

Policy Review Series: Class in the Creative industries: Paper No.03

Social mobility in the Creative Economy

Rebuilding and levelling up?

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Led by **nesta**



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As ever, any errors or omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

About the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) works to support the growth of the UK's Creative Industries through the production of independent and authoritative evidence and policy advice.

Led by Nesta and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of the UK Government's Industrial Strategy, the Centre comprises of a

consortium of universities from across the UK (Birmingham; Cardiff; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Work Foundation at Lancaster University; LSE; Manchester; Newcastle; Sussex; Ulster). The PEC works with a diverse range of industry partners including the Creative Industries Federation. For more details visit www.pec.ac.uk and  @CreativePEC

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Rebuilding and levelling up?

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 1 | Introduction | 4 |
| 2 | Scaling the challenge, making the case: Five reasons why we need to sharpen focus on socio-economic diversity | 8 |
| 3 | From operating at the margins to driving systemic change: Priorities for building a more socially inclusive Creative Economy | 19 |
| 4 | Shaping an agenda for change: A ten-point plan to advance social mobility in the Creative Economy | 54 |
| | References | 61 |
| | Annex A: Methodology | 65 |
| | Endnotes | 72 |

1

Introduction

When the PEC launched its Class in the Creative Industries programme in 2019, we did so at a time when the sector was riding high on the wave of a decade or more of strong economic performance. Growing at double the rate of the wider economy, innovative and export-orientated, and a key source of competitive advantage and soft power, the Creative Industries have undoubtedly been one of the UK's greatest success stories. Yet, despite this success, there were significant concerns that the benefits of growth were not being felt equally and that the opportunities created in this vibrant part of the economy were 'out of reach' for many.¹

Two years on, as we start to rebuild following a global pandemic that has had a profound impact on UK society and the economy and will continue to do so for decades to come, these concerns are more warranted than ever.

As we consider the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 crisis on disadvantaged pupils,² workers,³ and places⁴ and the risk of long-term scarring seen during previous recessions,⁵ widening access to the opportunities created in high-growth, high-skill parts of the UK economy, like the Creative Industries, is a priority.

The first report from the PEC's Class in the Creative Industries series, published in August 2020, established the pre-COVID-19 baseline of social mobility into creative roles. Echoing others' work, the research documented widespread and persistent class imbalances in the Creative Industries. Those from privileged backgrounds were more than twice as likely to land a job in a creative occupation. They dominated key creative roles in the sector, shaping what goes on stage, page and screen. They were also more likely to experience greater autonomy and control over their work, to have supervisory responsibility and to progress into managerial positions.⁶

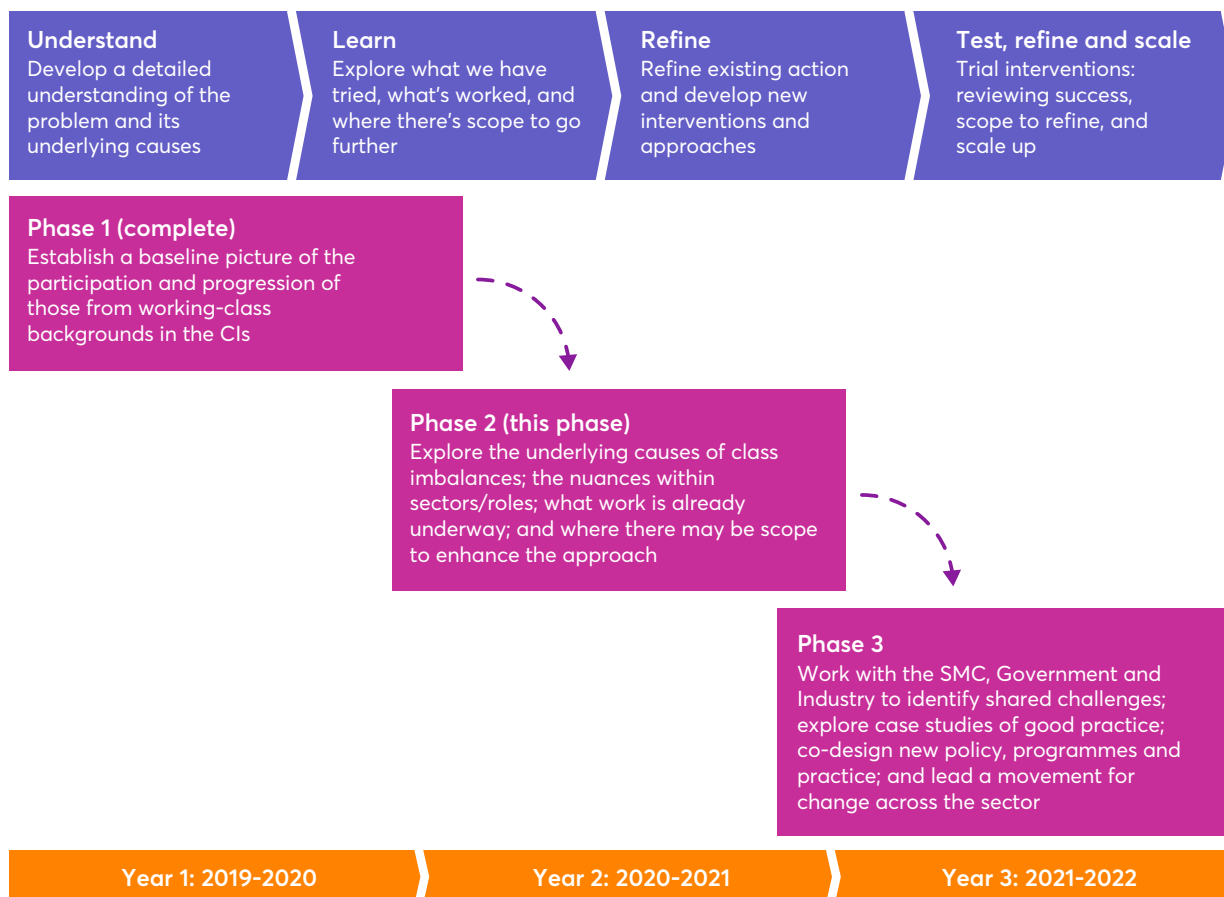
Despite growing awareness of these issues and actions in recent years by industry and Government to promote diversity and inclusion, the research showed the likelihood of someone from a working-class background securing work in a creative occupation to be largely unchanged since 2014.

So, as we look to recovery, and with the Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda foregrounding inequality in the current political discourse, this represents an important moment to consider how we can rebuild the UK economy – and the Creative Industries as a vital part of this – for the better. This rebuilding needs to be in a way that benefits more people and more places across the UK. Addressing significant and sustained class imbalances must be an important part of this effort and should feature in any 'sector vision'⁷ for the Creative Industries.

This represents an opportunity for the Creative Industries to seize this moment, as we emerge from an unprecedented crisis, to address the long-standing inequalities in the sector; to grasp the potential offered by the diverse talent that exists in the UK; to cement our creative excellence and competitive advantage, globally; and to demonstrate the vital role that growth sectors, like the Creative Industries, can play in rebuilding a more inclusive economy.

The PEC, working in partnership with the Social Mobility Commission, Creative Industries Federation and DCMS, seeks to catalyse collaborative action – led by industry, trade bodies, wider stakeholders and Government – to test and trial new policies, programmes and practices that promote a more diverse and inclusive Creative Economy,⁸ and to show leadership as an industry on the vital issue of social mobility in the UK.

Figure 1.1: The PEC’s Class in the Creative Industries research programme



Class in the Creative Industries Phase 2: Research aims and methodology

While the first phase of the programme established an important quantitative baseline picture of class in the Creative Industries, this second phase of the PEC's work has sought to provide **definitive evidence** on the causes of class imbalances and set out an **ambitious and wide-ranging programme of change** to enhance social mobility into the Creative Economy.

We have looked in-depth at four 'in-focus' sub-sectors: Screen; Advertising; Publishing; and Fashion. These are parts of the Creative Industries where our earlier research,⁹ and that of others¹⁰ has shown class imbalances to be most pronounced. In particular, we have considered access and progression in key creative roles in these sectors, such as Advertising and Marketing Directors; Fashion Designers; Authors, Writers and Editors; and Arts officers, Producers and Directors.

Our work has sought to build on the existing evidence base, **reviewing both academic and grey literature and interrogating secondary data sources**, such as the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Labour Force Survey (LFS) and DCMS' Taking Part Survey, to better understand the causes of class-based disadvantage in the Creative Industries.

Alongside this, the PEC research team has embarked on a **nine-month inquiry, entailing over 150 interviews with stakeholders, businesses and workers**. This included consultations with employers and industry stakeholders, exploring their perspectives on class-based disadvantage; the barriers to participation and progression in employment of those from working-class backgrounds; current activities, and future plans for enhancing workforce diversity and inclusion.

Crucially, to deeply understand class-based disadvantage the research entailed fieldwork interviews to **explore the lived experience of those from a working-class background who are working in key creative roles**. It is important to note that these individuals are by definition socially mobile, by virtue of their class origins and the fact that the roles they work in now are considered professional, middle-class destinations. Participants were selected to ensure our sample included individuals working in a range of different sized businesses, in different parts of the UK, and at different stages in their career journey. Pre-interview screening questions were used to confirm participants' class origin. Annex A provides further detail of our research methodology.

In April 2021, the PEC published the *Screened Out* report: a deep-dive on class-based inequality in UK Screen, supported by ScreenSkills using National Lottery funds distributed by the British Film Institute (BFI). *Screened Out* took an in-depth look into the underlying causes of class imbalances in this sub-sector, reviewed current business practices, and mapped the policy landscape in Screen. It concluded with a set of high-level policy recommendations, in particular looking at sub-sectoral policy and programmes.

The current report concludes Phase 2 of our programme, supported by funding from DCMS. It outlines why all Creative Industries need to sharpen their focus on socio-economic diversity; what to prioritise in order to tackle class-based disadvantage across the life-course; and how – through significant, systemic and sustained action – Government, industry and educators can work together to build a more socially inclusive Creative Economy.

Section 2: presents the case for redoubling our efforts to promote social mobility, providing a current and comprehensive picture of class imbalances across the Creative Industries in 2020. It draws on new data from the LFS and wider evidence of the potential impact of COVID-19 on social mobility into creative roles;

Section 3: considers what steps can initiate systemic change and begin to address deep-rooted structural inequalities in the Creative Industries, identifying four priorities for enhancing socio-economic diversity. For each, we outline the case for action and present recommendations for how policymakers, educators and industry need to respond.

Section 4: concludes by shaping an agenda for change, considering the fundamentals for success and summarising our priorities into a ten-point action plan for enhancing social mobility into the Creative Economy.

Figure 1.2: The PEC's inquiry into the causes of class imbalances in the Creative Industries



Job titles of those consulted

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Account Director | Director/Writer | Freelance Designer Maker | Producer/Crew |
| Actor and Writer | Documentary Producer/ Director | Freelance Journalist | Producer/Director |
| Actor/Writer/Producer | DOP/Cinematography | Graduate/Writer/Director | Production Executive |
| Agent | Editor | Head of Digital | Project Editor |
| Apprentice/Undercutter | Editor/Producer | Head of Production | Publisher |
| Brand Executive | Editorial Assistant | Head of Development for Current Affairs | Publishing Director |
| Brand Publisher/Editor | Exec Producer | Influencer & Campaigner | QA Analyst |
| Business Director | Exec Producer/Commissioner | Integrated Producer | Reporting Analyst |
| CEO | Executive Creative Director | Line Producer, Co Producer and Producer | Sales and Marketing |
| Cinematographer | Fashion Designer & Founder | Managing Director | Script Executive/Head of Development |
| Co-director | Fashion Editor | Managing Partner | Senior Planner |
| Commercial Lead | Fashion Educator | Marketing & Communications Manager | Senior Strategist |
| Company Director | Fashion Features Editor | Marketing Manager | Series Producer |
| Contracts Manager | Film Charity | Master Tailor | Student |
| Creative Director | Film Exhibition | Media Partnerships | TV series Editor/Producer |
| Creative Director & Designer | Film Festivals/Indie Production | Media Planning Manager | Video logger |
| Design Director | Filmmaker | Producer | Writer |
| Development Assistant | Finance Director | Producer and Writer | Writer |
| Director | Founder | | Writer/Producer/Director |
| Director of Menswear | Freelance Consultant | | |

2

Scaling the challenge, making the case

Five reasons why we need to sharpen focus on socio-economic diversity

In August 2020, the PEC published the first paper on *Class in the Creative Industries*, which sought to establish a baseline picture of socio-economic diversity in the sector. Since then, the labour market has continued to experience ongoing disruptions in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here we revisit the evidence and extend our analysis, importantly to include comparison with other parts of the UK workforce, to present an up-to-date picture and to dig deeper, to better understand the scale of the challenge. The findings make a strong case for the Creative Industries and policymakers extending their efforts to address class-based exclusion. These sit alongside the clear moral imperative and economic and creative case¹¹ for workforce diversity.

We present five reasons why now is the time to sharpen focus on socio-economic diversity in the Creative Industries.

1. The UK Creative Industries are missing more than 250,000 working class voices: a deficit almost equal to the increase in jobs in the sector over the past five years

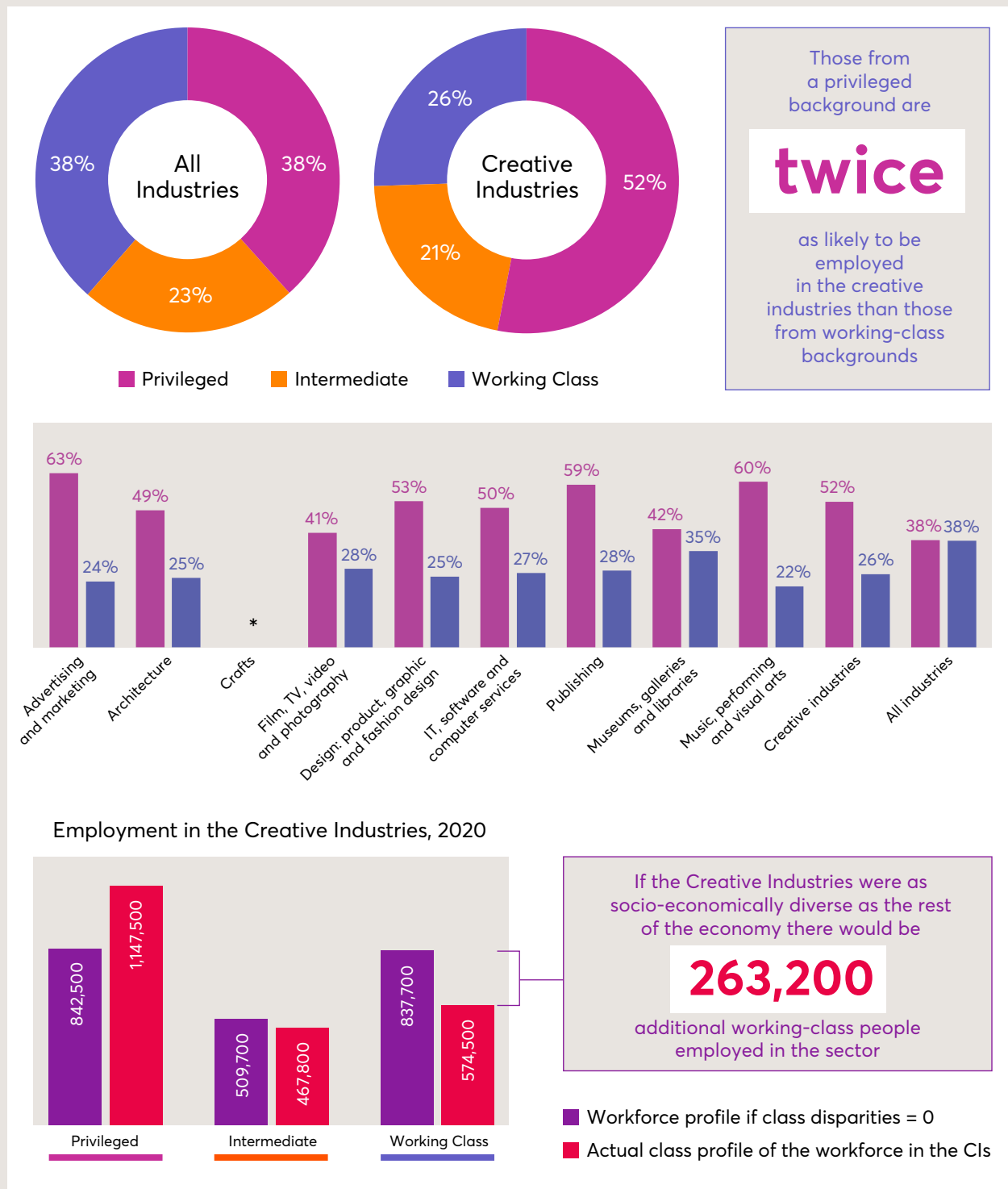
The latest data from the Labour Force Survey suggests that, in 2020, over half (52 per cent) of the Creative Industries¹² workforce were from high socio-economic backgrounds,¹³ compared with 38 per cent across all industries (Figure 2.1 overleaf). The privileged dominate every creative sub-sector (except for Crafts), accounting for approximately six in ten jobs in Advertising and marketing (63 per cent privileged); Music, performing and visual arts (60 per cent), and Publishing (59 per cent).

In contrast, those from working-class backgrounds are significantly under-represented in the Creative Industries. In 2020, a little over one in four roles (26 per cent) in the sector were filled by those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This is evident across different creative sub-sectors and means that those from a privileged background are twice as likely to be employed in the Creative Industries than their working-class counterparts.

To try and get a sense for the scale of the challenge, we have sought to consider what the class profile of the Creative Industries workforce would look like in the absence of this difference in fortunes – if class disparities were eliminated. What we find is that, if the Creative Industries were as socio-economically diverse as the rest of the economy, there

would be more than 250,000 additional working-class people employed in the sector (Figure 2.1). To put this figure in perspective, this deficit is greater in scale than the size of the creative workforce in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland combined (221,000) and only slightly less than the additional jobs created in the Creative Industries in the five years leading up to the pandemic (293,000).¹⁴

Figure 2.1: Scaling class¹⁵ imbalances in the Creative Industries, 2020 ^{16, 17}



Source: Labour Force Survey, July – September 2020. Office for National Statistics. Crown Copyright 2021.

* Data for the Craft sector has been suppressed given sample sizes are too small to provide reliable estimates.

2. Class-based exclusion is more pronounced in the Creative Industries than other sectors of the economy, and creative occupations are amongst the most elite

Figure 2.2 overleaf provides new analysis of the Labour Force Survey. It benchmarks the Creative Industries against other sectors of the economy, as well as comparing the profile of those working in creative occupations to the profile of the workforce employed in other occupational groups.

What this shows is that class imbalances are more pronounced in the Creative Industries than in any other sector category (as described using Standard Industrial Classification categories), including Finance and insurance (where 47 per cent of the workforce are from privileged backgrounds); Information and communication (ICT) (50 per cent privileged); and Professional, scientific and technical activities (also 50 per cent).

When we look at occupational groups, the profile of those working within creative occupations appears broadly in line with all professional occupations in the economy, where 51 per cent of the workforce are from privileged backgrounds and 26 per cent are of working-class origin. However, when we look in greater depth at specific occupations, the dominance of the privileged becomes clear.

When we rank occupations based on their class composition, we find that creative roles are amongst the most elite in the economy.

Creative occupations such as Architects; Journalists and Editors; Musicians; Artists; and Producers and Directors are, in fact, as dominated by the privileged as Doctors, Dentists, Lawyers and Judges. They are even more elite than Management Consultants and Stockbrokers (not shown in Figure 2.3 as they fall outside of the top 25).

So, when we compare and contrast the picture of class imbalances in the Creative Industries to other parts of the UK economy, it is clear that enhancing social mobility into creative roles is a critical challenge facing the sector.

This is increasingly recognised by Government and industry who, over the past decade or more, have been advancing policy and practice to build a more inclusive Creative Economy. But have these efforts proved effective in enhancing socio-economic diversity? And how might COVID-19 have impacted this picture?

