.e. BBC staff in presenter and journalism roles), 48.9% identified as female, 18.6% as Black, Asian and minority ethnic, and 4.1% as disabled. On productions 50:50 continues to monitor contributor diversity in our content, helping teams set benchmarks, track progress and improve upon their own performance. This year, between 150 – 165 different production teams returned data.

# 13

Independent production companies supported through the Indie Development Fund

## Case study

### Windrush 75th Anniversary across BBC Radio

In June 1948, the Empire Windrush docked in Tilbury carrying 800 passengers who had left the Caribbean for a new life in Britain. 75 years on, BBC Radio explored the Windrush legacy. 1Xtra's Richie Brave hosted a special episode of **1Xtra Talks** asking "What's your Windrush story?". Radio 4's **Windrush, A Family Divided** (BBC Audio) explored the issues by asking a married couple from Windrush families with informed but opposing views on whether the mass emigration from the Caribbean had been good or bad for the community.

BBC Radio 2 and BBC Sounds marked the anniversary with a concert at the Royal Albert Hall, curated and hosted by Trevor Nelson. An array of stars attended, including Craig David, Beverley Knight, YolanDa Brown, and award-winning author and poet Salena Godden, and performances, including Hak Baker's 'Windrush Baby', Lord Kitchener's 'London is the Place for Me', and Goldie's 'Inner City Life', captured the breadth of musical influence the Windrush generation has given British culture.



Windrush Concert, Radio 2

# SPORT

**BBC Sport has continued to invest in diversity and representation in all its sporting coverage. Over the last year, this has included continued and sustained investment in women's sport, such as the extensive cross-platform coverage of the Women's Football World Cup, the rights extension to the Women's Super League and a new deal for the Netball Super League.**

## BBC Sport Workforce off-screen

**14.2%**

Black, Asian and minority ethnic

**41.7%**

Female

**9.2%**

Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent

**22.2%**

Lower socio-economic backgrounds

Right:  
Women's Super League



# Sport

## The rise and rise of women's sport

In the last 12 months the BBC has continued to lead the way in driving the growth of women's sport.

The BBC delivered extensive cross-platform coverage of the Women's Football World Cup from Australia and New Zealand, continuing its run of having shown coverage of every tournament since 1999. This time the BBC broadcast 33 live matches across TV and iPlayer, alongside live text commentary and video highlights of all 64 matches, plus audio commentaries on BBC Radio and BBC Sounds. The Lionesses narrowly missed out on World Cup glory, losing to Spain in the final – a programme watched by 12 million people in the UK on a memorable Sunday morning in August.

After 40 years at the BBC and 14 as Director of BBC Sport, Barbara Slater summed up the BBC's role:

“

We're proud to be long-term partners for women's football which continues its fantastic upward trajectory. The Lionesses came so close but they should be incredibly proud of reaching a World Cup final. It was a brilliant tournament for audiences ... no-one can bring the nation together for the big moments quite like the BBC.”

**Barbara Slater**

Director of BBC Sport

Continuing the football theme, the BBC recently confirmed a rights extension to broadcast the Women's Super League, meaning fans can continue to watch live matches across free-to-air platforms. It builds on the ground-breaking three-year Women's Super League contract agreed in 2021, with 22 live matches per season on BBC iPlayer and a minimum of 18 live games across BBC One and BBC Two. Earlier in the year, the BBC secured a first-of-its-kind, two-year deal with England Netball to deliver live, free-to-air coverage from the Netball Super League. The new deal includes one live match a week across the regular season.

These events were part of another brilliant year for sport on the BBC, strengthening its position

as the most popular sports broadcaster in the UK, providing audiences with unparalleled cross-platform coverage and an unmatched portfolio of free-to-air sports rights. Research from the Women's Sport Trust showed that the BBC and ITV accounted for 11% of all the hours of coverage of women's sport in 2023 and an astonishing 77% of all the viewing.

### Investing in a diverse workforce

As well as widening coverage, the team have worked hard to increase representation on- and off-air, with continued investment in training to support historically underrepresented groups.