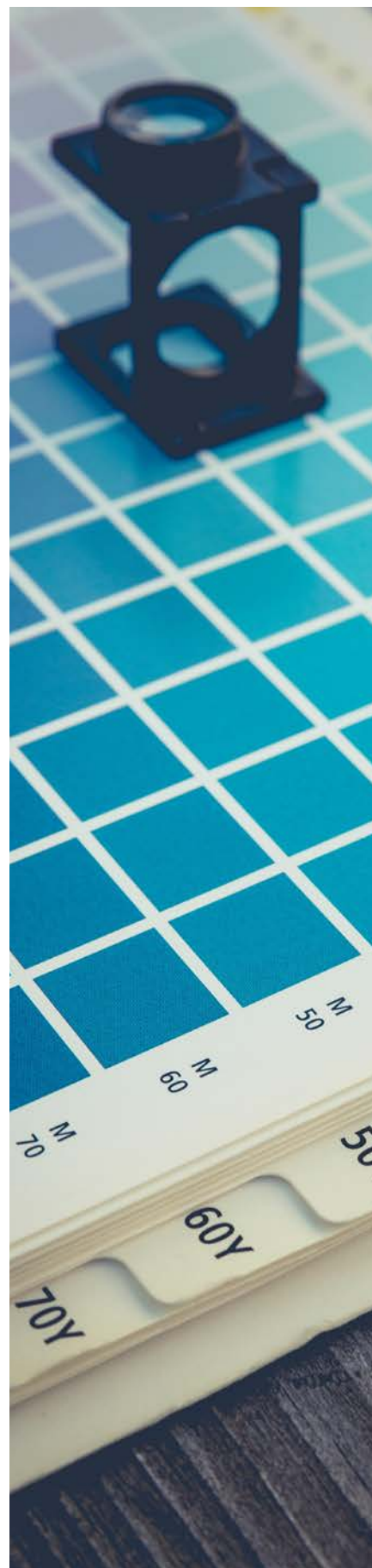
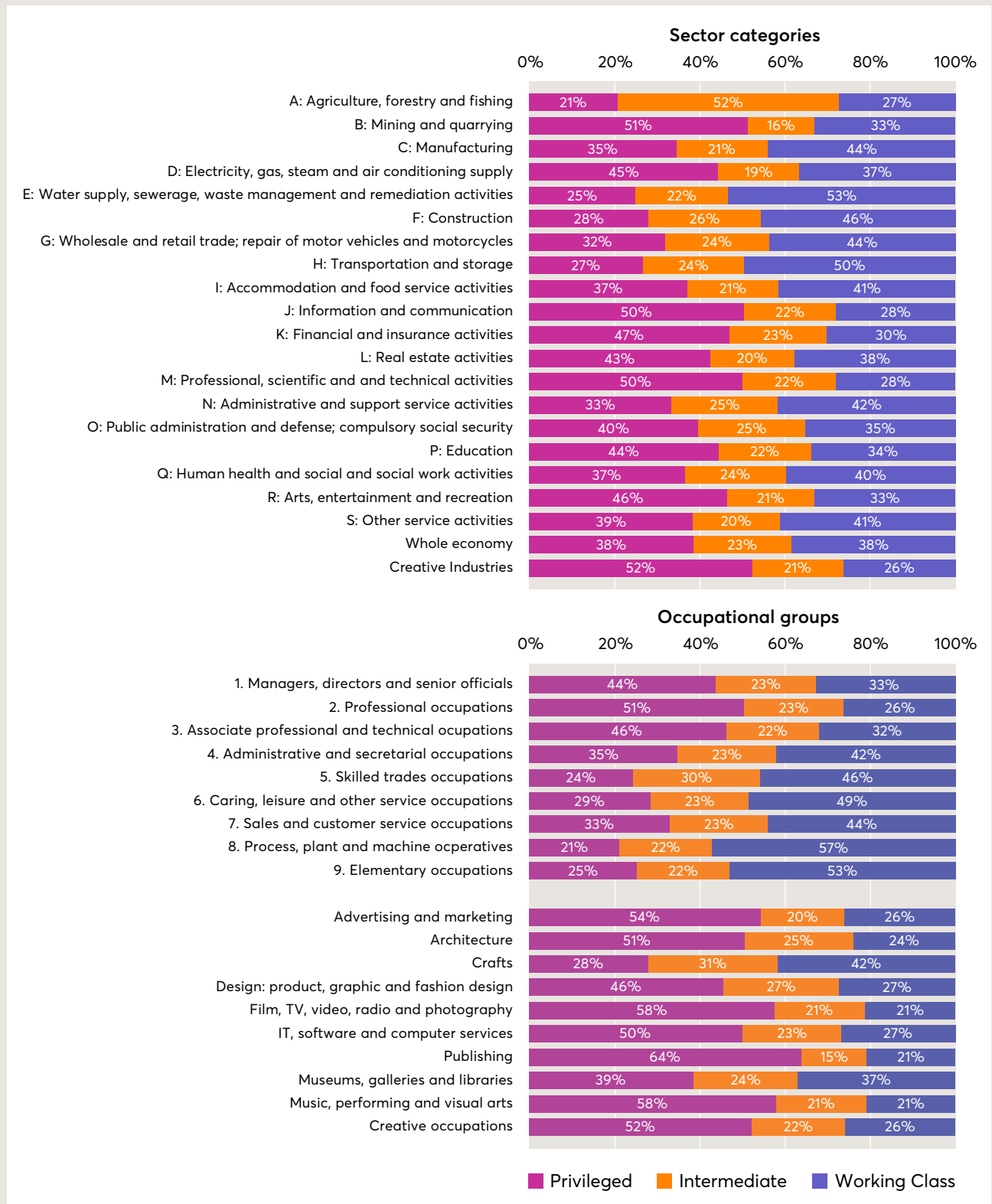
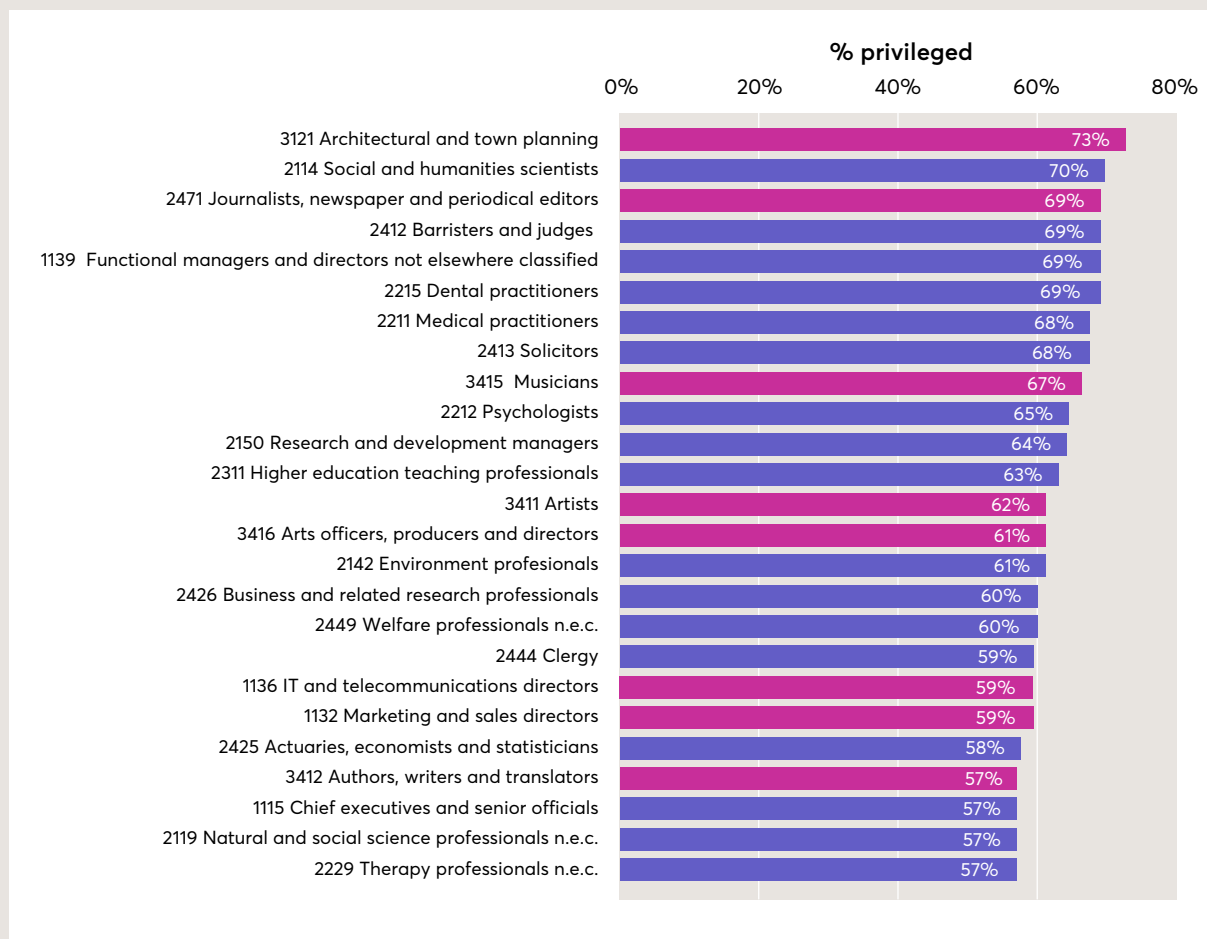


Figure 2.2: Benchmarking class inequality in the Creative Industries and Occupations, 2020¹⁸



Source: Labour Force Survey, July – September 2020. Office for National Statistics. Crown Copyright 2021.

Figure 2.3: Top 25 most elite occupations in the UK Economy*



Source: Labour Force Survey, July – September 2020. Office for National Statistics. Crown Copyright 2021.

* Occupations with a weighted base of < 15,000, which is equivalent to an unweighted base of ~ 50, have been excluded from this analysis.

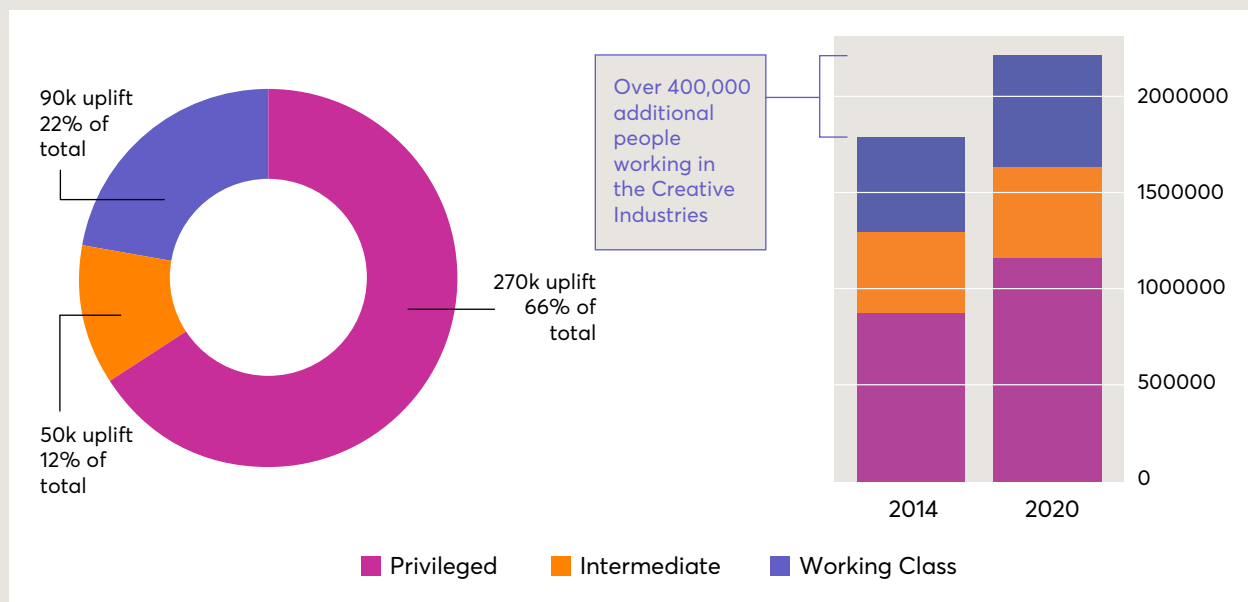
3. Growth of the Creative Industries has disproportionately benefitted the privileged and progress on social mobility has been slow

When we look at growth over this period, it is clear that the expansion of the Creative Industries has not benefitted all groups in equal measure (Figure 2.4, overleaf).

Between 2014 and 2020, the number of people working in the sector grew by over 400,000, yet two thirds (66 per cent) of this uplift was accounted for by those from upper-middle class origins. This means that those from privileged backgrounds accounted for a greater share of additional roles created in the Creative Industries during this period, than they did in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector (where they accounted for 60 per cent of the growth in jobs) or Financial and Professional services (63 per cent).

In contrast, the number of people working in the Creative Industries from lower socio-economic backgrounds increased by less than 100,000 over the same period – accounting for less than one quarter (22 per cent) of the uplift.

Figure 2.4: Past growth of the Creative Industries, by social class¹⁹

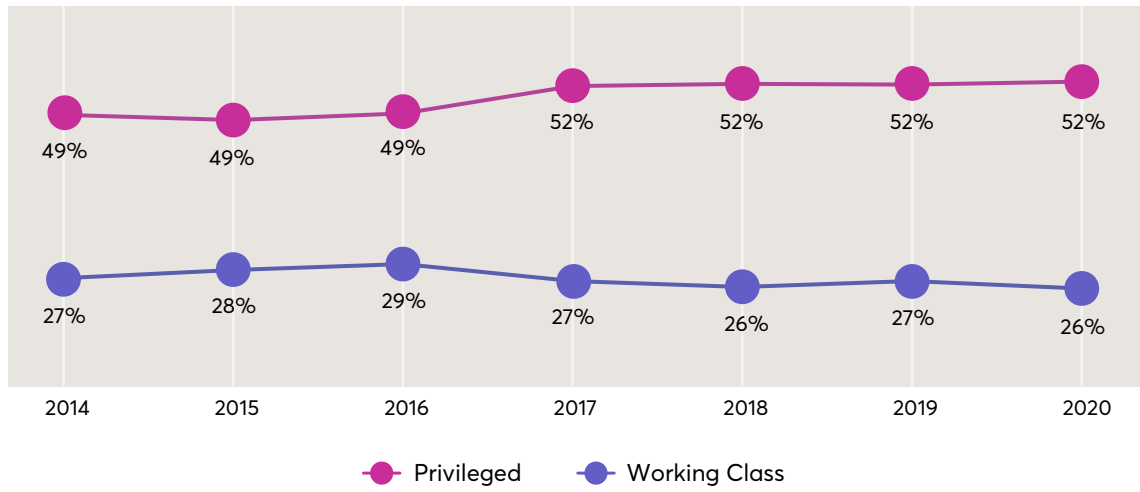


Looking at the class profile of the Creative Industries workforce (Figure 2.5), we observe little change since 2014, when the question of parental occupation was introduced into the Labour Force Survey.

The share of the creative workforce that come from privileged backgrounds has actually been on an upward trajectory, in line with wider changes in the class composition of the workforce as, over the long term, the economy continues to shift towards managerial and professional occupations. To control for this longer labour market shift, it is helpful to consider how odds and odds ratios – which show the likelihood of people from different class backgrounds being employed in the Creative Industries – have changed over time (Figure 2.6).

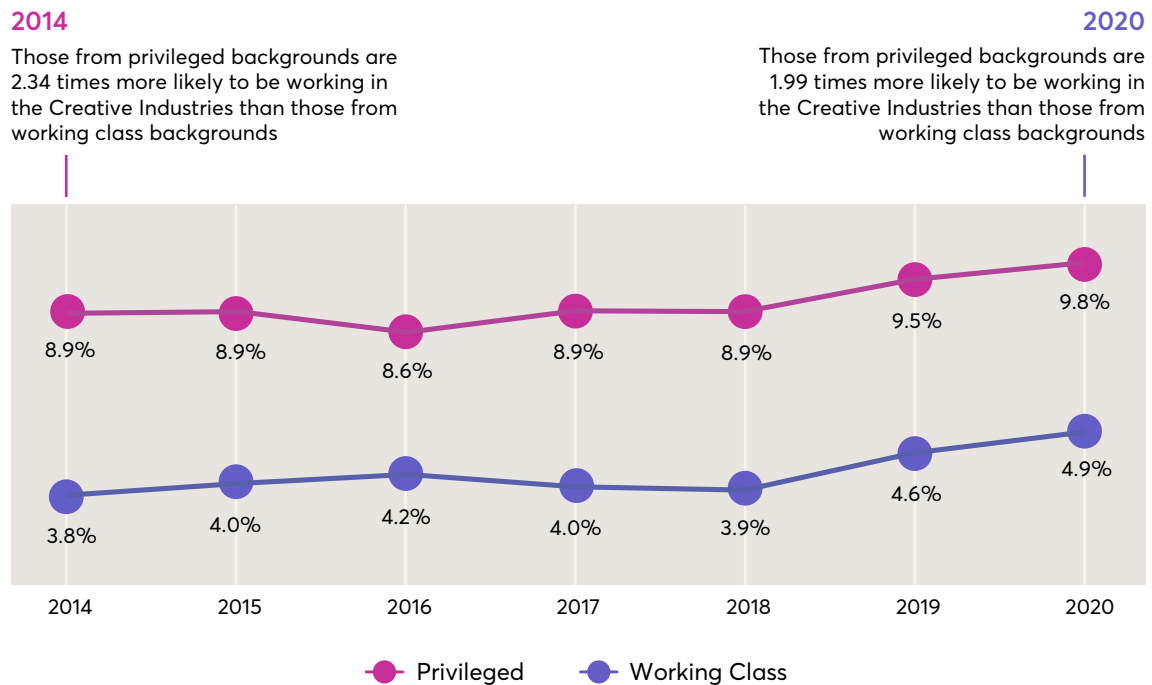
In doing so, we can observe the increase in the probability of people ending up in the Creative Industries (irrespective of class origin) as the sector has grown. As we noted earlier, in 2020 those from privileged backgrounds were twice as likely to be employed in the Creative Industries than those from working class backgrounds (9.8 per cent and 4.9 per cent respectively). The gap between the classes (the odds ratios) has declined since 2014, but only very slightly: 1.99 in 2020 compared to 2.34 in 2014. So, while we see some progress being made, the pace of change is very slow indeed.

Figure 2.5: Class profile of the workforce over time, Creative Industries



Source: Labour Force Survey, July – September quarters. Office for National Statistics. Crown Copyright 2021.

Figure 2.6: Likelihood of people from different socio-economic backgrounds being employed in the Creative Industries



Source: Labour Force Survey, July – September quarters. Office for National Statistics. Crown Copyright 2021.

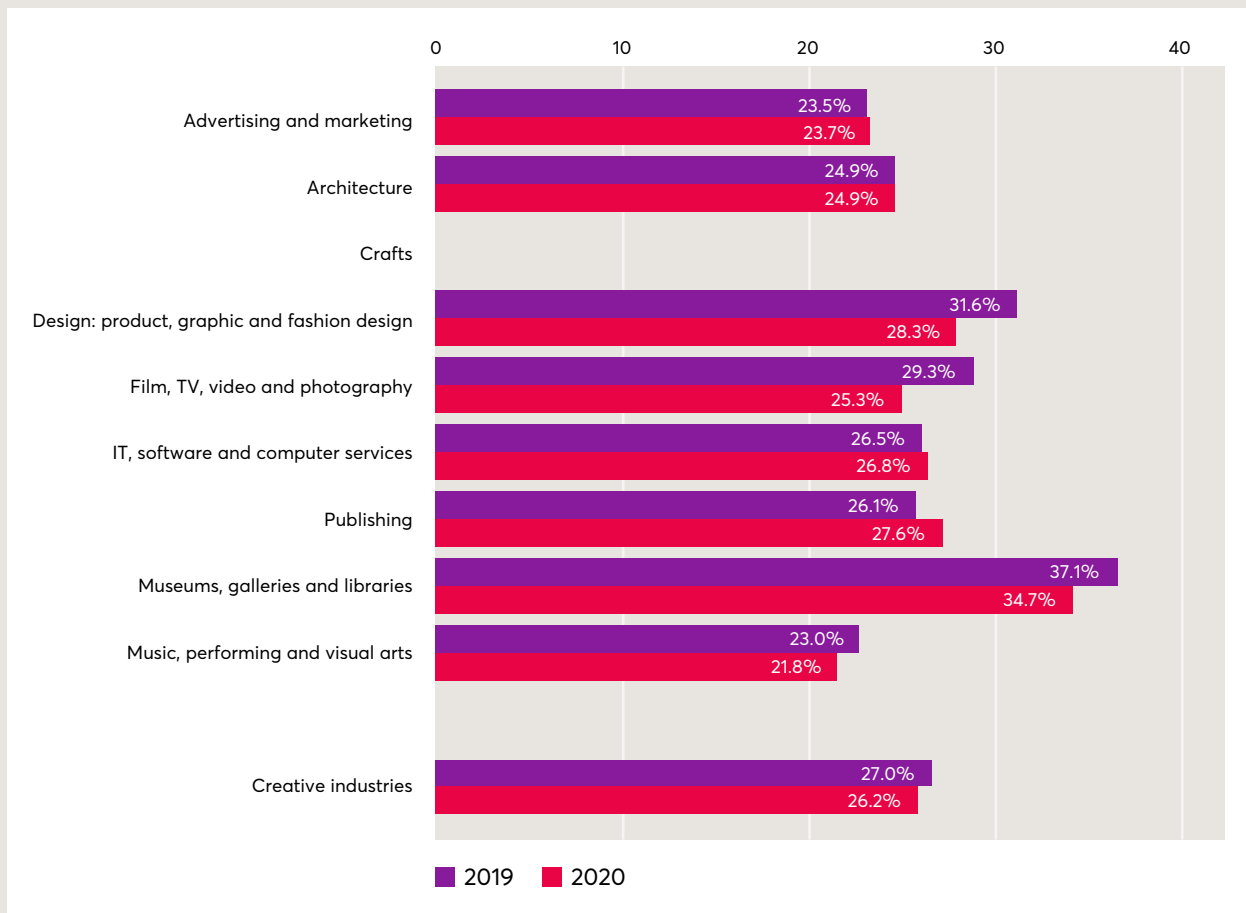
4. COVID-19 risks worsening already pronounced class-based exclusions in the Creative Industries

Not only has growth of the Creative Industries been far from inclusive in the past, but there are also growing concerns that the impact of COVID-19 has been felt most acutely by those already marginalised in the Creative Industries.

As lockdown shut live performance venues, museums and galleries and halted film and TV production, parts of the cultural sector witnessed a collapse in working hours and jobs.²⁰ Music, performing and visual arts; Film, TV, video, radio and photography; and Museums, galleries and libraries; and Design have been particularly badly affected, while other parts of the Creative Industries, particularly those producing or distributing digital content, have seen a surge in demand.²¹

Wider work²² suggests the pandemic has disproportionately impacted those already disadvantaged in the labour market, and there is early evidence that this may also be the case in the Creative Industries. Research studying labour flows, job losses and reductions in working hours has found self-employed creatives, young people, disabled workers, and those without a degree-level qualification to be most at risk.²³

Figure 2.7: Changing class profile in Creative sub-sector between 2019 and 2020 (% working-class)



Source: Labour Force Survey, July – September quarters. Office for National Statistics. Crown Copyright 2021.

At the headline level, we have seen only a very slight reduction in the share of the Creative Industries workforce from working-class backgrounds over the past year (Figure 2.7).

Yet, it is perhaps noteworthy that bigger declines are evident in those sub-sectors most severely impacted by the pandemic.

In Film and TV, for example, the share of the workforce from lower socio-economic backgrounds fell by four percentage points (-4pp) to just one in four – the lowest share since social mobility questions were introduced into the Labour Force Survey in 2014. The share also declined in Design (-3.3pp); Museums and Galleries (-2.4pp) and Music and performing arts (-1.2pp).

There is a need for caution in interpreting these figures, however, given the relatively limited sample size at a sub-sectoral level and that year-on-year fluctuations of similar magnitude have been evident in the past, against a more benign backdrop.

But, equally, they may also be cause for concern. The data presented here – a picture of the labour market between June and September in 2020 – will only capture the very early stages of the pandemic. From past research, we know that the 2008 financial crisis had a disproportionate and persistent impact on those already disadvantaged in the labour market. There is growing evidence that this is also true for the current crisis and, when we think about the underlying causes of class-based exclusion, we should be prepared for the pandemic to worsen existing imbalances evident in the Creative Industries. During times of heightened financial risk and with fewer opportunities (at least in the short-term), those with access to financial reserves and networks will be better placed to withstand insecurity and compete for those opportunities that do exist – reinforcing existing exclusions and increasing barriers to entry for new diverse talent trying to break in to the sector.



5. Class intersects with gender, race, disability, skills, and place. Social mobility must become an integral part of wider efforts to promote a more inclusive Creative Economy

Class-based exclusion is inextricably linked with gender, racial, disability and spatial disparities, and earlier research by the PEC²⁴ has shown how these factors interact to compound disadvantage. We extend this analysis in Figure 2.8 overleaf, which shows the likelihood of those from different demographic groups and socio-economic backgrounds securing employment in a creative occupation.

We find that privileged males are more than three times *more* likely to be working in a creative occupation than working-class females; and that disabled people from a working-class background are 2.7 times *less* likely to land a creative role than their privileged, able-bodied counterparts.

Class and race also intersect, though the picture is made more complex by the concentration of the Creative Industries in more ethnically diverse urban centres, particularly London. Here, if you are white and privileged the odds of working in a creative role are one in five – double the chance of those from ethnic minority, working-class backgrounds also living in the Capital.

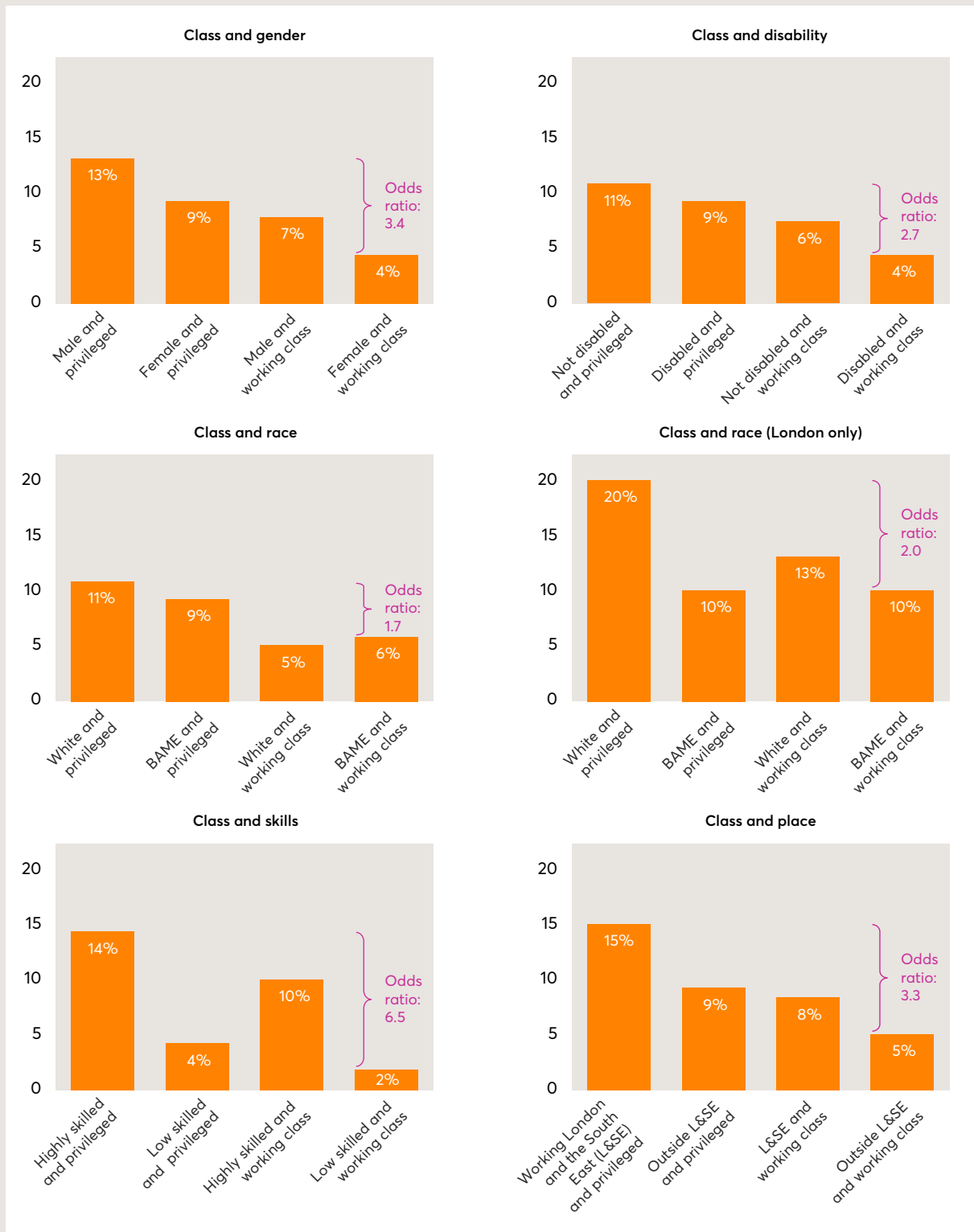
Indeed, place matters when it comes to socio-economic diversity, where just five percent of those from working-class origins based outside of London and the South East secure employment in a creative occupation, compared to 15 per cent of those from privileged backgrounds living in these regions.

The intersection of class and skills has a particularly profound effect, where those who are degree educated and from a privileged background are 6.5 times more likely to secure a creative role than those from lower socio-economic backgrounds that are qualified only to GCSE-level or below.

So, from an individual perspective, where class intersects with gender, race, disability, skills or place, the challenges become multiplied and 'double disadvantage' occurs. From a policy perspective, this means that we need to take a more holistic view of diversity and inclusion, understanding the barriers faced by different individuals in different places, while also recognising that promoting social mobility is integral to wider efforts to address inequality and exclusion, and 'level up' the Creative Economy.

Taken together, our assessment of the picture of class imbalances in 2020 acts as a call to action to industry. With class imbalances more pronounced than any other industry sector and creative occupations amongst the most elite in the economy; with a deficit of more than 250,000 working class voices in the industry; slow progress thus far; and warning signs that the pandemic could have potentially worsened already pronounced class-based inequalities evident in the Creative Industries – it has never been more important to redouble our efforts to build a more socially inclusive creative sector, alongside addressing wider disparities linked to gender, race, disability and place. But, after many years of debating the pronounced inequalities, what will it take to build a more socially inclusive Creative Economy? This is the question to which we now turn.

Figure 2.8: Exploring how class intersects with gender, race, disability, skills and place (Odds and odds ratios), Creative Occupations



Source: Labour Force Survey, July – September 2020. Office for National Statistics. Crown Copyright 2021.

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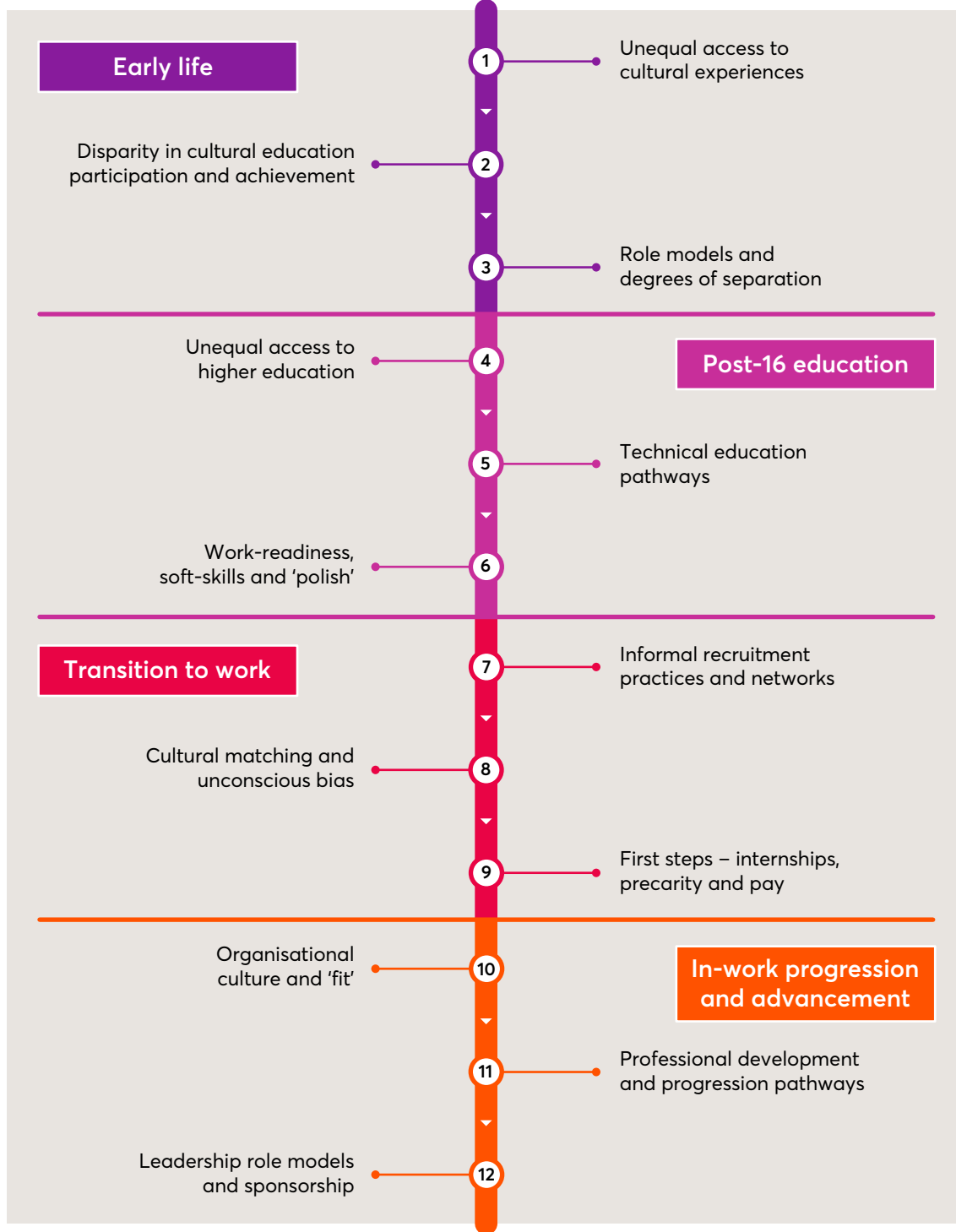
From operating at the margins to driving systemic change

Priorities for building a more socially inclusive Creative Economy

Identifying what it will take to build a more socially inclusive Creative Economy lies in better understanding the underlying causes of class imbalances. Over the past nine months, the PEC has undertaken an in-depth inquiry into these issues and identified twelve key points of class related disadvantage in the Creative Industries. These were published in our 'sector deep-dive' in to the Screen Industries earlier this year and are illustrated in Figure 3.1 overleaf.



Figure 3.1: Primary points of class-related disadvantage in the Creative Industries



Source: Carey et al (2021).

While our 'deep-dive' sought to explore the causes of class inequality in UK Screen, our desk-based research and fieldwork interviews in three other sectors – Advertising, Publishing and Fashion – suggest **striking consistency in the story of class-based disadvantage faced by those working in different parts of the creative sector**. Irrespective of which part

of the Creative Industries they worked in, our interviewees suggested that, early in life, they lacked awareness or belief that a creative career was an opportunity open to them. The majority had had to overcome significant obstacles to go to, and sustain themselves at, university. Without the financial backing of family or access to the right networks, most found the route into the industry was obscured, expensive and exclusive. Even when successful in 'getting in', pay and conditions, workplace culture and pathways to progression in the Creative Industries meant that class remained a mark of difference, influencing our interviewees' ability to sustain a career, their sense of belonging and fortunes in moving into more senior roles.

There were undoubtedly 'weights and measures' to the relative importance of issues in different sub-sectors, and we draw these out in the narrative that follows. But our research suggests that the framework established for understanding class-based disadvantage across the life-course (Figure 3.1) very much reflects the experience of those from working-class backgrounds looking to get in and get on in the Creative Industries.

It is within these areas of consistency in the narrative and shared challenge that we look to identify the priorities for the Creative Industries to act together to enhance socio-economic diversity. Crucially, an overarching message heard loudly throughout our research is that tackling class inequality is not only about redressing the differences in the accumulation of financial, social and cultural assets between privileged and working-class people. Addressing class inequalities is also about addressing the value that this industry places on those financial, social and cultural assets or 'capitals'. **Small scale investment in short-lived 'diversity initiatives' can only be viewed as operating at the margins of the problem**, creating fatigue and breeding cynicism that the industry is really committed to addressing deep-rooted structural inequalities. Instead, **what is needed is systemic change** and a profound shift in the way in which the industry assigns value to certain individuals or social groups, while others are marginalised.

In reflecting on the challenge, we identify four priorities for building a more socially inclusive Creative Economy:

- 1. Ensuring early life experiences establish fair foundations for success** – through equal access to culture and cultural education; and building an awareness of the breadth of roles available and a sense that there is a career for everyone in the Creative Industries, irrespective of their background;
- 2. Unlocking the potential of education as the great leveller** – widening access to higher education, opening up technical routes in to the industry, and ensuring a valuable and enriching educational experience that prepares all students for work in creative roles;
- 3. Improving job quality and business practices in the Creative Industries** – eliminating unpaid internships, promoting more inclusive hiring practices, fair pay and fostering an inclusive culture within creative businesses that allows diverse talent to thrive and progress; and
- 4. Accelerating progression of diverse talent and promoting inclusive leadership of the Creative Industries** – by tackling barriers to professional development in the workforce and promoting inclusive entrepreneurship to foster a new wave of diverse future leaders of the Creative Economy.

For each of these we consider the case for action: consulting the literature, presenting empirical evidence of the problem and drawing on the stories of lived experience heard through our fieldwork interviews. We subsequently present recommendations for how Government, educators and Industry can respond to these issues.



Priority 1: Early life experiences that establish fair foundations for success

“There definitely was a disparity in the kind of lives that we had led. They were all talking about all the theatre they’d been to, the galleries they’d been to at the weekend, and the holidays they were going on. And they all knew so many people in publishing, like somebody’s dad was a big publisher at that job... I felt very, very uncultured. Not understanding half of what they were talking about. And I still very much feel like that, actually.... They’d all lived these glamorous lives of theatre shows, and museums and galleries and foreign films and really literary books that, you know, weren’t ever things I’d been presented with. I did feel a bit like I was a bit **on the outside** for a while.. I kind of recognise that **a lot of why they have all that knowledge was because they’d had the access to it growing up.** In that you know that, you know, I hadn’t... **we’re like two different worlds.**”

Jenny, Project Editor, Publishing

In current policy there is an important focus on securing work in the Creative Industries. However, our earlier research (and that of others) suggests class-based disadvantage has much deeper roots. Class barriers are rooted in early life experiences, as future success can be heavily influenced by experiences in childhood.²⁵

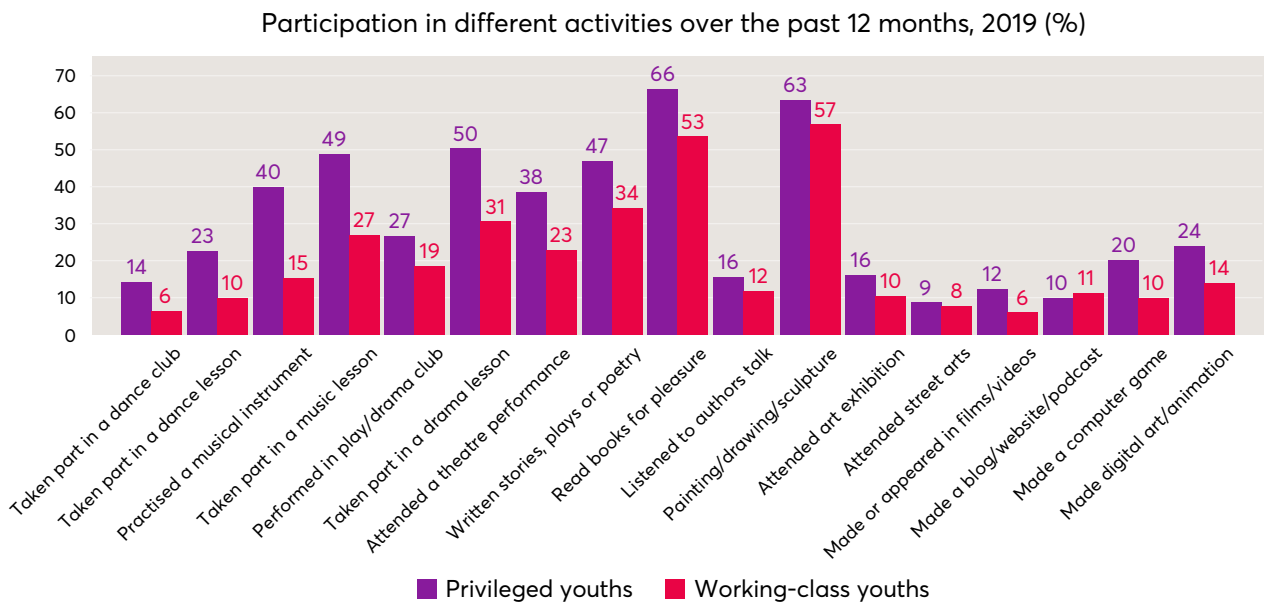
We heard a vast number of stories, like Jenny’s²⁶ above, that spoke of how a lack of cultural engagement, particularly with more legitimised ‘highbrow’ culture while growing up, meant they lacked the right vocabulary, behaviours or references – ‘cultural capital’²⁷ – that instilled a sense of difference. We heard many stories of being ‘on the outside’ even when they successfully made it into the Creative Industries.

There is robust evidence that **access to culture in the UK is highly unequal and stratified by social class.**²⁸ New analysis of the 2019 Taking Part survey suggests that those from working class backgrounds are far less likely to engage in many of the cultural activities that are funded

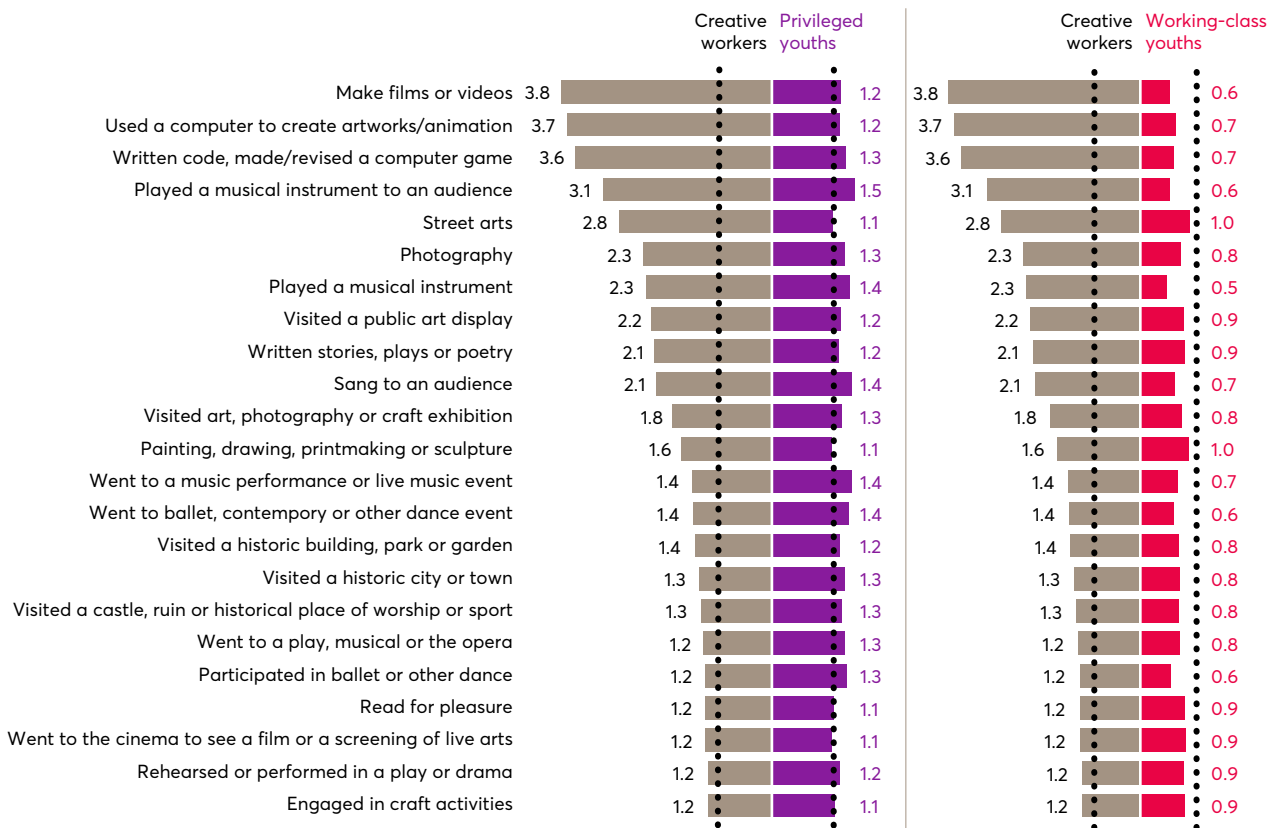
and supported by Government. The differences are particularly pronounced for music; drama and theatre; reading for pleasure; and writing stories, plays or poetry, but also engagement with digital media such as computer games, digital art or animation. (see Figure 3.2 overleaf). Here it is worth noting the vital role that public libraries played in enabling a free and plentiful supply of books that fostered an early love of reading amongst our interviewees who later in life went on to become successful writers, publishers and editors, and to work more widely in the creative sector.