For the third year, BBC Sport teamed up with the Black Collective of Media in Sport (BCOMS) to help provide a series of learning and development

sessions for more than 20 young people based in the North of England aiming to start a career in the sports media. Once again, the sessions have provided the springboard for many of those individuals to take up careers in sport, both at the BBC and across the wider industry.

The BBC's commentary and pundit teams have also continued to diversify over the last 12 months. Established presenters such as Alex Scott, Micah Richards, Denise Lewis, Jermaine Jenas, Jason Mohammed, Jeanette Kwakye, Ian Wright, JJ Chalmers, Jason Mohammad, Isa Guha and Andy Stevenson were joined this year, for example, by Qasa Alom who made his debut as the presenter of the BBC's iconic **Today at Wimbledon** highlights show.



Africa Cup of Nations, BBC Three and BBC iPlayer



Women's Super League

# NATIONS

**Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland work closely with BBC Network and local partners. Each nation creates content that celebrates our diverse communities with knowledge and authenticity.**

**Nations have exceeded their £12 million commitment across the three-year period.**

**£38m**

Qualifying spend over three years

**£10.5m**

Qualifying spend in 2023/24

**59**

Qualifying programmes in 2023/24

**Right:**  
The Chronicles of Armagh, BBC Northern Ireland



# Nations

## Northern Ireland

BBC Northern Ireland continues to work closely with BBC Network and other partners, celebrating Northern Ireland's diverse population with a wide range of co-commissioned and multi-funded content. We're proud to share stories of our different identities, heritages, languages and communities with local audiences, and with viewers across the UK.

- Series three of **Hope Street** continued its positive representation of community and inclusion. **Home Cook Hero** Suzie Lee celebrated both her Chinese and Northern Irish identity in a cookery series helping hard-pressed families to eat well on tight budgets.
- Two-time world boxing champ Carl Frampton's intensely personal exploration of the mental health crisis amongst young men in Northern Ireland, **Carl Frampton: Men in Crisis**, resonated with underserved audiences.
- Minority languages and diverse communities continued to enrich local schedules through our Irish language and Ulster-Scots portfolios. Series three of **The Band** brought us to underserved communities in rural and urban areas, with diverse casting that highlighted the positive impact involvement with music can have on both individuals and society.
- Local favourite **The Chronicles** returned with a particular focus on underrepresented people and places, featuring in this fifth series a year in the life of County Armagh.

- Our first Rethink Disability Festival connected BBC staff with key external stakeholders. Keynote speaker Adam Smyth (Director BBC Northern Ireland) led a panel discussion on changes in the media industry and the One in Five social enterprise – an initiative dedicated to developing digital content from disabled creatives.

### Measurement

BBC Northern Ireland continues to focus on diverse representation across the range of our output. Commissioners and the Creative Diversity team have worked together to ensure effective monitoring and reporting of diversity across commissioned content.



Carl Frampton: Men in Crisis, BBC One

### Case study Éadaí SOS

BBC Gaeilge commissions up to 25 hours of original video content, mostly in the Irish language, often bringing new ideas, new formats and new talent to the screen.

**Éadaí SOS**, a returning sustainable fashion series, featured Grace from Belfast who has a form of dwarfism and spent a lot of money not only on new clothes, but on having them

resized to fit her. Grace was authentically portrayed, speaking with enthusiasm about her passion for fashion, talking openly about the challenges she faced and her determination to wear the latest fashion her way. The series also featured Proinsias Ó Coinn, a member of the LGBTQ+ community, in his first presentation role. He has since secured another presenter role with another broadcaster.



Éadaí SOS, BBC Two

# Nations continued

## BBC Cymru Wales

BBC Wales continues to commit to diversity in all its forms and partners with film Cymru, It's My Shout, and Creative Wales to boost that commitment.

The BBC Elevate scheme has been instrumental in strengthening our commissioning team.

**Black Music Wales**, a film dedicated to telling an important social history, brought through a production trainee onto the production team.

On Par Productions, which was commissioned to tell the story of wheelchair rugby legend Jim Roberts, recognised the importance of having a team member with lived experience of using a wheelchair, as well as expertise in wheelchair sport on the team. The production team also included an assistant producer who was partially sighted.

Commissioning continues to work closely with the Creative Diversity Team through the production and the edit of both scripted and unscripted shows.



Black Music Wales, BBC Two

## Case study Inseparable Sisters

The remarkable story of conjoined twins Ndeye and Marieme, who live in Cardiff with their father Ibrahima, as they celebrate their seventh birthday.

The team worked hard to get viewers to see beyond the apparent disability and to meet the twins as individual people with very different personalities. Ibrahima's philosophy

of celebrating life and living for each day has lessons for us all. The film is uplifting and has been seen by over one million people. News clips from the documentary have been translated into 23 languages so far and BBC World News is planning to broadcast a cutdown version.



Inseparable Sisters, BBC One

# Nations continued

## BBC Scotland

BBC Scotland is committed to improving diversity and inclusion on- and off-screen through content commissioning and working with industry partners. We have revised our commissioning conversation plans with suppliers to include more questions on access and working with disabled talent. In October 2023, we facilitated a Disability Awareness Day ensuring producers were across best practice when it came to access, the 5As (see page 6) and access co-ordinators. New comedy **Dinosaur** was used as a case study to focus on best working practices to support neurodiversity across productions.

Continuing drama **River City** portrays a diverse mix of characters from across Scotland, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic representation and socio-economic diversity. The series launched a training academy to develop new off-screen talent this year and aims to increase deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent representation in 2024/25.

Working with BBC Comedy, we have successfully developed new talent through comedy short films for new writing and directing talent, and supported comedy grants and bursaries for female directing talent – as well as funding for an Edinburgh-based charity working with mums from lower socio-economic backgrounds to encourage their interest in comedy.

Factual series **Street Gangs** was developed through BBC Scotland's Emerging Directors scheme, which paired new talent with established indies to work on programmes targeted at a younger audience.



Dinosaur, BBC Scotland and BBC Three

“

**I think it's important that we keep seeing all different types of characters on our screen because, unfortunately or fortunately, I think we live in a world where people's opinions are formed from the media they consume.”**

**Ashley Storrie**

comedian, actor, writer and creator of **Dinosaur**

## Case study

### Diverse portrayal across BBC Scotland

Factual series **Darren McGarvey: The State We're In** is a co-production with The Open University for BBC Two and BBC Scotland. With privileged access to hospitals, schools and prisons, writer and rapper Darren takes an unflinching look at the UK's public services. Darren is a social commentator from a working-class background who has written award-winning books and previously presented series for BBC Scotland on class and addiction – this is his first series for BBC network.

Documentary series **The Firm** followed high-profile lawyer Aamer Anwar and his diverse team during a busy year. The series tells stories from a range of clients, including the family of Sheku Bayoh during the public inquiry into his death in police custody, as well as the Scottish Covid Bereaved at the biggest public inquiry in British history.

**Not Your Average Family** followed Charlie, a young trans man and his partner Lauren, who suffers from OCD, as they move on to the next phase of their adult lives.

**The Missing Madonna** is a fast-paced and thrilling podcast. There are undercover police, landed gentry, organised crime gangs, private detectives – and possibly the greatest artist in the history of the world: Leonardo da Vinci. Our presenter, Olivia Graham, is the emotional centre of the series and the podcast is true to how Olivia speaks. In mainstream media, representations of inner-city working-class lives can often be derogatory or reductive, so we were committed to ensure our podcast gave an honest and authentic picture of Olivia, her family and the wider community.



The Missing Madonna, BBC Sounds

The State We're In, BBC Two and BBC Scotland

Not Your Average Family, BBC Scotland

# NEWS

**We continue to make good progress on diversity and inclusion since the launch of the News Diversity and Inclusion Commitments.**

- 1 Recruiting and retaining a workforce reflective of our audiences, which means we are better able to provide products and services that meet their needs and wants, and integrate a wide range of viewpoints.
- 2 Ensuring that our workplace is inclusive, and everyone feels they can be themselves and do their best work.
- 3 Focusing on 'Belonging' so that people feel comfortable at work, including being treated fairly and respected by colleagues, feeling connected to the people they work with and the teams they are a part of.
- 4 Ensuring that we embed diversity and inclusion throughout everything we do, including our workforce, products and practices.