Overall though, cultural consumption amongst young people growing up in working class households contrasts strongly with the affluent middle class who dominate work in Creative Occupations. This difference is part of the reason that **those from more privileged backgrounds are more likely to be considered a cultural ‘match’ when interviewed for jobs or commissioned, or informally connected,** with those already working in the sector.²⁹

Figure 3.2: Patterns of cultural consumption by class origin, 2019³⁰



Patterns of cultural consumption, 2019 (index vs all workers/youths)



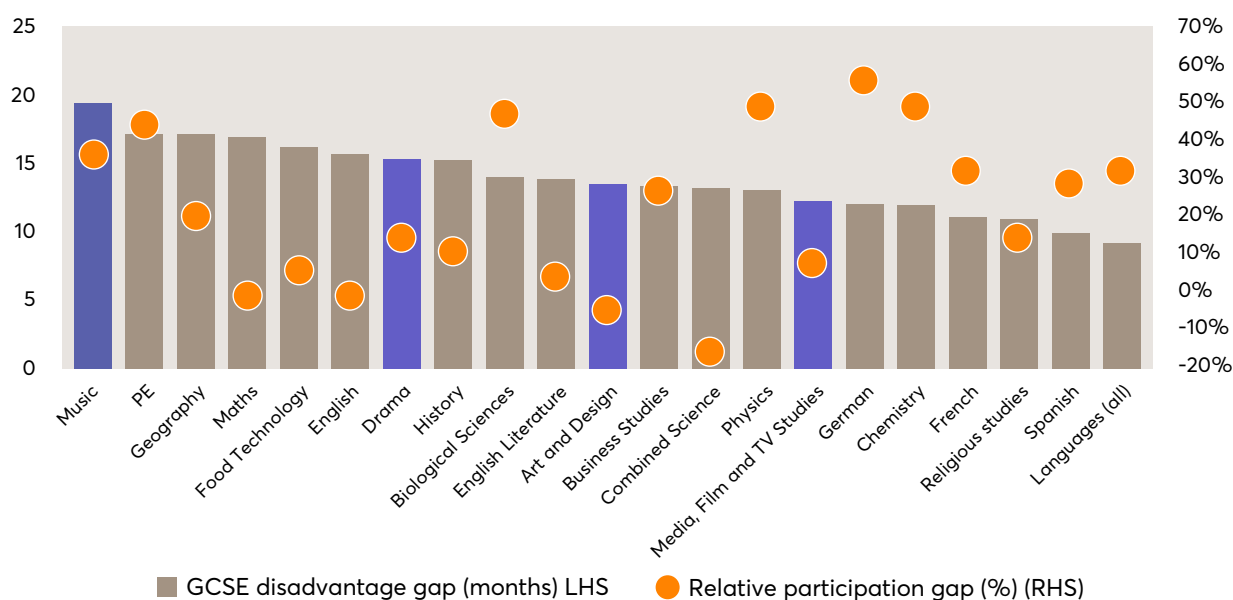
Source: Taking Part 2019, DCMS.

Inequalities are also evident in the classroom. Government has long acknowledged that culture is an important part of a child's education and, since 2019, the importance of developing cultural capital amongst all learners, and particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, has featured in the Education Inspection Framework.³¹ Yet Ofsted has voiced concerns that at some schools, lower-attaining students were not offered a chance to study certain subjects in the arts,

with pupils 'filtered' into a different pathway and creative subjects 'sometimes marginalised.'³²

Alongside well-evidenced educational attainment gaps for disadvantaged students (overall³³), **there exists significant disparities in cultural education participation and achievement** with disadvantaged students considerably less likely to participate in most creative subjects at GCSE-level (Figure 3.3).³⁴

Figure 3.3: Participation and achievement gaps in creative learning, England³⁵



Source: Hutchinson et al (2020) Education in England Annual Report 2020.

"I spent my entire career observing people who went to much fancier schools than the one I attended. **What those schools do to you, even if you're not that clever, they'll polish you. You know, they'll get you through it. They'll instil you with confidence.** The kind of skill set that you need to get through a state comprehensive is not the kind of skill set that you need to get through one of these top private schools, not my school."

Joanne, Producer, Screen

There are also growing concerns regarding the deprioritisation of creative education in schools in England, with reports from the Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) suggesting a decline in both the uptake of creative subjects at GCSE and A-Level and the number of arts teachers and teaching hours over the past decade.³⁶ Similarly, the Arts Council England-sponsored Durham Commission on Creativity and Education reported **significant disparities in teaching for creativity between schools, often reflecting socio-economic factors**; and expressed deep concern about the reduction in status of arts subjects.³⁷ Further, research suggests that pupils in high-deprivation schools have fewer opportunities for out-of-classroom education, that some extracurricular activities remain largely the preserve of the wealthy, and

that this **inhibits the development of confidence, social networks and soft skills** that influence success in the labour market later in life.³⁸

Wider research has evidenced the important role that influential adults play in sharing knowledge, guidance and contacts that can shape a young person's career aspirations and trajectory.³⁹ With key creative and senior roles in the Creative Industries dominated by the privileged, there are significant concerns that those from working-class backgrounds may lack visible role models and that the 'degrees of separation' between those from working-class backgrounds and anyone, working in any job, in the Creative Industries, are so significant that **many young people are unaware that a career in the sector is even an option.**⁴⁰

"There wasn't ever really a sense of publishing as a job, like maybe journalism was like batted around as an idea. But no, I didn't have any kind of idea that you could have a job that was like to make and commission and work on, like books. No, I didn't know that. Even if I can remember back to when you learned about people that did jobs at school and stuff, they never went into, the specifics of people's jobs like that.

And then even if we had, like, careers days, I never remember someone coming in and saying, oh my job is in publishing or my job is in films."

Laura, Editorial Assistant, Publishing

"At school it was never discussed ever, like job opportunities in the creative sector or anything. I think when you come from a working class background and then you go to a school like that, you literally are seen to ... 'What do you want to be? Do you want to be a policeman, or a fireman, or a teacher? What are you going to study after school?' That's what is drummed into you. I never once, from any adult, was told, 'Well, if you're good at this stuff, you could work in marketing or you could work in advertising. You could work in media.'"

Evie, Account Director, Advertising

Our interviews with workers serve to reinforce these concerns. Many referenced a lack of awareness of the breadth of jobs in the Creative Industries, or a sense that these jobs were not 'for people like me'. Some were lacking any advice or personal connections with knowledge of creative careers, so felt it took longer to figure out what they wanted to do and how to even get into the industry. Others spoke of how they had needed to **overcome parental perceptions of the legitimacy of creative careers or the viability of establishing and sustaining a career in the sector.**

The quality of careers advice was generally felt to be inadequate and outdated, and we heard several accounts, such as Evie's above, of our interviewees being discouraged from pursuing creative options in favour of more academic routes, 'tangible' or 'realistic' options. This was a particularly strong narrative amongst our consultees in Fashion. Several of those we spoke to described how, despite a love of fashion and passion for making, they were 'pushed' to study other subjects, that were considered to be more academic or where there was a more certain chance of a job and secure pay at the end of their studies.

"And even just the attitude towards fashion. I remember one of my dad's friends who was a teacher, headmaster saying, 'What are you studying?' And I was like, 'I'm studying fashion. I'm doing math and French.' And he was like, 'Oh, hmm.' Two really great things and one a bit, 'hmm.' So it's this really weird thing towards if you're clever and your academia is good and fashion is just dresses and a bit frivolous."

Janet, Master Tailor, Fashion

There is also a strong spatial dimension to these disparities. **Our interviews suggest the lack of access to cultural experiences, learning options, cultural resources or knowledge of creative careers is particularly acute in rural or coastal areas.** Sometimes this sat alongside wider concerns about school performance or funding, but more often the issue concerned subject choice; qualifications on offer; or the awareness, knowledge or support amongst teaching staff of creative disciplines or career opportunities in the creative sector.

Yet there were positive examples too, of where an influential adult – a teacher, college tutor, local youth club worker or widening participation professional – had provided vital insight and support for our interviewees at a critical point in their development. These individuals nurtured nascent talent and tentative ambition, offered practical advice and support to find suitable courses, institutions and internships, and, most

critically, instilled belief and confidence to pursue these opportunities. In many cases these interventions were transformative: setting our interviewees on a trajectory that would enable them to secure the creative roles they hold today.

Despite these positive stories, our research suggests that early life factors – unequal access to culture; disparities in participation and achievement in cultural education; and a lack of visible role models – set those from working-class backgrounds at a distinct disadvantage to their privileged counterparts in getting in and getting on in the Creative Industries. **Ensuring that early life experiences establish fair foundations for success through equal access to culture and cultural education, building an awareness of the breadth of roles available and a sense that there is a career for everyone in the Creative Industries, irrespective of their background, must therefore be a crucial priority in enhancing socio-economic diversity.**

What do we need to do?

Schools, local cultural institutions and youth provision have the potential to play a vital role in addressing early-life barriers to social mobility by widening access to culture for those from low socio-economic backgrounds.⁴¹ Yet, over the past decade we have seen considerable funding cuts that have weakened the local institutional infrastructure for the arts, culture and creativity.

Past research has highlighted the significant impact of austerity measures implemented following the 2008 financial crisis on local government budgets for cultural and related services.⁴² Although the Chancellor announced £90m per annum for the Arts Premium,

channelling additional funding to secondary schools to support arts programmes and extra-curricular activities, financial constraints continue to impact the scale and effectiveness of local intermediaries, such as the Local Cultural Education Partnerships and Bridge Organisations in England, which serve as important brokers between schools and local arts and cultural organisations.⁴³

Despite investment in Music Education Hubs, IntoFilm, Digital Schoolhouse, Creative Learning Centres and other place-based 'hubs' that aim to offer cultural experiences and creative learning for young people, and resources and professional development opportunities for schools, coverage remains patchy.



Recommendation 1

Offer a new, long-term financial settlement for cultural education, with enhanced funding and resources for arts and culture in schools, alongside investment in a stronger local institutional infrastructure and an extended network of Creative Learning Centres to widen access to culture outside of urban conurbations and within social mobility cold spots.

- Confirm funding for the Arts Premium over the next fiscal cycle, while extending its coverage to include primary schools in DfE Opportunity Areas and social mobility cold spots.
- Rebuild the local institutional infrastructure to support cultural education, providing long-term investment in local brokerage agencies, such as the Bridge Organisations, Cultural Education Partnerships, and Creativity Collaboratives in England, that provide a vital link and support coordination between schools and local arts and culture organisations.
- Invest in a network of Creative Learning Centres in under-served areas, providing highly localised, free-access public spaces for children to be creative and engage in cultural activities. These should learn from and complement established models, such as the Digital Schoolhouse and the Northern Ireland Creative Learning Centres; cohabit and connect with existing community spaces and groups; and explore hub and spoke models with urban and regional cultural institutions.

There has been a sharpening of focus on careers information, education and inspiration activities in recent years, reflecting growing concerns about the impact of a lack of awareness of career pathways on the talent pipeline to the Creative Industries.⁴⁴

The Sector Deal for the Creative Industries⁴⁵ saw the launch of the Creative Careers Programme – a multi-faceted programme of support. Importantly, the programme is closely aligned with cross-sectoral initiatives, such as Speakers for Schools and the work of the Careers and Enterprise

Company, working collaboratively to support schools in developing industry-relevant careers strategies. Alongside the [Discover! Creative Careers](#) website, the programme includes several

'inspiration' activities for pupils aged 11+, including bringing leaders from industry into schools, offering work experience, and immersive events through the Discover! Creative Careers week.

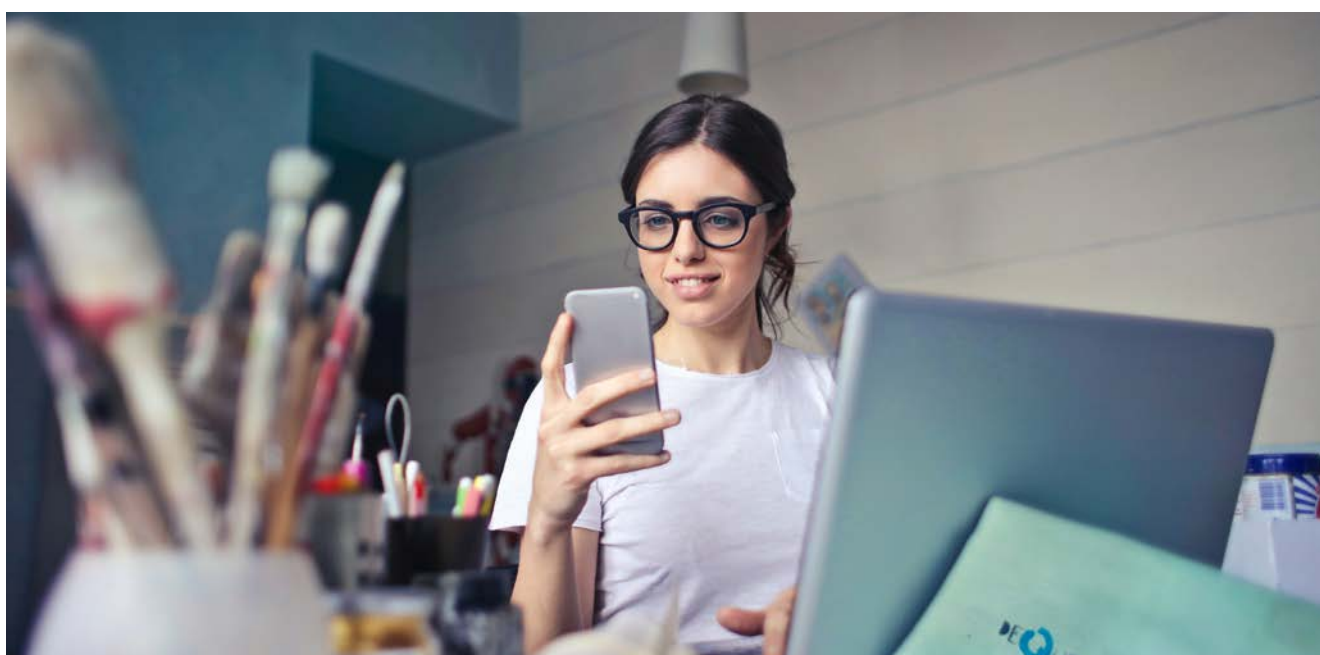
Creative Careers Programme

The logo for Discover! Creative Careers, featuring the word "DISCOVER!" in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a dark purple rectangular background. Below "DISCOVER!" is the text "creative careers" in a smaller, white, lowercase sans-serif font.

The Creative Careers Programme (CCP), a partnership between The Creative Industries Federation, Creative & Cultural Skills and ScreenSkills, is an integrated industry-led programme of activity that is working to ensure there is a larger and more diverse intake of talent via a broader range of routes into the Creative Industries. Launched initially in England in 2019 via funding from DCMS, the programme developed through engagement with a range of businesses, industry bodies, schools and teachers. Arts Council England and the Welsh Government via Creative Wales funded further developments of the 2020-2021 programme.

Its flagship event, Discover! Creative Careers Week is a call to arms for the Creative Industries to open their doors, physically and online, to introduce students from all backgrounds to the various job roles that exist. In 2019 hundreds of employers hosted thousands of students in their buildings to take part in tours, workshops and tasks and provide immersive, hands-on experiences.

Discover! Creative Careers Week has recently adapted to a digital delivery model with two online Discover! weeks, for Wales and England respectively, consisting of filmed interviews, tours, live panel discussions and teaching resources for schools and colleges. The CCP has also facilitated regional training for Careers and Enterprise Company Enterprise Coordinators and provided specialist Enterprise Advisors to support school leadership teams with their Careers Strategies.



Early evaluation evidence suggests that the programme leveraged £8.5m in industry investment from £2m in start-up funding from Government, reaching 113,000 young people across England and engaging 1,000 employers.⁴⁶

Securing future funding for this pan- Creative Industries programme, across the UK, will be vital

in providing education and guidance on creative careers for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds who tend to have greater 'degrees of separation' from the Creative Industries than their more privileged counterparts.

Recommendation 2

Extend, expand and more actively target the Creative Careers Programme towards social mobility cold spots and embed the programme within local skills systems.

- Extend investment in the Creative Careers Programme for the next fiscal cycle, expanding its reach to Scotland and Northern Ireland, offering additional activities targeting parents and other adult influencers to enhance understanding and attitudes towards creative careers; and widening support to include young people and adults looking to retrain, particularly those who have lost their jobs as a consequence of COVID-19 or who are looking to up/reskill to enable career transition later in life.
- Strengthen targeting of CCP towards social mobility cold spots, working with the expanded network of local brokerage agencies (see Recommendation 1) to provide additional resources and support to increase engagement by schools with high proportion of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals.
- Embed CCP within local skills systems, exploiting the potential of the Programme, and its delivery partners, to play a strong brokerage role between industry and educators, keeping careers information current and facilitating enriching work experience opportunities with creative employers. This will be particularly crucial in England given the roll-out of new T-levels for the sector with their mandatory 45-hour work placement requirement, and the additional barriers disadvantaged learners may face in finding suitable placement opportunities.



Priority 2: Unlocking the potential of education as the great leveller

“The MA at [HE Institution] is known for being incredibly difficult and all-encompassing. I worked three jobs alongside my MA. I worked in a call centre. I worked in a pub, and I worked in a bar. I still did have to take out a loan from the bank to then fund the rest of my rent... **Because I didn't have support to be able to do it from necessarily a big pot of money from family or whatever, and it's so expensive to do work and to live in London, I had to kind of... I was really ducking and diving.**

I've seen first-hand the difficulties that students face, myself and now teaching students, and how it **really impacts their mental health when they have to worry about money.** And they're not able to sit and think because they've got other things to worry about... **Their work completely goes downhill when they've got these issues to deal with, money and not being able to sustain themselves.”**

Marcus, Fashion Designer

The story we heard from Marcus, now a successful Designer in the Fashion industry, illustrates the struggles faced by many of those from working-class backgrounds as they strive to secure a university degree from a prestigious institution. This remains a primary route into many Creative Industries.⁴⁷ Yet we know **educational achievement in school, and relatedly class origin, is a significant predictor of access to university and in particular to elite institutions.**⁴⁸ Research by the Sutton Trust found that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and from state schools are much less likely to apply to Russell Group universities than their more privileged or private-school counterparts. This is the case even when they had comparable qualifications – including the same A-level grades and subjects.⁴⁹ Similarly, analysis of data from the Next Steps survey, found that the most advantaged students were twelve times more likely to attend a Russell Group university.⁵⁰

Our research suggests that **the cost of going to university and the need to relocate in order to attend specialist creative institutions act as considerable constraints to those from low socio-economic backgrounds.**

Echoing wider work,⁵¹ a number of our consultees suggested that the removal of government grants for art and design training and the introduction of tuition fees acted as a significant barrier for those without the financial backing of parents.

Those that benefitted from 'the old system' of free tuition and maintenance grants – such as Tanya overleaf – suggested they were vital in enabling them to pursue their creative interests and secure a university degree.

In contrast, many of our younger interviewees suggested they were **actively discouraged from pursuing their ambition to study creative subjects at university by their families because of the shoulder of debt they would bear, for an outcome that was seen as uncertain and insecure.**

“And I think the main barrier for me, and looking at what I’m doing that now, would’ve been paying for it. **There’s no way that had I not got a living, a grant, and the fees paid, that my parents would’ve afforded for me to go to a degree. Absolutely not, wouldn’t have happened.** I didn’t even have to pay for my transport. I got free transport from the council to get to college. I got tuition-free college places, tuition-free degree place with a grant from the council, a living maintenance grant. There’s no way that I could’ve paid. I’m looking at if I have to pay my son’s fees and living expenses, and he’s not at university, he’s at local college.”

Tanya, Director of Fashion

For some, the cost of tuition and living expense proved an insurmountable barrier, even when they had successfully secured places at a prestigious creative institution, leading them to pursue more local options or deterring them from further study altogether. Others – like Anna, now a successful

Integrated Producer working in Advertising – felt they had chosen the wrong course, or the wrong institution because of a lack of financial capital, confidence or awareness of the learning options available to them.

“And I remember going to a careers advisor and I said that I’d heard about [Specialist creative institution]. And I said that I really wanted to go there. I’d heard it was the best place to go for art and that’s what I wanted to do. And the careers advisor said, ‘Oh, start your sights a bit lower.’ Even though he hadn’t seen my work or knew nothing about me, just automatically it was like, ‘People from here don’t go there, so just don’t bother, don’t get your hopes up...’ I think I completely chose and did the wrong degree at the wrong university because I didn’t have enough confidence to apply to maybe one of the more prestigious ones.”