**100+**

Early Careers and staff apprenticeships hosted in News in 2023

**53.7%**

Of employees are female

**49.1%**

Of senior leaders are female

**29.5%**

Of employees are Black, Asian and minority ethnic

Right:  
Clive Myrie and Kirsty Grant presenting at the BBC News Awards 2024



# News

## Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce

The BBC Extend in News programme was launched in April 2017 to increase the number of disabled journalists in BBC News. To complement this programme, in October 2023, we initiated a year-long campaign aimed at fostering greater diversity by attracting deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent individuals to join our workforce. We organised a series of webinars and events to foster open and transparent conversations with deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent people. Our webinars featured BBC News presenters discussing the barriers within BBC News and the proactive steps being taken to overcome them. They shared personal insights and advice for aspiring journalists. Other webinars focused on topics such as reasonable adjustments and demystifying the application process.

We partnered with 10,000 Black Interns, an organisation that aims to place young talented Black people into industries where they are underrepresented. In 2023, BBC News offered six placements with radio, podcast, streaming and social teams, with the aim of giving future journalists a taste of working life at BBC News. During their six-week placements, the interns got involved in producing pilots, editing podcast episodes, reporting from film premieres, and even presenting on TikTok.

## We improved our outreach to diverse communities:

6

Interns recruited across BBC News teams

## Supporting our staff – employee experience

Covering the Israel-Gaza war has been a challenging and, at times, dangerous job for BBC reporters. BBC News covered all aspects of the war, from the geopolitical to the very personal. This is a polarising subject which presents many challenges, with news coverage particularly subject to debate and minute scrutiny, yet our research has shown that when asked to choose the one provider they would turn to for impartial reporting, three times as many pick the BBC as choose our closest competitor.

In October 2023, we supported BBC journalists covering distressing content related to the Israel-Gaza conflict both abroad and in the UK.

We have also delivered additional support via trauma counselling sessions to assist journalists in managing the emotional toll of their work. We established staff faith networks and integrated education on faith and belief into leadership programmes.

## BBC Young Reporter

BBC Young Reporter continues to develop young people's engagement with and understanding of journalism and the broadcasting industry. The project provides opportunities for young people aged 11 – 18 across the UK to tell their own original stories with the BBC via the annual BBC Young Reporter Competition.

In 2023, BBC Young Reporter sourced, produced and broadcast young people-led stories for all BBC Nations & Regions news outlets, as well as national programmes, including **The One Show**, **Newsround**, **BBC Breakfast**, Radio 5 Live and BBC Sounds podcasts, together with BBC News online and social platforms. Stories included the use of AI in education, inclusive sport, and non-apparent disabilities.



Zarah, Assistant Producer, BBC Bitesize



Alex, Journalist, BBC News

“

**There is a space for me here.”**

### **Beverley Segunda**

aged 19, a Broadcast Journalism student at the University of Salford, was placed with BBC News Social

# OUTCOMES

**E**nsuring we are holding ourselves and independent production companies accountable is a key requirement of the Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice. We have made real progress in this area, particularly with the introduction of the End of Production report. This complements Diamond data and our internal reviews to monitor our progress on achieving diversity and representation.

We are pleased that the commitments that form the basis of the Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice have all been delivered. We will be setting new commitments to build on our progress later this year.



**Right:**  
Juice, Various Artists Limited, BBC Three

# Outcomes

Our 2018 Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice set 46 commitments for ourselves and for our producers to achieve, with our support. We have now met all of these commitments.

The following tables indicate our progress based on what we have been able to evidence or demonstrate for ourselves and the producers we work with:

- Action has been fully implemented across the BBC and with the producers we work with.
- Progress has been made, but the action has not been fully implemented across the BBC and with producers we work with.
- Action has not yet been implemented.

## Principle

**1**

### Leading by example

#### What we said we'd do

In 2018 we set ourselves seven commitments related to 'Leading by example'. All of these have been achieved consistently over the years.

#### What we expect from the producers we work with

In 2018 we set 11 commitments regarding our expectations from the producers we work with related to 'Leading by example'. All of these commitments have now been met.

22/23

23/24



The individual at the production company accountable for delivery against agreed diversity objectives will be identified in, and be asked to sign, the commissioning specification as confirmation.



All content makers will be expected to demonstrate their compliance with the guidelines and the commissioning specification agreement. At the point of delivery the diversity of a programme may be evidenced through the reporting method specified at the time of commissioning.



Where producers continually fail to meet expectations or do not engage with the code, the BBC will take appropriate action.



# Outcomes continued

## Principle

# 2

## Authentic portrayal

### What we said we'd do

In 2018 we set ourselves four commitments related to 'Authentic portrayal'. All have now been achieved.

### What we expect from the producers we work with

In 2018 we set five commitments regarding our expectations from the producers we work with related to 'Authentic portrayal'. These objectives have been achieved.

22/23

23/24



We will actively engage in conversations with content makers about any authenticity issues in specific productions and capture any agreements in the commissioning specification.

To share a list of all key on-air talent roles with the commissioner to demonstrate their commitment to having a diverse range of talent.



## Principle

# 3

## Casting should be open and fair

### What we said we'd do

In 2018 we set ourselves three commitments related to 'Casting should be open and fair'. All of these have been achieved.

### What we expect from the producers we work with

In 2018 we set three commitments regarding our expectations from the producers we work with related to casting. All of these have been achieved.

22/23

23/24



To set out for each production what measures will be taken to remove any barriers in casting (as set out in the commissioning specification).

To provide all required diversity information of perceived and actual diversity of on-air talent by the means specified at the time of commissioning.

Note: The BBC encourages suppliers to provide the email addresses of on-air talent required to establish actual diversity. The BBC cannot provide that information.

To arrange casting in places with suitable accessibility.



# Outcomes continued

Where we have given ourselves a Green\* this reflects our belief that the End of Production report will address this commitment, which is now in place and the results of which will be captured over the next 12 months.

Principle	What we said we'd do	What we expect from the producers we work with	22/23	23/24
<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>A diverse workforce makes for better content</b></p>	<p>In 2018 we set ourselves four commitments related to 'A diverse workforce'. All of these have been achieved.</p>	<p>In 2018 we set five commitments regarding our expectations from the producers we work with related to 'A diverse workforce' makes for better content. All of these have been achieved.</p> <p>We expect content makers to set out for each production what measures will be taken to increase off-air diversity (as set out in the commissioning specification), including those in senior production roles to include:</p> <p>Executive Producer, Series Producer/Editor, Producer/Director, Production Executive, Head of Production, Writer, Director, Producer.</p> <p>For returning series, production companies will be expected to highlight which positions within the production have been extended to 'new and/or established' diverse talent that they have not worked with before. The BBC will support this as appropriate.</p> <p>We expect all content makers to provide all required diversity information of production crews by the means specified at the time of commissioning.</p> <p>We expect all content makers to support junior talent from across the spectrum by having:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A</b> Eliminated unpaid internships on productions for the BBC; make all paid internships and time-limited unpaid work experience open to a diverse pool of talent.</li> <li><b>B</b> Where possible, provide at least one paid training and development placement on appropriate productions to either a participant or alumni from approved industry schemes. We note that smaller production companies may not be able to fully comply with this commitment due to limited number of positions. However, where there are requirements to 'crew up' for production we expect them to actively consider a wide pool of potential candidates from diverse backgrounds and actively seek new talent.</li> <li><b>C</b> Ensure that the abilities advertised are true requirements of the role and are not an unnecessary barrier to participation from any particular group.</li> <li><b>D</b> Job opportunities should be advertised using a variety of methods so that they can be seen by the widest group possible.</li> </ul>		

# Outcomes continued

**Principle****What we said we'd do****5****Measurement**

In 2018 we set ourselves and our production partners six commitments related to 'Measurement'. These have now been achieved.

**What we expect from the producers we work with****22/23****23/24**

We will expect production companies to respond to confidentially shared insights taken from our reports to identify and address challenges in increasing diversity on- and off-air.



We will expect production companies to assure their compliance with this code and where necessary provide relevant information on request.





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