Anna, Integrated Producer, Advertising

New research from the Sutton Trust also suggests that COVID-19 has exacerbated the financial barriers faced by those from low socio-economic backgrounds in pursuing higher education, with disadvantaged students feeling they are less able to afford to study because of the pandemic and more likely to have changed their mind about university attendance.⁵²

Our interviews highlight that **even when successful in securing a university place, those from working-class backgrounds often have a very different experience from their privileged counterparts.** As we heard from Marcus’ testimony above, financial pressures and the need to hold down multiple jobs, while studying, can impact the quality of work product and the mental health of

students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. In Fashion, this was sometimes exacerbated by the need to cover additional costs related to their projects, for example the cost of fabric or other materials. In all cases, **the urban (and particularly London) centric nature of specialist provision meant extremely high living costs were often a considerable weight for students to bear.**

As Daniel's account of his time at Film school exemplifies, many of our interviewees described

how they found their experience of university far from positive. For some, this related to a lack of cultural capital: for example, the Creative Director in Fashion who found he lacked the in-depth knowledge of designers or arts movements held by his more privileged counterparts. Others felt their working-class background left them feeling alienated, that their ongoing financial struggles were ill understood, and that their accent, regional dialect or race set them apart from their middle-class peers.

"But with these kind of competitive, insane places, you can really get out of it as much as you want, because weirdly, all this money that people have, you can't buy like originality, talent or the actual understanding of, knowing what you want to do, if that makes sense, sometimes that's just the most important thing, like having something to say, having lived the life, having actually considered that there's a pressure on you to achieve things, to support people and do stuff like that. So **that's what film school was like. And it was amazing for me. But I know people that had really horrible experiences because it's a lot of competitive people and lots of people with lots of money and it destroys some people and they end up with huge debts and no career.**"

Daniel, Writer/producer/director, Screen

Technical education can offer a more inclusive route into professional occupations to those unable to cover the cost of higher education.⁵³

Several of our interviewees emphasised the important role that College had played in their journey, often in providing an initial foundation degree before pursuing university.

Yet fractured and flawed technical education pathways into the Creative Industries, particularly evident in England, undermine this potential.

New analysis of the Individualised Learner Record (Figure 3.4) suggests that there has been a dramatic reduction in the take-up of Arts, Media and Publishing courses at Further Education (FE) level, with total enrolments declining by around

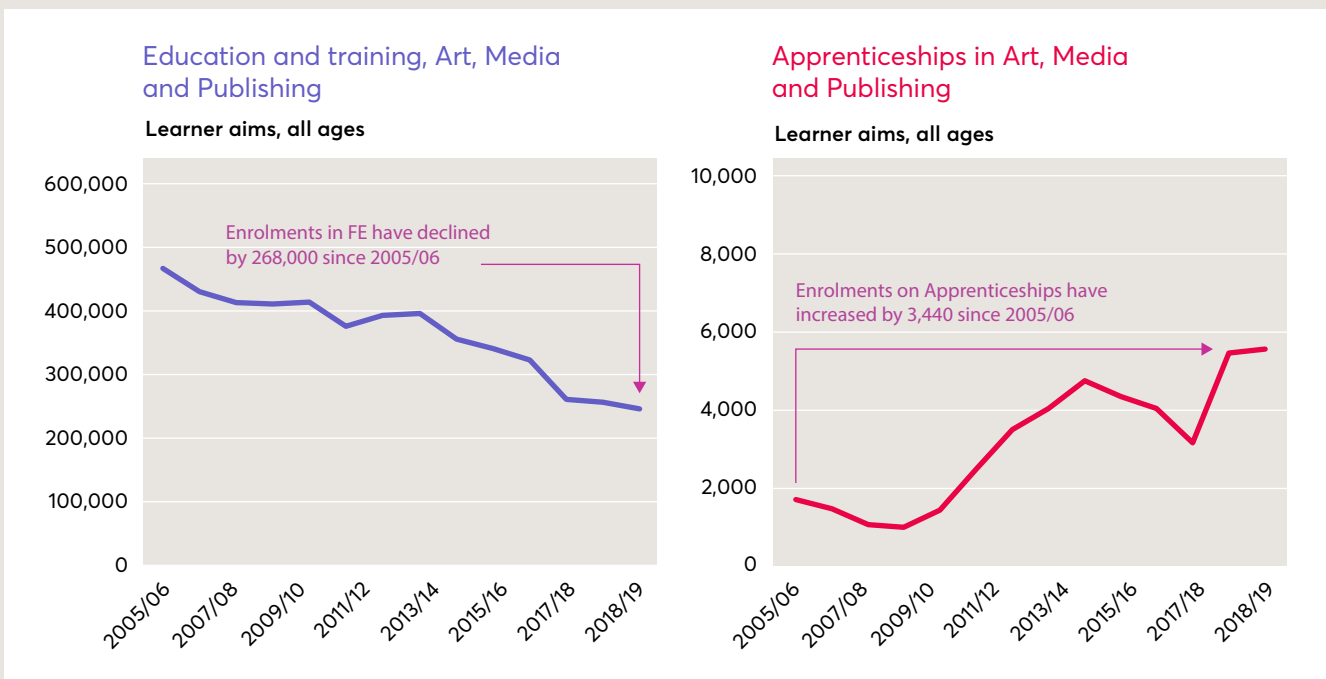
265,000 since 2005/6 (-55 per cent), and at a much faster rate than across all disciplines (-32 per cent).

While the number of Apprenticeship aims has been increasing, this growth pales in comparison to the decline in college-based education and training and wider evidence (+3,440 over the same period) and wider evidence suggests that the take-up of Apprenticeships remains low across all the devolved nations.⁵⁴ Past research points to a range of industry-specific implementation challenges,⁵⁵ which were echoed in our consultations particularly with employers in film production and TV broadcasting.⁵⁶

"I think the apprenticeship scheme is a brilliant thing. I think it is underutilized by the Creative Industries because of the way it's structured, and doesn't fit the Creative Industries. We've got an apprentice levy that we don't spend. If [Apprenticeships] could be much more fit for the business we do, we could have an apprentice on every single production, and we would be able to change the face of the industry really, really quickly. It's sort of heart-breaking that we can't use it better to bring more people in."

Screen Employer

Figure 3.4: Technical education pathways into the Creative Industries in England⁵⁷



Source: Individualised Learner Record, Department for Education.

Generally, there was a very low level of awareness of technical routes into the industry, perhaps with the exception of Advertising where most employers we spoke with offered Apprenticeships. Many of our interviewees – such as David, Director of a Fashion Label, overleaf – suggested vocational education and paid work-based learning opportunities (along the lines of T-Levels and Apprenticeships) would provide a valuable

alternative to academic routes, not least given the opportunity to 'earn while you learn'. Despite this, our interviews with both workers and businesses across our 'in focus' sub-sectors suggest vocational education continues to be viewed as inferior to academic pathways and, as we explore later, can further add to the sense of difference felt by those from working-class backgrounds when in work.

“If I had an apprentice program, it would be like, you can take on someone who then learns tailoring or learns how to do draping or really specific things in a studio environment. I think they’d be hugely beneficial, even if there were sort of different levels to them where you could do one when you’re 16, instead of doing A levels. Learning how to sew and learning how to construct garments, but also learning how to construct good garments, not just t-shirts, I think that’s something that’s really being lost in all the conversations is that there’s actually a huge amount of human skill that’s taken away when you kind of train people who are from working class backgrounds to make clothes quickly and badly either, that’s not the way though.”

David, Director, Fashion

Taken together, the account above suggests that if we are going to unlock the potential of education as ‘the great leveller’ – to improve social mobility through education – then we need to redouble efforts to widen access to higher education, accelerate plans to open up technical routes in to the industry, and ensure that irrespective of the route learners choose, they receive a valuable, enriching, future-proofed educational experience, aligned to the changing needs of industry and that prepares them for the future world of work in the Creative sector.

What do we need to do?

The widening participation agenda has been in place for decades, and higher education institutions – including major providers of creative education – have long developed strategies and schemes to address disparities in access, progression and outcomes between students from different social groups. At the same time, we are seeing renewed focus on diversifying models of delivery beyond three-year bachelor’s degrees, as a further vehicle for widening access. In the Creative Industries, there are a wide range of examples of providers undertaking outreach activities and providing scholarships that partially or fully cover tuition fees and bursaries for wider costs, in order to widen participation.

It is vital these efforts continue despite the challenging fiscal environment facing providers of creative higher education. Just this year we have seen confirmation of cuts to ‘top-up’ grants for performing and creative arts and media studies⁵⁸ and to additional funding for students in London. Future risks, in the form of cuts to tuition fees and loans, or caps to student numbers as part of the Government response to the Augar review⁵⁹ would further exacerbate the already exclusive nature of creative higher education. This is at a time when the findings of our research suggest a need for universities and specialist providers to redouble their efforts and play a lead role in driving social mobility into the Creative Industries.



Recommendation 3

Universities, and particularly specialist creative institutions, should redouble their efforts and play a leading role in driving social mobility into the Creative Industries, with stretching targets; stronger focus on the student lifecycle; and an extended offer of online, blended and flexible learning options.

- Higher education institutions should include more explicit and challenging targets for access, continuation, and degree outcomes of students from low socio-economic backgrounds (SEB) in their Access and Participation Plans. We recommend that HEIs include the Social Mobility Commission's SEB measures⁶⁰ to supplement existing area-level measures (such as POLAR⁶¹), to more accurately identify contextually disadvantaged learners and to promote consistency in the measurement and monitoring of class imbalances across the Creative Industries.
- Scale-up scholarships, bursaries and maintenance grants for students from low socio-economic backgrounds, coupling financial support with pastoral care, mentoring and networking opportunities to promote an inclusive learning environment; support soft skill development; enhance social capital; and enable transition to work.
- Institutions should offer more flexible learning options (e.g. part-time, modular) and leverage the shift to online and blended learning during COVID-19, to widen and extend access to specialist provision for those outside of urban centres and London and the South East.

Efforts to widen access to Creative Higher Education must go hand-in-hand with an acceleration of plans to enhance technical education pathways into the Creative Industries, so that college-based courses and Apprenticeships are a viable and valued alternative to a university degree.

Much work is already in train. In England, the recently published 'Plan for Jobs' White Paper sets out a new long-term post-16 skills strategy which includes a series of measures to improve the quality, relevance and standing of technical education; expand higher technical qualifications and establish stronger vocational pathways; strengthen local skills systems; and introduce new funding (including a Lifetime Skills Guarantee) and flexibilities that could be hugely positive in widening access.⁶² Similar developments are also underway in the devolved nations. In Scotland, for example, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has complemented its suite of Modern Apprenticeship frameworks with new Foundation Apprenticeships in Creative and Digital Media for young people in the senior phase of secondary school to provide technical routes into creative roles.⁶³

There is growing emphasis on industry-leadership and employer-led skills solutions, and sector bodies, including Sector Skills Councils, Trade Associations and membership organisations operating within parts of the Creative Industries are acting to strengthen technical and vocational pathways through the creation of new specialist centres of excellence and institutes of technology; the development of new college-based technical qualifications and Apprenticeship standards. At the same time, we are seeing greater devolution of adult skills planning and budgets to local areas and place-based strategies, local skills improvement plans, and place-based interventions to enhance the skills infrastructure, provide creative learning opportunities for local communities and strengthen the local creative skills base.

Capitalising on this momentum, and strongly positioning the Creative Industries within wider skills policy developments, will be crucial. In doing so, policy can strengthen existing, and create new, technical routes into creative occupations for those from low socio-economic backgrounds.



✓ Recommendation 4

Harness ongoing developments in skills policy, particularly in England, to rapidly open-up technical pathways into the Creative Industries to create a viable and valued alternative to a traditional university degree.

- Undertake a full, forward-looking review of technical learning pathways in the Creative Industries, including college-based and work-based routes and with a focus on higher-level technical qualifications that provide a viable alternative to university education
- Advance and accelerate plans to develop more flexible Apprenticeship models (inc. Apprenticeship Training Agencies); alongside modular, portfolio learning options and other, locally-led, skills solutions, capitalising on the Flexi-Job Apprenticeships Fund and National Skills Fund
- Develop stronger, more inclusive and collaborative networks for creative skills development in local places. These should have local colleges at their heart, work with local employer groups and creative businesses to widen access, offer modular, blended, flexible learning, aligned to the needs of industry and position the Creative Industries as a priority with local Skills Advisory Panels, Local Skills Improvement Plans and Skills Accelerator trailblazers.
- Promote engagement with technical education amongst employers and learners by leveraging an expanded Creative Careers Programme (see Recommendation 2) and through dedicated campaigns to change perceptions of vocational routes amongst the business community and to raise awareness of how the new Lifelong Loan Entitlement could be used for creative skills development amongst young people, and those looking to transition into or already working within the Creative Industries.



Priority 3: Improving job quality and business practices in the Creative Industries

"It's like you only get paid proper money that you can live off after about ten years or so of a consistent track record. And that's accepted. Throughout the arts and film industry, I feel. It's like you're proving your seriousness, like you're a good investment and things to the cultural landscape...It's unsustainable. You can only really manage in the film industry if you have a partner that works full time, private money, family money and or like a second job that you can actually put proper hours into. Otherwise, forget it, really."

Nicola, Freelance Producer, Screen

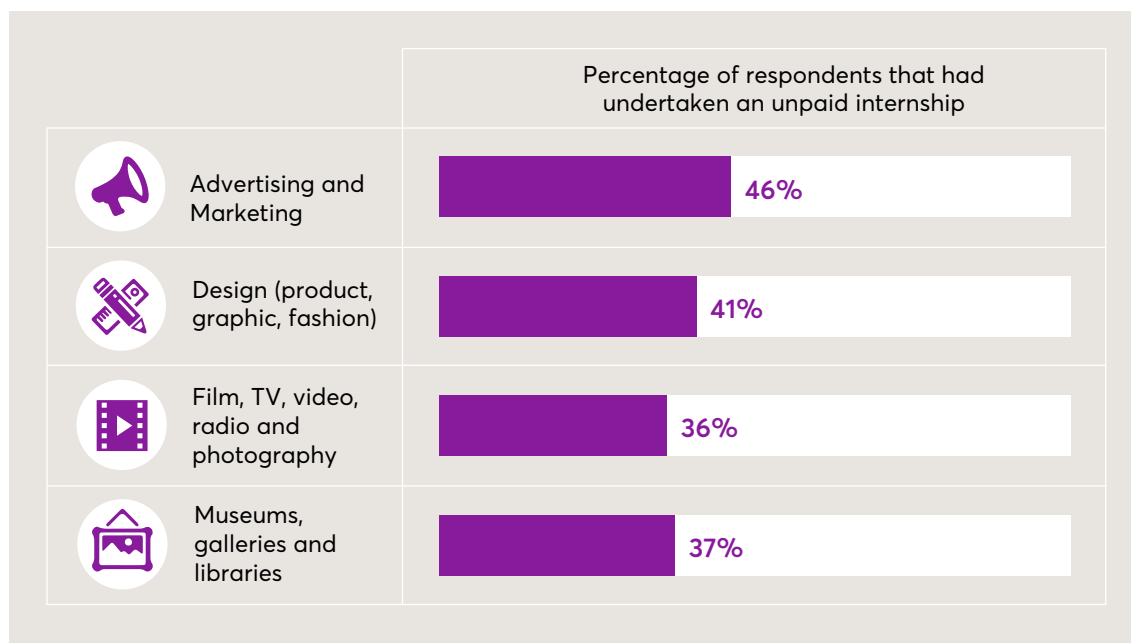
The impact of COVID-19 has heightened concerns about job precarity in parts of the Creative Industries.⁶⁴ Our research reinforces these concerns, highlighting how **pay, insecurity and workplace practices act as a considerable barrier for those from low socio-economic backgrounds.**

Despite the dominance of high-skilled roles and well-qualified workers, as illustrated by Nicola's observations above, pay in many parts of the Creative Industries is low. Alongside low (and sometimes no) pay, it can take a considerable amount of time to establish a sustainable career in a creative occupation.⁶⁵ The need to subsidise cultural work with employment in other sectors early in their career was common amongst our interviewees.⁶⁶ However, it was not confined to those initial career stages, with some, very established, interviewees still working second, non-cultural, jobs or reporting the expectation that they work for free. The prevalence of unpaid internships in the Creative sector is well-documented. Research by IPPR (2017) highlighted how media industries are one of the sectors of the economy most dependent on internships. Create London⁶⁷ found 87 per cent of cultural workers surveyed had reported working for free in some way (including unpaid internships; profit shares; unpaid work on their portfolio and working for free while others are paid) and that nearly half of those under 30 had completed an unpaid internship (Figure 3.5 overleaf).

There is wide body of literature on low and no pay in the Creative and Cultural Sector, coupled with long-standing calls for an end to unpaid internships and fair pay for creative workers.⁶⁸ Yet **our research finds the need to work for free is commonplace, and particularly so in the Fashion industry.** While our fieldwork in Advertising, Publishing and Screen suggests the majority of internships are now paid, those working in key creative roles in Fashion suggested unpaid internships remain the primary route into the industry. This was a consistent narrative across ages and different parts of the sector.

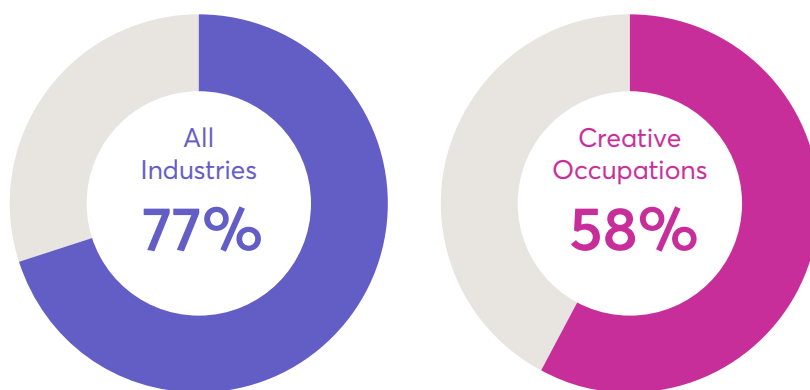
Even when paid, **entry-level wages (and sometimes the wages of more senior staff) were reported to be extremely low,** especially in Fashion and Publishing. We heard stories of creative workers taking pay cuts to pursue their creative interests or accepting less-desirable roles that offered more significant and secure earnings. Many of our interviewees emphasised that **few opportunities offered sufficient pay to offset costs of travel and accommodation, which posed a significant barrier to those without the financial backing** of parents or a place to stay with friends or family. Again, the economic geography of the sector poses additional challenge, with the mobility required to access opportunities in high-cost urban centres incurring additional financial, as well as emotional, toll.⁶⁹

Figure 3.5: Job quality in the Creative Industries



Source: Brook et al (2018) for Create London.

Percentage of workers who feel their job is secure⁷⁰



Source: Understanding Society, 2016-18.

Alongside the exclusionary impact of unpaid work and low pay, there was an underlying sense of the fragility of business models in parts of the Creative Industries. This fragility was often presented as explanation for, or in mitigation of, poor labour practices.

In Publishing, for example, diminished rates of pay, particularly for freelance writers, was closely associated with changes in commercial risk, revenue models and profit margins since the

rise of digital platforms (for retail and content). In Screen, there are concerns that the growth of 'high-end' TV and online streaming has made budgets tighter and schedules shorter, requiring production teams to work harder, for longer, without additional pay.⁷¹ In fashion, many viewed unpaid internships as an integral part of the structures of the industry, particularly given the time and financial investment required to establish a business or build a fashion brand.

“Internships came up a lot, and personally for me and my experience, I think it’s the worst in the entire world, because it’s not done on merit, obviously. It’s done because only the people who can afford it can take the internships.

But the flip side of that is this system of internship is the only way that many young designers in the UK could build up their business, by employing interns, because they cannot pay anybody. So we sort of talk about this fantastic system we have in the UK of fashion and whatever, but it’s supported by the most undemocratic system going, and these people are barely hanging on. They’ve got a business because they’re exploiting people. And I know these people don’t think they’re being exploited, but they are..”

Natalie, Design Director, Fashion

In addition to pay, wider business practices in the Creative Industries further exclude those from working-class backgrounds. **Job insecurity and the risk of significant gaps between short-term contracts** is felt most acutely by those without financial reserves, and (as we heard earlier) can deter working-class talent from pursuing a career in the industry. **Informal recruitment practices were viewed as commonplace in all four of our ‘deep-dive’ sectors.** We heard several accounts where our socially mobile interviewees across Publishing, Advertising, Screen and Fashion felt a lack of contacts working in industry set them at a disadvantage to their privileged counterparts who reaped the **benefits of nepotism and networks when looking to secure a first step into the industry.**

While strong networks are often closely associated with dynamism and innovation in the Creative Economy, our research echoes wider work in finding they can act as a significant ‘barrier to entry’ for those from less advantaged backgrounds.⁷² Some of our interviewees freelanced, often for several months, a year or more, to bridge the gap between university or placements and securing paid employment. Others moved home or secured work in other sectors to support themselves financially, while pursuing opportunities in the Creative Industries.

But the class problem in the Creative Industries is not just about access. **Even when successful in overcoming barriers to entry, those from working**

“Before I even graduated, I’d done one of the big pitching sessions, so I was already sort of lining up relationships in the industry, but when I graduated, I remember one of my friends... I remember her saying to me, ‘My dad got me work experience as an assistant director on [Hollywood film], but I don’t really like that, so I turned it down.’ At that point, I was literally begging people to give me unpaid work.”

Jessica, Head of Development, Screen

class backgrounds face further disadvantage when in work.

Our research suggests that **class-based exclusion in creative settings is mostly subtle: present but not overt.** Often this related to the sense of difference or ‘otherness’ that our socially mobile interviewees felt when everyone else in the room, set or shoot are from upper middle-class backgrounds, hold a degree from a prestigious university, and are armed with ‘the right’ look, ‘high-brow’ cultural references and mastery of unwritten behavioural codes.

“For a while I didn't tell anybody I didn't have a degree. I just let everyone assume. Because they did, and I was a little bit ashamed. Because everybody else did have one. And I remember sitting there one day and just saying, well, I don't have a degree. And sort of realising that **the person I was talking to was so utterly flabbergasted at the very idea that I didn't have a degree. And they were the first person who I mean, they literally sharp intake of breath. And actually, I knocked the edges off my accent as well. So, it's sort of come back a bit now, my accent, but it sort of disappeared a bit for a while because I needed it to.**”

Hannah, Freelance Consultant, Publishing

There are undoubtedly nuances in different contexts: the need to know, pronounce and wear certain labels in Fashion; the studied informality of Advertising; or the need to reference critically-acclaimed content in Publishing or Film. Yet the narrative was remarkably consistent in our deep-dive sectors.

Framing organisational culture and 'fit' as an influence on career development may obscure even more troubling issues. As the comments from our interviewees indicated, what some perceived as workplace 'banter' can also be read as class-based forms of discrimination. This is especially

important when race and gender are taken into account alongside social mobility. Women and ethnic minority interviewees reported incidents of bullying or discrimination, with clear evidence of a more hostile environment than that experienced by their white, male, middle class origin, peers (also shown in Brook et al 2020)

Judgement based on accents and regional dialects is, however, less subtle. Our research suggests **microaggressions – commonly disguised as 'banter' about accents and cultural knowledge – is part of everyday life in the industry.**

“You'll talk in a meeting and somebody'll just **play your accent directly back to you, and it's uncomfortable. It's in a way that's slightly derogatory, I think. I don't think anybody's trying to be mean or put you down, but it's like you are an oddity, you know?**”

Emma, Media Partnerships, Advertising

We also heard several accounts of how our interviewees were 'sorted' into particular genres, or cast in a certain role or way because of their working-class roots.⁷³ Others felt diversity was sometimes commoditised and commercialised

and that efforts to promote inclusion were often short-lived and tokenistic, chiming with wider research exploring racial equality in the Creative Industries.⁷⁴

"The other thing that people don't like to talk about is whether you are lucky enough to come through on the crest of **what the powers that be have decided is a cool trend to support...everybody is suddenly rushing to pick up projects that they've all refused a lot of the time**, they'll rush to try and pick up projects from directors who are black or writers who are black. And then all of a sudden it will be like female directors... And it will be cool for a bit like, you know, the MeToo movement. And then it's kind of dies away and it's almost onto like Black Lives Matter. **And that's not really a good way to run the system, is it, to make it unequally weighted only for a small period, and then go back to essentially running things exactly the same as they were before.**"

Daniel, Writer/Producer/Director, Screen

This work culture led many of **those from working-class backgrounds to feel the need to 'assimilate': to look, speak or behaviour in a certain way. Not only does this impose a great emotional toll on individuals, but means that, even if successful in increasing the representation of working-class talent, the Creative Industries will fail to**

realise the creative and commercial dividends associated with a diversity of thinking and voices.

There is a crucial need, therefore, to consider how to build an inclusive culture within creative businesses that allows diverse talent to thrive and progress.

"When I started working, two or three weeks into the job, I realized that it was like, the editorial teams, **they were not people that look like me. No one spoke like me.** And even the people who originally were from working class backgrounds, you wouldn't have been able to tell they were because **everybody had conformed to what was expected of you to talk, how you behave, how you spoke.** Even the gentlemen that I used to report into he had just put on this posh voice. You know as well and I found this all really bizarre. And almost suddenly I felt really pressurized, like oh my God I like I used I'll say this now I'm not ashamed of it. I used to lie about where I used to live."

Ruha, Publishing

What do we need to do?

While policy makers and industry stakeholders have a vital role to play, it will only be possible to improve job quality, drive better working practices and foster an inclusive culture if the industry itself – creative businesses large and small – take the lead and work collaboratively.

In 2019, the Creative Industries Council signed the CIC Diversity Charter: a framework for enhancing diversity and inclusion through better measurement and reporting, clearer targets, strategies to widen talent pipelines, retain and advance diverse talent, and stronger leadership and advocacy.

Creative Industries Council Diversity Charter

“We in the creative sector believe in people and ideas. To remain relevant, and to maintain our place as global players, we need to be inclusive in our outlook and our practice, and to draw on a diverse workforce. We will do all we can to make sure that our work, and the people who make it are fully representative of the richness, depth and diversity of the whole of the UK”

The Pledge

To effect meaningful change signatories of the Creative Industries Council Diversity Charter pledge to:

1. Collect relevant and meaningful data on diversity and inclusion
2. Increase the diversity of talent pipelines at entry level
3. Promote strategies to diversify mid and senior level hiring, development, retention and promotion within member companies and suppliers
4. Improve the diversity of our output so it serves and appeals to people from all backgrounds and regions across the UK
5. Develop and set meaningful targets within our organisations and with member companies and suppliers
6. Engage leaders within our sector to champion diversity and inclusion
7. Create best practice and guidance to help our organisations, member companies and suppliers to build inclusive cultures
8. Regularly report and publish our progress to Government and the Creative Industries Council.

Source: Creative Industries Council (2019).

Despite a welcome sharpening in focus on diversity and inclusion in the Creative Industries, it is clear from our consultations that, when it comes to social class and social mobility, we are much earlier on the journey. It is vital that **advancing socio-economic diversity is an explicit strategic priority, part of the diversity ‘conversation’ in the Creative Industries and viewed as an integral**

part of businesses commitment under the CIC Diversity Charter Pledge. As we have shown earlier, there are clear intersections between class, gender, race and disability which warrant a more nuanced and holistic approach to understanding the barriers faced by individuals and tackling disadvantage and exclusion.

Our research also suggests that creative businesses are unsure of how to capture and classify a person's socio-economic background and which interventions are effective in addressing class-based inequality. It is therefore timely that

the Social Mobility Commission (SMC) have recently reviewed and simplified their guidance on data measurement and, alongside the launch of this report, will publish a Social Mobility Employer Toolkit for the Creative Industries.

Social Mobility Commissions Employers Toolkit for the Creative Industries

The Social Mobility Commission exists to see a UK where the circumstances of one's birth do not determine outcomes in life. Through their research and the resources developed through their Employers' programme, they support employers to create more inclusive and diverse socio-economic workforces.

Their 'Socio-economic diversity and inclusion toolkit for Creative Industries' is due to be published in September 2021. It has been developed using the Labour Force Survey, a nationally-representative survey, to generate new analysis and industry benchmarks to give insights

into the sector's performance on socio-economic diversity alongside this research from the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, led by Nesta.

Months of consultations with charities, membership bodies and employers within the creative industries sector has also helped form the guidance. It is intentionally stretching in its commentary and recommendations, and it presents a roadmap for employers in the sector to drive improvements in society, the economy and people's lives. Once published, it can be found here: socialmobilityworks.org

This toolkit has been developed in consultation with industry stakeholders and tailored to the needs of creative businesses. The APPG for Creative Diversity is also due to report in September 2021 providing an evidence-based

view of effective practice for businesses and policy makers, and with work underway to adapt the Social Mobility Foundation Employer Index for the sector, there are strong foundations on which to build a movement for change.

✓ Recommendation 5

Government and industry should unite in driving a movement for change to advance social mobility in the Creative Industries, by embedding socio-economic diversity within the CIC Diversity Charter, adopting the new SMC Social Mobility Toolkit, and commissioning a new business-led Social Mobility Taskforce to drive the implementation of the Toolkit across creative sub-sectors.

- Embed socio-economic diversity within the Creative Industries Council Diversity Charter, with signatories to the Pledge providing leadership in measuring the socio-economic diversity of their workforce; advancing practices that improve access, retention and advancement of working-class talent within their businesses; and acting as vocal and visible advocates for industry-wide change.
- Adopt the new SMC Social Mobility Toolkit for the Creative Industries, with industry bodies, trade associations and membership organisations actively raising awareness of the Toolkit and offering support for businesses, particularly SMEs, operating within their sectors to nuance its recommendations and work through implementation challenges.
- Commission a Social Mobility Taskforce for the Creative Industries to spearhead industry leadership to promote socio-economic diversity and inclusion. Drawing lessons from the Taskforce commissioned by HMT & BEIS to advance socio-economic diversity in Financial and Professional Services, as well as international good practice, the Taskforce should unite businesses from across the Creative Industries in advocating for change and implementing recommendations from the SMC Toolkit.

While it is vital to advance policies and business practices that promote socio-economic diversity in the Creative Industries, it is equally important to acknowledge that many of the causes of class imbalances are associated with longstanding concerns regarding the precarity of work in the Creative and Cultural Sector which, long invisible to many, COVID-19 has brought to the fore.⁷⁵

Some of the issues raised above speak to the economics of the sector, of how technology has driven changes in consumption and commercial models, and of the rise of modern working practices. These trends are particularly pronounced in the Creative Industries but also evident across the wider economy. Low pay and insecurity, employment status and entitlement, worker agency and collective bargaining, labour

protections, regulations and enforcement are all of growing concern in the UK (and globally) and were the subject of the Taylor Review,⁷⁶ and Government's Good Work Plan.⁷⁷ We have also seen the introduction of Fair or Good Work Charters, Action Plans and other resources in the devolved nations, cities and regions across the UK, which aim to create more and better jobs within places.

The same principles that govern these plans and programmes should be applied to the Creative Industries. **All Creative Work must become Good Work. This will address some of the most fundamental causes of class imbalances, while tackling the low pay, precarity and poor labour practices that many creative workers endure.**



✓ Recommendation 6

Develop a Good Work Strategy for the Creative Industries, that seeks to quickly stamp out bad practice while advancing a long-term plan to ensure the creative sector offers Good Work to those from all backgrounds.

- Lead a campaign to increase awareness and enforcement of regulation to eliminate the use of unpaid internships in the Creative Industries.
 - Establish a robust, wide-ranging baseline picture of job quality in the Creative Industries, building on the work of the Measuring Job Quality Working Group⁷⁸ to identify a suite of metrics to include in the annual DCMS Economic Estimates Employment Series, so to place equal weight on the quality, as well as quantity, of jobs in the Creative Economy.
 - Develop a new Good Work Plan for the Creative Industries building on the principles and recommendations of the Taylor
- Review, working with industry stakeholders, Unions and ensuring fair representation of creative freelancers; deploying Government procurement and funding levers to drive implementation; and connecting with place-based Good/Fair Work Charters, Action Plans and other resources (where they exist).
- Following the conclusion of the DCMS Committee on the Economics of Music Streaming, DCMS should launch a wider Inquiry into creative business models and creative earnings, particularly in Fashion, Screen and Publishing, to better understand how to tackle low pay without undermining financial sustainability.

Priority 4: Accelerating progression of diverse talent and promoting inclusive leadership of the Creative Industries

"I think for me, the challenge and what I've always said is that, we're only going to be able to make a difference in this industry as people of colour... and make a change if leadership teams are actually more diverse. And while there are things in place now, entry level seems to be a lot of excitement or enthusiasm for change amongst younger publishers. I don't know, the decision makers are not made up of, what modern society looks like, the makeup of London or the society I grew up in. I just think it's a monolith. And I feel like, it's going to take a long time to see a change there where it really needs to change."

Eshal, Editor/CEO, Publishing

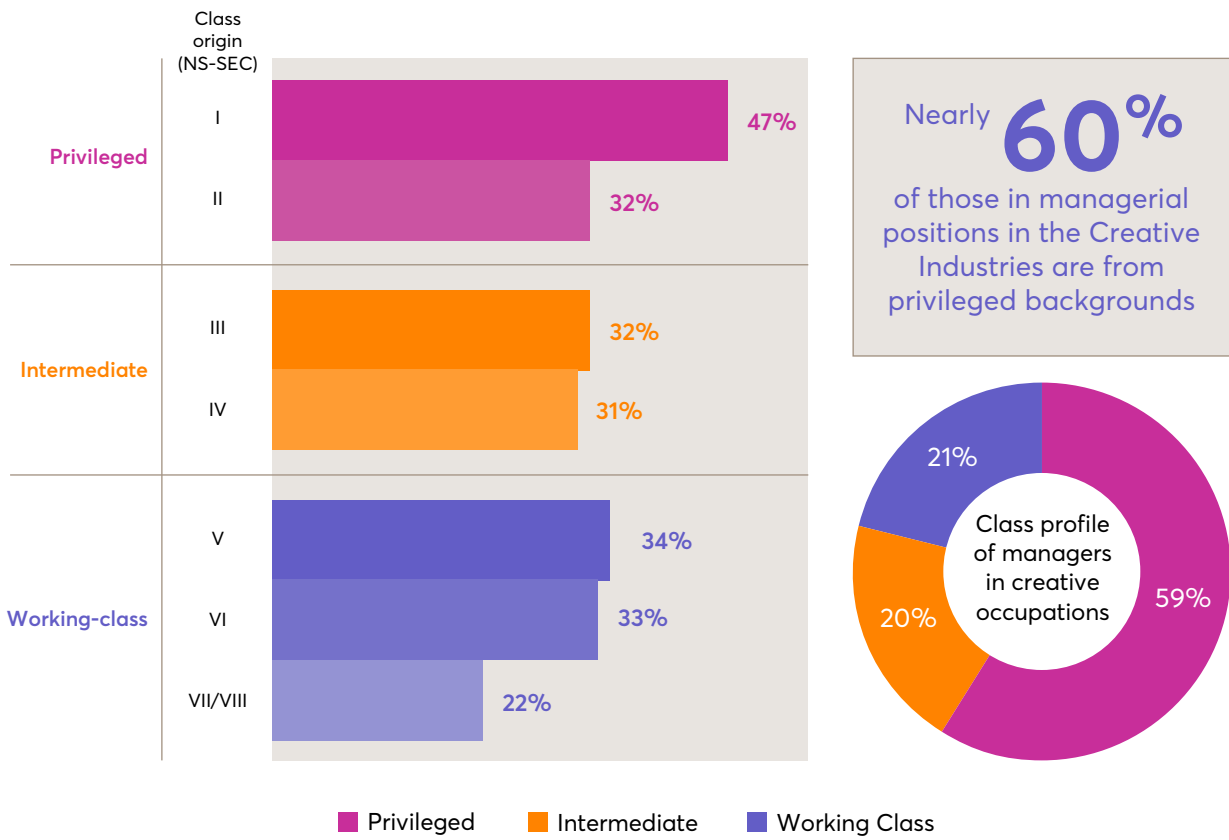
While attracting and retaining diverse talent into creative roles is vital, it will be impossible to address the institutionalised 'poshness' of the Creative Industries if the upper echelons of the industry and positions of authority across the sector remain dominated by the upper middle classes.

Currently, nearly 60 per cent of those in leadership roles in the Creative Industries come from privileged backgrounds. Earlier research has evidenced vertical segregation within the Creative Industries and raised concerns about the dominance of white, middle-class people in senior management, board-level positions.⁷⁹ Figure 3.6 further demonstrates how the likelihood to be a manager is clearly stratified by class origin.

Creative workers from higher managerial and professional backgrounds (NS-SEC1) are more than twice as likely to be a manager than those whose parents worked in routine occupations or were long-term unemployed (47 per cent and 22 per cent respectively).



Figure 3.6: Progression and advancement of diverse talent



Source: Labour Force Survey, July to September, 2019.



“The difference comes with the sense of authority, so being from a working class background you are often in brainstorm or in meetings with people, you are often sort of dismissed, **your ideas are dismissed more routinely than they’re listened to.** Compared to a counterpart that comes from Oxbridge or from the more privileged background. You work, **you have to work a lot harder at making yourself heard** than those individuals do...

...you have to just keep taking contract to contract, six weeks here, six months there because you have to pay your bills. And even that’s potentially a detriment to your career because you’re only as good as your last project. So if you have to take something that’s deemed less desirable in order to pay your rent, then no one’s going to be looking at you for that 9pm, highly return, highly thought of successful BBC One series. Even that in the industry is a problem – that snobby snobbishness around what you’ve worked on. It’s not necessarily how good you are and your skill set, it’s how good, how well the program was received. Which is difficult because the **ones that win awards are few and far between and also dominated by those privileged Oxbridge sort of workers in the industry. They’re the ones that get the awards, they’re the ones that win the BAFTAS, which then in turn brings more high profile commissions, and then they have their own sort of little talent pool of people who dot around. And breaking into that is virtually impossible.**”

Callum, Documentary Producer/Director, Screen

Callum’s testimony above starts to give a sense of why this is. **Confidence was a recurring theme in our fieldwork across all ‘in focus’ sectors. Interviewees frequently spoke of how they struggled to find the confidence to speak up and be heard.** They felt their voice was often lost or ignored in comparison to those from more privileged, often Oxbridge-educated, backgrounds. These privileged counterparts were seen to have a sense of entitlement and projected authority that ensured their ideas and views often held greater purchase.

Those with privileged backgrounds were also observed to ‘move up the ranks’ very quickly, spending a short time in junior positions before rapidly progressing into managerial roles and directorial positions, in either a corporate or creative sense. **Again, nepotism and networks were thought to play an important role. Cultural affinity with colleagues and more senior counterparts afforded access to – as Hannah describes overleaf – ‘secret clubs’ or networks that accelerated their progression and secured ‘sponsors’ who provided mentorship, advocacy and advice to enable their success.**⁸⁰

"I joined a meeting, this is when I realised I might be slightly in over my head. And that was myself and the publisher, as they were at the time, and all of the publishing heads of all the different imprints, and they were having a little chat before the meeting started and they were reminiscing about their school days and about the stables and the swimming pools and it sort of became clear to me very quickly. I mean, I didn't say anything, but it became clear to me very quickly that I was probably the only person in that meeting who hadn't been to a public school that most people could name, not just a public school, but one that everybody on the street could name. And there was this 'secret club' that I hadn't realised existed.

I'm so naive, I hadn't even known that until that point and then I realised that actually there was this whole layer of communication and networking that was going on that I had no idea, I didn't even have any idea existed, let alone that it was a thing that I was excluded from.

I think that is part of the problem, and I think what happens is people get stuck at middle management and they don't get any further because they're not part of that network. And if you look at publishing now, unfortunately, it is all run by public school boys who went to the same four public schools."

Hannah, Freelance Consultant, Publishing

Unlike other sectors of the economy, **some parts of the Creative Industries lack formal job structures and careers pathways.** This lack of formal job structures is linked to project-based working in sub-sectors like film, music, fashion and the arts, alongside a heavily freelance workforce. For some workers, progression and leadership might be defined not by a change in job title, but by having more creative control, access to larger budgets, or the chance to work with higher profile teams and creatives.

For workers in the Creative Industries who are looking to progress, there may be **a lack of formalised professional development or workplace training,⁸¹ often linked to non-standard workplaces or a lack of professionalisation of some roles within the sector.** Those from working-class backgrounds are slightly less likely to have participated in training in the past three months.⁸²

The freelance nature of many workers in the sector can also be a barrier. Whilst freelance fees would typically be expected to cover training, workers in some parts of the Creative Industries earn lower salaries than other sectors and may not be able to access formal training or other development opportunities.

Our interviewees emphasised the importance of seeking out work on higher status projects, and content likely to receive critical acclaim, in influencing career success. However, many suggested that **the ability to take a strategic approach to selecting the next contract was the preserve of those who had the financial security to take risks.** Risk taking included the ability to decline work if it was the sort of opportunity that **would not support progression.** Instead, many of those we spoke with told of the need to take whichever contracts came their way in order to pay their bills, even if that was potentially at the detriment of their career.

A further obstacle to progression for those from working-class backgrounds is the importance of networks, and networking, in securing development and advancement opportunities. Most commonly, this related to the cost of travelling to major cities (and London in particular) in order to meet with those hiring or commissioning. Others spoke of how they lacked the funds, time or wider support to enable them to exploit informal networking opportunities to – as Marcus here describes it – ‘rub shoulders with certain people’ or participate in ‘away trips’ that would likely present opportunities for career progression.

While our research has not sought to look in detail at issues of business start-up or scale-up, our discussions surfaced a range of challenges experienced by working-class creatives who founded, now very successful, businesses. **Their testimonies paint a picture of creative entrepreneurship that is best described as a high-risk game, where the stakes are high, pay-outs are rare, and the deck is stacked in favour of the privileged.**

Many of our interviewees spoke of the need for significant upfront investment, to develop a portfolio or back a new project. This is in a context where return on this investment was far from guaranteed, and could take many years to realise success and achieve sustainability. Thus we see the Creative Industries underpinned by a level of investment and risk that only those with significant financial reserves or backing can sustain.

“I would say there’s a lot of social sides to do with fashion that help with you gaining extra zhooshy bits, for example with press and buyers and attending events and things like that. I think that **not necessarily having the money or the time because of having the workload, you’re not able to necessarily rub shoulders with certain people or be able to go to certain things, be present for certain things. I think that sometimes that can become a little bit of a disadvantage.**”

Marcus, Designer, Fashion

“I was very early days self-employed and had been offered the opportunity to go over to train and it would have meant flying to London, staying in London for a few days. And I just didn’t have the money.”

Julie, Producer and Writer, Screen

“**The opportunity to make a really successful career here, are laughably remote...** If you could make a list of things that you had to do, and that had to go right, had to be lucky, people other than you had to agree on, to go from having an idea, to having a TV show, if you had that list, if you had any idea, you would be like ‘Why does anyone do this?!’ Its why shows take seven years, and then you don’t know if you’ve got any money, and then you have to get your next series commissioned and funded, because you have to have two series to even have a hope of getting a licensing deal, then if you get a licensing .. **that is a seven to ten year cycle to even know if you’re going to break even. And nine out of ten shows don’t.**”

Christian, CEO, Animation

Other creative entrepreneurs, like Melanie below, suggested **a potential gap in funding and support between the first and third year of start-up**. This was particularly important for businesses that required a degree of capital investment for technology, machinery (for example, to make

garments) or workspace, where interviewees reported living off very low earnings, moving home to live with friends or family, or drawing Universal Credit to manage limited income during the early stages of start-up.

"I applied this year for at least 12 different grants or funding routes... **the issue is if you are in this gap between emerging, just graduating, til three years in business or just as a company, you're in this grey zone where it's very difficult for you to apply to a lot of their grants**. I think it would take me another one or two years to actually sustain myself from this so I can just say, from having just anxiety and worry, I'm like kind of, 'Oh, maybe work out but I still in need of borrowing money for very long time.' Yeah, so it's not maybe feasible. I think it would be... If I would get one support scheme... **One grant, for example, would help me so much. With this money I could do investments into being more effective which could generate, then, more benefits for my work. It's just really this kind of domino system.**

I would be totally up for **any kind of support schemes where you're also just kind of in there sometime, like once a month in the pub and talk to each other**. I would love anything. I think it would be really, really good to be a bit **more equal rather than fighting against each other.**"

Melanie, Creative Director & Designer, Fashion

But concerns were not solely financial. **Several entrepreneurs spoke of their initial difficulty in managing the commercial, alongside creative, aspects of their business. In particular, this related to protecting their ideas or designs; pitching for business or to investors; financial management; leadership and people management**. These are challenges faced by most business start-ups. In the case of those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, our research echoes wider work⁸³ in suggesting that these challenges are heightened, given a lack financial capital, confidence, and expertise within their

personal and professional networks. These issues sit alongside fierce market competition in parts of the creative sector.

Altogether, our research has only started to scratch the surface of these issues. Further work is needed to better understand the challenges faced by those from socio-economically disadvantaged (and other marginalised) backgrounds when looking to start and scale a creative enterprise, so to enable a new wave of diverse future leaders and pioneers of the Creative Economy.

What do we need to do?

In addition to supporting diverse new entrants into the Creative Industries, our research suggests **an important priority is to enhance focus and investment in interventions that support progression and advancement. Not only will this serve to redress the balance of socio-economically diverse talent in leadership positions, but it will also create a new wave of diverse future leaders, to act as role models that inspire the next generation.**

In contrast to the plethora of entry-level schemes, we find relatively few programmes, certainly of breadth and scale, that seek to support the development of mid or late career professionals. We find fewer still that actively target those from (socio-economically) disadvantaged backgrounds. There is a need, therefore, to scale-up successful small-scale sub-sectoral initiatives; strengthen the targeting of leadership development programmes towards under-represented groups, and bring forward new schemes that offer flexible financial support for professional development activities and sustained sponsorship of working-class talent.



Recommendation 7

Bring forward a new wave of diverse future leaders of industry, through a Creative Industries wide fund to support and accelerate the advancement of those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

- Invest in a 'Future Leaders Fund' – a challenge fund to provide flexible grants for professional development and leadership programmes targeting mid/late career creatives from (socio-economically) diverse backgrounds. Such a fund would benefit from having two separate 'lots' to expand, scale or better target existing programmes that enable professional development and support diverse leaders; and innovate, developing and piloting

new initiatives, particularly those that offer sustained 'sponsorship' of diverse talent.

- The fund should have a dedicated capacity-building function, providing support for potential bidders, training sessions and detailed feedback to enable new delivery organisations to come forward and to ensure the process of bidding supports the development of delivery organisations.

Alongside advancing socio-economically diverse talent working within the Creative Industries, **we need to better understand how to promote inclusive entrepreneurship and the scale-up of minority-led businesses in the sector.**

Our research has started to demonstrate how those with a lack of financial or social capital may face additional challenges in establishing a business, not least given the risk/reward profile associated with creative ventures. Several of our interviewees felt the dominance of the privileged in the upper echelons of the industry was, at least in part, a reflection of the fact that it was

these individuals who had the financial reserves to start new ventures in (then) emerging parts of the Creative sector, like, as the Emilia narrates overleaf, visual effects and animation.

So, as we explore the creative applications of immersive technology, creative robotics, and artificial intelligence, and contemplate the £1bn of venture capital investment going into Creative Technology (or 'Createch'),⁸⁴ we must, at this early juncture, think seriously about how we can ensure this next wave of creative pioneers are much more diverse than those that went before them.

“When visual effects and animation really kicked off in the UK, so 30 something years ago, it was the same dynamic in the sense that it was a new and emerging industry, and so the people who were able to take up that opportunity and potentially run the risk of not earning very much money because they weren’t sure where clients were coming from, or be able to invest in the technology that they needed at the time, all those kinds of things, were people who were very privileged.

And so certainly that means the upper echelons, the owners of animation and visual effects companies, the MDs, the chief creative officers, the chief technical officers et cetera are all from a very privileged background.”

Emilia, Talent Manager, Screen



Recommendation 8

Unlock the potential of creative entrepreneurs from (socio-economically) diverse backgrounds, through further research to explore distinct barriers to starting and scaling creative ventures and better targeting and extending funding and support for diverse entrepreneurs and minority-led enterprises in the Creative Industries.

- Commission new research to: examine the (socio-economic) diversity of leaders in the Creative Industries, including those pioneering new creative technologies; explore access to finance and wider barriers to growth; review existing interventions; and shape new policy responses that build on international good practice in promoting inclusive entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Actively target support and funding for enterprise and innovation (e.g. Creative Scale-up; the InnovateUK Creative Industries Fund; Business Basics; Help to Grow, Enterprise Funds offered by Arm’s Length Bodies (ALBs) and the British Business Bank), for minority-led enterprises/entrepreneurs in the Creative Industries.

4

Shaping an agenda for change

A ten-point plan to advance social mobility into the Creative Economy

4.1 Social mobility and 'Levelling up' the Creative Economy

It is clear from recent policy statements that the Government's 'levelling up' agenda has a much broader vision that extends beyond place-based interventions. In this context, questions of how to address social inequalities, such as those associated with low levels of social mobility into high profile professions, will form an important element of 'levelling up' the UK.

In the case of creative industries, these spatial and social issues are intertwined: the dominance of London and the South East is testament to the lack of balance within the UK's Creative Economy, and the need to move to urban centres, particularly London,⁸⁵ to succeed in Creative Industries creates additional and specific issues for those from working class backgrounds. This spatial aspect of social mobility into Creative Industries was made clear by our interviewees.

Our assessment of early-life sources of class-based disadvantage (Priority 1) emphasised how the economic geography of the sector influences an individual's 'degrees of separation' from the Creative Industries. Those living in creative clusters are more likely to have someone within their social network that works in the industry than those that live elsewhere. In turn, this separation influences their awareness of career opportunities and connections that can aid first (and subsequent) steps into the industry.

As we discussed under Priority 3, the spatial patterns of the sector also determine the geography of opportunity. The vast majority of our socially mobile interviewees had moved to London or other cities, in order to establish, sustain or progress their career in the Creative sector. Only a small number had subsequently moved back to the town or region they grew up in. This drains creative talent from the regions and makes geographical mobility a pre-requisite for success in the Creative Industries. That presents financial cost and emotional toll that those from low socio-economic backgrounds are unable or unwilling to pay.⁸⁶

"I remember being about 18 and I applied for like an internship... thinking like if I get this internship, I've got to come to [Northern city] every day and it takes an hour and a half because you have to get three buses. How am I going to do that? Like, this is just not feasible but I really wanted to do something like that, but it felt like physically out of reach as well as like I just don't know how you get into something like this."

Thomas, Writer, Screen

Efforts to 'level up' the Creative Economy and support the development of thriving creative clusters throughout the UK, will play an important role in addressing the sector's social mobility problem. For 'levelling up', we need to look beyond the obvious candidates. Enabling the ongoing success of 'Creative Capitals'⁸⁷ like Manchester, Leeds or Glasgow and 'Creative Challengers' like Birmingham, Bristol, Newcastle, Sheffield, Edinburgh or Cardiff is clearly an important policy goal. At the same time, we also need to nurture the development of 'incipient' or nascent clusters and 'micro-clusters', which recent PEC research found right across the UK and not just in urban centres.⁸⁸ These hyper-local clusters have the potential to provide creative opportunities, much closer to home, for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. 'Micro-cluster' levelling up will fail if it comes at the price of 'levelling down' the rest of the UK's Creative Economy.

It's not only the number of creative jobs outside of urban centres, London and the South East, that matters. The quality of opportunities in other regions is also key. Fieldwork interviews across all our 'in-focus' sectors emphasised how the 'draw' of London was often the potential for more creative work, bigger budget or higher status projects, and the opportunity to work with higher profile teams and creatives. **London was also viewed as the place where deal-making happens, with London's networks unlocking commercial opportunities or creative commissions.**

"Location affects this industry an awful lot... When you know if you want to be in advertising, you have to go to London. Bristol maybe now from the South West perspective. And Manchester is growing as well, but you know you go back five or six years and it is London. And I've trained people and **as soon as they get to their wings, you know they go off to London to work with more interesting clients or have a bigger, varied ability to play with.** If you're born in the South East, you can kind of fall into this industry very easily just by you know you have a **much denser opportunity to know somebody who's in it.** You have a much greater ability just to jump into a job."

Natalie, Editor/CEO, Publishing

"And it was a time of John Galiano and McQueen. And fashion was very much designer fashion. **And it was London centred. It wasn't brands. So to us, the thing that was sold to us, that you get down to London and you go and do that. And anything that is any less than that, isn't worth anything really.**

And I think that was the attitudes but the generation that my tutors were from, that probably was possible because London wasn't as expensive as it is now."

Anna, Educator, Fashion

The spatial concentration of these 'career-making opportunities' in London is further exacerbated by the informality of hiring and deal-making in the Creative Industries. **Formalising these practices to increase the visibility of opportunities will be as important as relocating to, or developing better quality creative opportunities in, other regions.**

"That has really been hard to get people to understand that just by going to a book event, just by going to a book signing and you start chatting to people, that makes all the difference. So, to **writers who are in London, absolutely have got steps a billion times higher than anybody else because they're networking.** You can network in London all the time and not have to pay a penny, except that you have to get there. So, for the rest of us who aren't in London, it costs and then we have to find somewhere to stay. But if you're in London, you're just there, everyone knows each other, they're just in each other's pockets all the time. So, **any opportunity that happens to arise, they look to the left, to the right, and they go, oh, do you want to do this? Do you want to do that? And that's how it is. And that's why that circle of influence, the London publishing scene is so small.**"

Travis, Head of Digital, Advertising

A further consideration – often missed from the spatially-focussed discourse – is the question of who benefits from 'levelling up'. If expansion of creative clusters outside of London and the South East predominantly benefits the privileged – as has characterised growth of the Creative Industries in the past – policy interventions will only perpetuate existing inequality, albeit with a different spatial footprint. **Instead, it is important to avoid making the same mistakes of the past, by promoting inclusive growth of creative clusters, ensuring that the opportunities created benefit those from disadvantaged or marginalised backgrounds.**

There is an important role for place-based policy and programmes in this regard. Our research suggests there is much local innovation underway in creative clusters across the country. With the promise of further devolution of powers and funding to cities and counties in the forthcoming Levelling Up White Paper, and with more funding coming through in the form of the Levelling Up, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and National Skills Funds, there is an opportunity to advance new place-sensitive policies to promote equality, diversity and inclusive growth of creative clusters.

"I believe I can absolutely 100 per cent say if I'd been down south, I would have progress further by now. I just get so frustrated that out of London, we still really just get the crumbs, you know, we get tiny little pots of money that is thrown into the pie."

Claire, Actor/Producer/Writer, Screen

✓ Recommendation 9

Support the inclusive growth of creative clusters and micro- clusters across the UK to redress the geography of opportunity in the Creative Industries and advance place-based approaches, founded on local insight and enabled through strong institutional infrastructure, that connect those from (socio-economically) disadvantaged backgrounds with good quality jobs in the Creative Economy.

- Extend and expand funding to 'level-up' the Creative Industries, through the roll out of Creative Scale-up and targeted investment in nascent creative clusters and micro-clusters across the UK. Require all recipients of funding and support to report on the diversity of beneficiaries and establish explicit targets for reaching under-represented groups.
- Creative businesses should review scope to (re) locate creative opportunities outside of London and the South East and, wherever possible, make permanent the shift to remote/hybrid working during COVID-19. It will be important to give due consideration to the quality of these opportunities to ensure they provide scope for progression and to formalise hiring and commissioning/procurement practices to create a less London/urban centric, more level playing field in accessing creative opportunities.
- Explore place-based approaches to promoting equality, diversity and inclusive growth of creative clusters across the UK. Enhance, scale, develop and test place-based interventions, founded on local intelligence, working towards clearly-defined strategic priorities and enabled by robust institutions and governance arrangements, that will enhance equality and diversity, across multiple policy domains: enterprise, innovation, education and skills, cultural policy.

4.2 Fixing the fundamentals: measurement, targeting and evaluation

Many of the recommendations outlined throughout this report concern better targeting of interventions towards those from low socio-economic backgrounds. In order to target, we first need to measure. Our research suggests a lack of confidence within the industry regarding how to talk about and measure class. This will act as a significant inhibitor to progress.

With the Social Mobility Commission's new guidance and simplified approach to measuring socio-economic background, this no longer needs to be the case. **There is an opportunity and a need to establish a robust and consistent approach to measuring socio-economic background across the Creative Industries.**

We need businesses to ask the question of their workforce; those delivering programmes to ask the question of beneficiaries; and educators to ask the question of their staff and their students. We need to embed socio-economic background measurement within existing diversity monitoring systems, including industry-wide measurement systems, surveys, and standards. This needs to sit alongside a clearer and simplified approach from DCMS in their annual assessment of the demographics of employment in the Creative Industries.

A standardised approach will create strong foundations to **establish explicit, ambitious but attainable targets for enhancing socio-economic diversity in the Creative Industries**. This standardised approach will also allow existing funding levers – Government, industry-specific, supply-chains – to sharpen their focus on class-related exclusion and drive a commitment to change.

Better measurement will also allow us to assess how well we are doing in driving change; whether our efforts are having an impact. Our research suggests that few programmes capture the socio-economic origin of participants. Further, we find there is a dearth of evaluation evidence that would help us review the efficacy of different interventions – something also highlighted in the CIC Diversity Charter Diversity and Inclusion Progress Report.⁸⁹ We must, therefore, invest more in robust evaluation of the impact of different interventions – at a business, project, programme and strategic-level – to enable the industry to understand ‘what works’, refine the approach, and roll-out and scale-up successful activities.



Recommendation 10

Put the fundamentals in place and create stronger incentives, by adopting the SMC’s approach to measuring socio-economic background; establishing explicit targets for socio-economic diversity in the Creative Industries; and ring-fencing funding for evaluation and knowledge exchange.

- Government, educators and industry should make an explicit strategic commitment to measure and enhance socio-economic diversity in the Creative Industries, adopting the SMC’s approach to measuring socio-economic background.
- DCMS should include the socio-economic profile of the workforce, in line with the SMC’s methodology, in their annual Economic Estimates (Employment series), as part of wider monitoring of diversity of the creative workforce.
- All public-funded programmes should be required to monitor and report on the diversity of beneficiaries. Where programmes have the potential to address the underlying causes of class imbalances, explicit targets for reaching under-represented groups should be established, wherever possible with funding contingency.
- All programmes should include ring-fenced budgets, proportionate to the scale of the intervention, for evaluating impact and supporting knowledge exchange between policy makers, delivery organisations and intermediaries.

4.3 Towards a Social Mobility Plan for the Creative Economy

Together, the recommendations outlined throughout this report form the basis of a ten-point, ten-year plan to enhance socio-economic diversity in the Creative Economy. For ease, these are summarised in Figure 4.1 overleaf.



Figure 4.1: A ten-point, ten-year plan for enhancing socio-economic diversity in the Creative Economy

Recommendation 1

Offer a new, long-term financial settlement for cultural education, with enhanced funding and resources for arts and culture in schools, alongside a stronger local institutional infrastructure and an extended network of Creative Learning Centres to widen access to culture outside of urban conurbations and within social mobility cold spots.

Recommendation 2

Extend investment in the Creative Careers Programme for the next fiscal cycle; expand its reach to Scotland and Northern Ireland; extend activities, widen support and more actively target social mobility cold spots; and embed the programme within local skills systems, exploiting the vital brokerage role it can play between industry and educators.

Recommendation 3

Universities, and particularly specialist creative institutions, should redouble their efforts and play a leading role in driving social mobility into the Creative Industries, including stretching targets for socio-economic diversity in their Access and Participation Plans; strengthening focus on the student lifecycle, coupling financial support with pastoral care; and extending their offer of online, blended, and flexible learning options.

Recommendation 4

Harness ongoing developments in skills policy, particularly in England, to rapidly open-up technical pathways into the Creative Industries. Advance flexible Apprenticeship models, modular learning options and locally-led skills solutions; enabled through strong, collaborative networks for creative skills development in local places; and by promoting engagement with technical education amongst employers and learners.

Recommendation 5

Government and industry should unite in driving a movement for change to advance social mobility in the Creative Industries, by embedding socio-economic diversity within the CIC Diversity Charter, adopting the new SMC Social Mobility Toolkit, and commissioning a new business-led Social Mobility Taskforce to drive the implementation of the Toolkit across Creative sub-sectors.

Recommendation 6

To address some of the most fundamental causes of class imbalances, we need a Good Work Strategy for the Creative Industries, that seeks to quickly stamp out bad practice, such as unpaid internships, while advancing a long-term plan to ensure the Creative sector offers Good Work to those from all backgrounds, building on the principles and recommendations of the Taylor Review.

Recommendation 7

Bring forward a new wave of diverse future leaders of industry, through a Creative Industries challenge fund that provides flexible grants to scale existing, and advance new, professional development and leadership programmes to support and accelerate the advancement of those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Recommendation 8

Unlock the potential of creative entrepreneurs from (socio-economically) diverse backgrounds, through further research to explore distinct barriers to starting and scaling creative ventures, including those pioneering new creative technologies, and by better targeting and extending funding and support for diverse entrepreneurs and minority-led enterprises in the Creative Industries.

Recommendation 9

Expand funding and support to enable the inclusive growth of creative clusters and micro-clusters across the UK, deploying diversity monitoring and targets to more closely couple economic and social outcomes. Advance industry-led and place-based approaches, founded on local insight and enabled through strong institutional infrastructure, that connect those from (socio-economically) disadvantaged backgrounds with good quality jobs in the Creative Economy.

Recommendation 10

Put the fundamentals in place and create stronger incentives, by adopting the Social Mobility Commission's approach to measuring socio-economic background; establishing explicit targets for socio-economic diversity in the Creative Industries; and ring-fencing funding for evaluation and knowledge exchange.

We acknowledge that this plan is substantial and ambitious in its intent. It represents a departure from the current, piecemeal approach. It recognises that significant, systemic and sustained action will be required to address the profound class-related disadvantages in the Creative sector.

The strategic priorities and actions we identify range from early-life interventions right through to employer practices in the workplace. The recommendations span education, skills, economic, enterprise, and cultural policy. They include asks of multiple Government departments, Devolved and Local Government, schools, colleges and universities, industry stakeholders, and, most crucially, leaders of creative businesses.

Change will take time, so **the industry needs to make a long-term commitment, over the course of at least a decade to socio-economic diversity.** This long-term commitment is not an excuse to put off change. Detailed monitoring and target-setting must accompany any commitment to transform our Creative Industries.

But the scale of ambition and the reach of this plan, begs the question: Who will lead this systemic change? How can we enable shared commitment and accountability for building a more socially inclusive Creative Economy?

There are no easy answers to these questions. What we know from the implementation challenges associated with other strategies, not least the Government's 2017 Industrial Strategy,⁹⁰ is that accountability and good governance is key.

Given this, **we recommend establishing a Social Mobility Council, jointly chaired by the Minister of State for Digital and Culture, the Chair of the Creative Industries Council, and the incoming Chair of the Social Mobility Commission.** The Council must have senior-level representation from education, government and all corners of the Creative Industries. It must have responsibility for setting explicit targets, tracking progress at six-monthly intervals, and appointing a socio-economically diverse Advisory Panel who will provide independent guidance and scrutiny.

The PEC will continue to play its part, undertaking research to better understand class-based exclusion and providing insight to support better policy, programmes and practice to enhance social mobility into creative occupations. Over the course of the next year, we will work with our partners, the Social Mobility Commission and Creative Industries Federation, to curate a programme of engagement with leading creative businesses, educators and other industry stakeholders that will create space for experimentation, peer-to-peer learning, co-creation and continuous improvement, to enable significant and sustained improvements in socio-economic diversity in the Creative Industries.

But it is our hope that, through this paper, we have established a comprehensive, coherent, evidence-based view of the causes of the social mobility problem in the Creative Industries and what it will take to build a more socially inclusive Creative sector.

While there is always an important place for targeted further research, **what we need to see now is action – by Government, educators and businesses, large and small – to rise to this challenge** and make a long-term commitment to transforming our Creative Industries, so that the next chapter in the Creative Industries' success story tells of the vital role that diverse talent has played and the opportunities this vibrant part of the economy has created for people from all walks of life and corners of the country.

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Annex A: Methodology

Measuring socio-economic diversity

Our approach to measuring socio-economic diversity aligns with the recommendations of the Social Mobility Commission, in their guidance *Simplifying how employers measure socio-economic background* published in November 2020. This means that the data contained in this report is consistent with the SMC's national benchmarks, but deploys a slightly different methodology to that used in the [first paper](#) from the PEC's Class in the Creative Industries series.

We draw on data concerning the parental occupation when the respondent was aged 14 from the Labour Force Survey. Carried out by ONS on a quarterly basis, the LFS is a highly regarded UK data source that is used to underpin key labour market statistics. It provides data at a level of precision not matched by any other surveys, interviewing approximately 60,000 households, comprising 150,000 people, each quarter. The survey covers both payroll employees and the self-employed – which is of vital importance to the Creative Industries given the propensity for freelance working.

Parental occupation is then used to place an individual's class origin within the [National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification](#) (NS-SEC). NS-SEC clusters occupations together into eight groups, from I (higher managerial and professional, which includes doctors, CEOs and lawyers) to VII (routine occupations such as bar staff, care workers, and cleaners), while VIII is those who have never worked or who are long-term unemployed. We then collapse NS-SEC classes further into three classes:

- Those from 'privileged' backgrounds, who had at least one parent whose job was a higher or lower managerial, administrative or professional occupation (NS-SEC 1 or 2);
- Those from 'intermediate' origins, whose parents worked in intermediate or were self-employed (NS-SEC 3 or 4);
- Those from 'working-class' backgrounds, whose parents were employed in lower supervisory and technical occupations, routine or semi-routine occupations, or who were long-term unemployed (NS-SEC 5, 6, 7 or 8).

Figure A1 overleaf provides the class profile of the Creative Industries, alongside national benchmarks.

Figure A1: Class origins of the workforce, Employed and self-employed, Aged 16+

| | | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| All industries | Privileged | 33% | 33% | 35% | 35% | 35% | 37% | 38% |
| | Intermediate | 25% | 25% | 24% | 24% | 24% | 24% | 23% |
| | Working class | 42% | 42% | 42% | 41% | 41% | 39% | 38% |
| Creative industries | Privileged | 49% | 49% | 49% | 52% | 52% | 52% | 52% |
| | Intermediate | 24% | 23% | 22% | 21% | 21% | 21% | 21% |
| | Working class | 27% | 28% | 29% | 27% | 26% | 27% | 26% |
| Advertising & marketing | Privileged | 56% | 49% | 59% | 50% | 50% | 60% | 63% |
| | Intermediate | 16% | 25% | 21% | 27% | 21% | 17% | 14% |
| | Working class | 28% | 26% | 20% | 23% | 28% | 23% | 24% |
| Architecture | Privileged | 43% | 50% | 41% | 55% | 41% | 50% | 49% |
| | Intermediate | 31% | 25% | 23% | 25% | 31% | 25% | 26% |
| | Working class | 26% | 24% | 35% | 20% | 27% | 25% | 25% |
| Craft | Privileged | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| | Intermediate | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| | Working class | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Design: product, graphic and fashion design | Privileged | 40% | 33% | 48% | 49% | 56% | 41% | 41% |
| | Intermediate | 31% | 29% | 18% | 20% | 21% | 27% | 31% |
| | Working class | 29% | 38% | 33% | 31% | 23% | 32% | 28% |
| Film, TV, video, radio and photography | Privileged | 47% | 54% | 45% | 49% | 54% | 49% | 53% |
| | Intermediate | 27% | 20% | 22% | 24% | 18% | 22% | 22% |
| | Working class | 26% | 26% | 32% | 27% | 28% | 29% | 25% |
| IT, software and computer services | Privileged | 49% | 46% | 48% | 53% | 54% | 55% | 50% |
| | Intermediate | 22% | 25% | 22% | 21% | 20% | 18% | 23% |
| | Working class | 29% | 29% | 29% | 27% | 26% | 26% | 27% |
| Publishing | Privileged | 51% | 49% | 59% | 61% | 43% | 50% | 59% |
| | Intermediate | 24% | 24% | 25% | 16% | 22% | 24% | 14% |
| | Working class | 25% | 27% | 16% | 23% | 34% | 26% | 28% |
| Museums, galleries and libraries | Privileged | 44% | 53% | 45% | 45% | 50% | 40% | 42% |
| | Intermediate | 24% | 16% | 16% | 20% | 28% | 23% | 23% |
| | Working class | 32% | 31% | 39% | 35% | 22% | 37% | 35% |
| Music, performing and visual arts | Privileged | 54% | 55% | 48% | 51% | 60% | 57% | 60% |
| | Intermediate | 22% | 19% | 22% | 18% | 22% | 20% | 19% |
| | Working class | 25% | 26% | 30% | 31% | 19% | 23% | 22% |

Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September quarters, ONS

Notes: Creative Industries are defined using Standard Industrial Classification codes as per the DCMS methodology. All industries include SIC categories A to S, but exclude activities of households and extraterritorial organisations. Figures may not sum to 100 per cent due to rounding. Data for the Craft sub-sector has been suppressed given sample sizes are too small to provide reliable estimates.

Employer and Stakeholder Consultations

The research included **35 telephone consultations with businesses** in four 'in-focus' sectors: Advertising, Fashion, Publishing and Screen. These discussions explored employer perspectives of class imbalances in the Creative Industries and their causes; current activities to enhance socio-economic diversity; future priorities and plans for their own organisations; and reflections on the need for industry-wide action, programmes and policies.

While our discussions focussed on socio-economic diversity, given the clear intersections with other characteristics such as gender, race and disability, our consultations with employers looked at diversity and inclusion in this broader sense. They included a range of organisations – large and small – selected to ensure coverage across different parts of the UK.

We also **engaged with a further 26 industry stakeholders**, sharing early findings from the research so to inform and refine the key messages and recommendations from this work.

Figure A2: Businesses and stakeholders consulted as part of this research

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| adam&eveDDB | Penguin Random House | Common People |
| All3Media | Playground Games | Creative Diversity Network |
| BAIT/Cloth Cat Animation | Plug-in Media | Creative Industries Federation |
| Banijay | Publicis Groupe | Creative Mentor Network |
| BBC | Quiet Storm | Creative Scotland |
| Beano Studios | Rebellion | DCMS |
| Boss Models | Sara Putt Associates | Department for Communities NI |
| Channel 4 | SeeSaw Films | Fashion Roundtable |
| Clear Cut | The Specialist Works | Ffilm Cymru Wales |
| Elle UK | True North | IPA |
| Faber & Faber | Twenty Twenty | National Film and TV School |
| Framestore | VCCP | Northern Ireland Screen |
| Harper Collins | Warp Films | Pact |
| Hat Trick | WPP | Publishers Association |
| Havas UK | Advertising Association | Scottish Government |
| ITV | Animation UK | ScreenSkills |
| Karamarama | BAFTA | Skills Development Scotland |
| LA Productions | British Film Institute | Social Mobility Commission |
| Leith Agency | British Fashion Council | UK Screen Alliance |
| Lucas Films | British Screen Forum | |
| METAIL | Commercial Break | |

Fieldwork Interviews

The final aspect of the primary research entailed **100 fieldwork interviews to explore the lived experience** of those working in key creative roles in our four 'in-focus' sectors that come from a working-class background. In particular, we have considered access and progression in key creative roles in these sectors, such as Advertising and Marketing Directors; Fashion Designers; Authors, Writers and Editors; and Arts officers, Producers and Directors.

Participants were selected to ensure our sample included individuals working in a range of different sized businesses, in different parts of the UK, and at different stages in their career journey; and early screening questions were used to confirm participants' class origin. We also sought to achieve a sample as representative of the demographics of the UK population as possible.

Figure A3 (overleaf) provides a list of the job titles of those who participated in the fieldwork interviews.

The interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed. In the report, we have used pseudonyms and removed identifying characteristics from the quotes (where necessary) to protect the anonymity of participants.

In total, researchers engaged with 61 employers and stakeholders, and conducted 100 fieldwork interviews. A larger number of interviews were conducted in the Screen Industries to inform a sub-sector 'deep-dive' supported by ScreenSkills, with National Lottery funds awarded by the BFI. Researchers sought to undertake 25+ consultations and interviews in the three other 'in-focus' sectors.

| | Business and stakeholder consultations | Fieldwork interviews | Total |
|--------------|--|----------------------|------------|
| Screen | 33 | 40 | 73 |
| Publishing | 4 | 20 | 24 |
| Advertising | 11 | 14 | 25 |
| Fashion | 7 | 26 | 33 |
| Other/All CI | 6 | | 6 |
| Total | 61 | 100 | 161 |

Figure A3: Job titles* of those who participated in the fieldwork interviews

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Account Director | Editor (Publishing) | Managing Director (Screen) |
| Actor and Writer | Editor/Producer | Managing Director (Fashion) |
| Actor/Writer/Producer | Editorial Assistant | Managing Partner (Advertising) |
| Agent (Fashion) | Exec Producer | Marketing & Communications Manager |
| Apprentice/Undercutter | Exec Producer/Commissioner | Marketing Manager |
| Brand Executive | Executive Creative Director (Fashion) | Master Tailor |
| Brand Publisher/Editor | Executive Creative Director (Screen) | Media Partnerships |
| Business Director (Advertising) | Fashion Designer & Founder | Media Planning Manager |
| CEO (Publishing) | Fashion Editor | Producer |
| Cinematographer | Fashion Educator | Producer (Advertising) |
| Co-director (Publishing) | Fashion Features Editor | Producer and Writer |
| Commercial Lead (Fashion) | Film Charity | Producer/Crew |
| Commercial Lead (Advertising) | Film Exhibition | Producer/Director |
| Company Director (Fashion) | Film Festivals/Indie Production | Production Executive |
| Contracts Manager (Advertising) | Filmmaker | Project Editor (Publishing) |
| Contracts Manager (Publishing) | Finance Director | Publisher |
| Creative Director (Fashion) | Founder (Fashion) | Publishing Director |
| Creative Director (Advertising) | Freelance Consultant (Publishing) | QA Analyst |
| Creative Director & Designer | Freelance Designer Maker | Reporting Analyst |
| Design Director | Freelance Journalist | Sales and Marketing |
| Development Assistant | Graduate/Writer/Director | Script Executive/Head of Development |
| Director (Screen) | Head of Digital (Fashion) | Senior Planner |
| Director (Fashion) | Head of Digital (Advertising) | Senior Strategist |
| Director (Advertising) | Head of Production | Series Producer |
| Director of Menswear | Head of Development for Current Affairs | Fashion Student |
| Director/Writer | Influencer & Campaigner | TV series Editor/Producer |
| Documentary Producer/Director | Integrated Producer | Video logger |
| DOP/Cinematography | Line Producer, Co Producer and Producer | Writer (Screen) |
| Editor (Advertising) | | Writer (Publishing) |
| | | Writer/Producer/Director |

* Note: this list has been de-duplicated. Where multiple interviews have been undertaken with individuals working in the same role, in the same sub-sector, the job title is only listed once.

Defining the Creative Industries and Creative Occupations

Throughout this research we have used the DCMS definition of Creative Industries and Creative Occupations, as follows.

| Creative Sub-Sector | SIC (2007) | Description |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| Advertising and marketing | 70.21 | Public relations and communication activities |
| | 73.11 | Advertising agencies |
| | 73.12 | Media representation |
| Architecture | 71.11 | Architectural activities |
| Crafts | 32.12 | Manufacture of jewellery and related articles |
| Design: Product, graphic and fashion design | 74.1 | Specialised design activities |
| Film, TV, video, radio and photography | 59.11 | Motion picture, video and television programme production activities |
| | 59.12 | Motion picture, video and television programme postproduction |
| | 59.13 | Motion picture, video and television programme distribution |
| | 59.14 | Motion picture projection activities |
| | 60.1 | Radio broadcasting |
| | 60.2 | Television programming and broadcasting activities |
| IT, software and computer services | 74.2 | Photographic activities |
| | 58.21 | Publishing of computer games |
| | 58.29 | Other software publishing |
| | 62.01 | Computer programming activities |
| Publishing | 62.02 | Computer consultancy activities |
| | 58.11 | Book publishing |
| | 58.12 | Publishing of directories and mailing lists |
| | 58.13 | Publishing of newspapers |
| | 58.14 | Publishing of journals and periodicals |
| | 58.19 | Other publishing activities |
| Museums, galleries and libraries | 74.3 | Translation and interpretation activities |
| | 91.01 | Library and archive activities |
| Music, performing and visual arts | 91.02 | Museum activities |
| | 59.2 | Sound recording and music publishing activities |
| | 85.52 | Cultural education |
| | 90.01 | Performing arts |
| | 90.02 | Support activities to performing arts |
| | 90.03 | Artistic creation |
| 90.04 | Operation of arts facilities | |

| Creative occupations Group | SOC (2010) | Description |
|---|------------|--|
| Advertising and marketing | 1132 | Marketing and sales directors |
| | 1134 | Advertising and public relations directors |
| | 2472 | Public relations professionals |
| | 2473 | Advertising accounts managers and creative directors |
| | 3543 | Marketing associate professionals |
| Architecture | 2431 | Architects |
| | 2432 | Town planning officers |
| | 2435 | Chartered architectural technologists |
| | 3121 | Architectural and town planning technicians |
| Crafts | 5211 | Smiths and forge workers |
| | 5411 | Weavers and knitters |
| | 5441 | Glass and ceramics makers, decorators and finishers |
| | 5442 | Furniture makers and other craft woodworkers |
| | 5449 | Other skilled trades not elsewhere classified |
| Design: Product, graphic and fashion design | 3421 | Graphic designers |
| | 3422 | Product, clothing and related designers |
| Film, TV, video, radio and photography | 3416 | Arts officers, producers and directors |
| | 3417 | Photographers, audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operators |
| IT, software and computer services | 1136 | Information technology and telecommunications directors |
| | 2135 | IT business analysts, architects and systems designers |
| | 2136 | Programmers and software development professionals |
| | 2137 | Web design and development professionals |
| Publishing | 2471 | Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors |
| | 3412 | Authors, writers and translators |
| Museums, galleries and libraries | 2451 | Librarians |
| | 2452 | Archivists and curators |
| Music, performing and visual arts | 3411 | Artists |
| | 3413 | Actors, entertainers and presenters |
| | 3414 | Dancers and choreographers |
| | 3415 | Musicians |

Endnotes

Click on endnote number to go back to source page

1. Carey et al. 2019; Giles et al. 2020; DCMS 2019; Creative Industries Federation 2021; Oakley et al. 2017; Brook et al. 2018.
2. Renaissance Learning/Education Policy Institute 2021; Cullinane and Montacute 2020; Blainey and Hannay 2021a 2021b; Rose et al. 2021.
3. Chinn et al. 2020; Adams-Prassl et al. 2020; Blundell et al. 2021; Financial Conduct Authority 2021; Sehmi and Slaughter 2021.
4. Magrini 2020; Wallace-Stephens and Lockey 2020.
5. Bell and Blanchflower 2011; Cribb et al. 2017.
6. Carey et al. 2020.
7. The Government's Plan for Growth (2021) indicated the intent to develop 'sector visions' which will outline government and industry's collective ambitions for these sectors for the next decade. At the time of writing, it is currently unclear, however, which sectors the Government intends to develop such 'visions' for.
8. Throughout this report, we use the DCMS definition of the Creative Industries, comprised of nine sub-sectors. We are also interested in those working in creative occupations outside of the Creative Industries. Taken together these two components comprise the Creative Economy. For further information, please see Annex A.
9. Carey et al. 2020; O'Brien et al. 2016.
10. Publishers Association 2021; Saha and van Lente 2020; Advertising Association/IPA/ISBA 2021; Eikhof and Warhurst 2013; Friedman et al. 2020; Brook et al. 2020a; Fashion Roundtable 2021.
11. McKinsey 2018, 2020; CIPD 2018; BCG 2017, 2018; Nathan and Lee 2013; Nathan 2012; de Vaan et al. 2015.
12. We use the DCMS definition of the Creative Industries, aggregated from 4 digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes. Please refer to Annex A for further details.
13. Socio-economic background or 'class origin' is based on parental occupation aged 14 and coded to the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) where Privileged = NS-SEC 1 and 2; Intermediate = NS-SEC 3 and 4; and Working Class = NS-SEC 5, 6, 7 or 8. Please see Annex A for further information.
14. Figures based on the DCMS Economic Estimates Series.
15. Class origins based on parental occupation aged 14 and coded to the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) where Privileged = NS-SEC 1 and 2; Intermediate = NS-SEC 3 and 4; and Working Class = NS-SEC 5, 6, 7 or 8. Creative Industries are defined using Standard Industrial Classification (DCMS) codes, using the DCMS definition. Please see Annex A for further information.
16. Modelled employment levels estimated based on class profile across all industries *total employment in the CIs.
17. Actual employment levels by class origin estimated based on class profile in the CIs *total employment in the CIs, in order to remove DNAs.
18. Figure 1.2 shows the class profile of the workforce in sector categories of the Standard Industrial Classification 2007 (SIC) and major occupational groups as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification 2010 (SOC). This means there will be a degree of overlap between these broad categories and the four-digit SIC and SIC unit groups that comprise the Creative Economy. Please see Annex A for further details.
19. Employment levels by class origin have been estimated based on class profile in the Creative Industries multiplied by total employment in the sector, given significant numbers of non-responses to the parental occupation question in the Labour Force Survey.
20. O'Brien et al. 2020a; Bakhshi et al. 2021.
21. PEC/IPO/ AudienceNet 2020.
22. Hupkau et al. 2020; Major and Machin 2021; Lawrence 2020, Eikhof 2020; Comunian and England 2020.
23. O'Brien et al. 2020b; Bakhshi et al. 2021.
24. Carey et al. 2020.
25. Carey et al. 2021; Randle et al. 2015; Eikhof and Warhurst 2013.
26. Throughout this report we have used pseudonyms and removed identifying characteristics from the quotes (where necessary) to protect the anonymity of participants.
27. Cultural capital, a concept popularised by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu is a complex and contested term. For the purposes of our analysis, we are using the idea broadly, going beyond formal educational qualifications, to capture ease and familiarity with particular cultural forms that are important in the context of the Creative Industries (see Friedman and Laurison 2020 for a more detailed discussion).
28. Reeves and de Vries 2019; Davies and Rizk 2018; Hanquinet et al. 2019.
29. Brook et al. 2020a.
30. Youths aged 11-15. Class origin based on NS-SEC of Household Reference Person. Creative workers are adults working in creative occupations, as per the DCMS definition.
31. Ofsted 2019.
32. Speilman 2017; Ofsted 2018.
33. Crenna-Jennings 2018.
34. Hutchinson et al. 2020.
35. Notes: Attainment gap at KS4, based on mean rank difference converted to a months of progress measure. Relative participation gap the percentage point difference between the entry of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged pupils within a given subject, divided by the percentage entry of non-disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged pupils refers to those who have claimed Free School Meals (FSM) in any of the past six years, and are compared to a reference group of those that have never claimed FSM over this period.

36. Cultural Learning Alliance 2019, 2020.
37. Durham Commission 2019.
38. Crenna-Jennings 2018; Donnelly et al. 2019; Zimdars et al. 2009; Scherger and Savage 2010.
39. Friedman et al. 2017; Friedman and Laurison 2019; Brook et al. 2020a.
40. Carey et al. 2021; Brook et al. 2020a; Carey et al. 2019; Bazalgette 2017; Eikhof and Warhurst 2013; Carey et al. 2016.
41. Donnelly et al. 2019.
42. Gray and Barford 2018; Rex and Campbell 2021.
43. BOP 2019; Cultural Learning Alliance 2019.
44. Bazalgette 2017; Skills Development Scotland 2015.
45. HM Government 2018.
46. Creative Industries Federation 2021.
47. Giles et al. 2020.
48. Anders et al. 2017.
49. Wyness 2017.
50. Anders et al. 2017.
51. Banks and Oakley 2016.
52. Montacute and Holt-White 2020.
53. Battiston et al. 2020.
54. Skills Development Scotland 2019; StatWales 2019; ApprenticeshipsNI 2019.
55. Bazalgette 2017; Creative Industries Council 2016; Carey et al. 2019.
56. Carey et al. 2019.
57. Data is for learning aims. A learner will be counted for each qualification they are studying and so can be counted more than once. Apprenticeships, education and training only. Excludes community learning. For Apprenticeships, the National Aims Report counts the number of aims that make up each framework, which is a different methodology to the FE and skills release which counts each framework once.
58. Office for Students 2021.
59. Giles (Forthcoming).
60. The SMC's new guidance (2020) recommends the use of parental occupation of the main earner when respondent was aged 14 as the main question to determine socioeconomic background (SEB), which has been shown to be easy to understand and achieve the highest response rates in testing. The SMC also provides guidance on how to collapse responses to three categories, which align with the ONS three-class versions of the NS-SEC. Further information can be found in Annex A, in the SMC's Employer Toolkit, or supplementary guidance.
61. The OfS Access and participation plan guidance recommends the use of the area-level measure Participation of Local Areas 'POLAR4', with scope for supplementary use of other measures. Past research has, however, shown POLAR and other area-level measures to yield significant errors in assessing the disadvantage of learners. See Boliver et al. 2019 and the final report of the Social Mobility Advisory Group 2016 for further information on the context and measurement challenges.
62. Giles 2021.
63. Skills Development Scotland 2019.
64. Eikhof 2020; Comunian and England 2020; Banks 2020.
65. Giles et al. 2020.
66. See also Giuliani et al. 2020
67. See also Brook et al. 2020a.
68. See for example Sibert and Wilson 2013; Brook et al. 2020b.
69. Allen and Hollingsworth 2013.
70. Q: 'I would like you to think about your employment prospects over the next 12 months. Thinking about losing your job by being sacked, laid-off, made redundant or not having your contract renewed, how likely do you think it is that you will lose your job during the next 12 months? Is it...?' Figure shows per cent that respond unlikely or very unlikely.
71. Wiles et al. 2020.
72. Brook et al. 2020a; Friedman et al. 2016; Brook et al. 2018.
73. See also Alacovska and O'Brien 2021; Johnson and Peirse 2021; Erigha 2020.
74. Saha 2018; Saha and van Lente 2020; Nwonka 2020a, 2020b, Nwonka and Malik 2018; Fashion Roundtable 2021.
75. Comunian and England 2020; Eikhof 2020; Banks 2020.
76. HM Government 2017.
77. HM Government 2018.
78. Irvine et al. 2018.
79. Carey et al. 2020; Bridge Group 2020.
80. Friedman et al. 2016; Friedman and Laurison 2020; Brook et al. 2018.
81. Arts Council England 2018.
82. Carey et al. 2020.
83. British Business Bank 2020.
84. Tech Nation 2021.
85. Nesta 2018; Tether 2019.
86. Randle et al. 2015.
87. Nesta's Creative Nation report segmented locations into five creative cluster models: incipient clusters, creative conurbations, creative districts, creative challengers and creative capitals. See Nesta 2018 for further information.
88. Siepel et al. 2020; Burger et al. 2021.
89. Creative Industries Council 2020.
90. Industrial Strategy Council 2021.

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