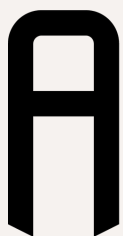


A YEAR OF ANTI- RACIST ACTION



for an
inclusive
arts
workforce

2021

INC ARTS UK

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INTRODUCTION

In summer of last year, as black squares went up in solidarity, African diaspora, Asian diaspora and ethnically diverse arts sector workers demanded explanations for the treatment they'd received, and en masse made recommendations for organisations to make anti-racist change.

This marked the beginning of a long year of activism. With this survey, we wanted to see if arts and culture organisations were doing more than just posting a 'black square'.

We need measurable data to make meaningful change, which is why we embarked on this this survey, and continue to monitor anti-racist action in the sector.

We are grateful to the organisations that made time to respond, and acknowledge that whilst inclusive change is incremental, systemic change is iterative.

WHO DID WE ASK?

In May 2021, Inc Arts sent out survey requests to 100 Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio organisations (NPOs), and the 16 organisations directly funded by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Out of 831 ACE NPOs, we asked the 100 with the largest annual budgets.

Who answered?

Of the 116 organisations asked, 83 organisations responded to Inc Arts' survey:

	Approached	Responded
ACE NPOs	100	75
DCMS funded orgs	16	8

25% of NPOs and 50% of organisations directly funded by DCMS didn't respond to our requests for information.

FINDINGS

SOCIAL MEDIA

We explored how many organisations made an explicit statement of solidarity.

59%

POSTED A BLACK
SQUARE ON SOCIAL
MEDIA

80%

POSTED A PLEDGE
TO ANTI-RACIST
ACTION ON SOCIAL
MEDIA

”

“We didn’t post a black square as we chose to set up the equality and diversity working group instead and focus on organisational change alongside of our expressions of solidarity with our communities and workers. At the time we felt that taking real action was more important than symbolism.”

ANTI-RACIST POLICY

Of the organisations approached, while many had expressed intent, the data suggests that converting intent to action is taking time. Accountability and transparency are vital to ensuring equity of treatment across policies and behaviours.

57%

UPDATED OR
CREATED AN ANTI-
RACISM POLICY
FOR THEIR
ORGANISATION

23%

PUBLISHED THEIR
ANTI-RACISM
POLICY

”

“We also held an open discussion with our staff back in September 2020 where we discussed Black Lives Matter and what we want to do as an organisation to create a workforce that is representative of our local community.”

PROGRAMMING

We then interrogated inclusion strategies across programming and workforce.

90%

INCREASED
ENGAGEMENT WITH
ETHNICALLY
DIVERSE TALENT
THROUGH
COMMISSIONING
WORK FROM
ETHNICALLY
DIVERSE CREATIVES
DURING LOCKDOWN

83%

INCREASED THE
ETHNIC DIVERSITY
OF MAIN STAGE
PROGRAMMING FOR
2021 AND BEYOND

”

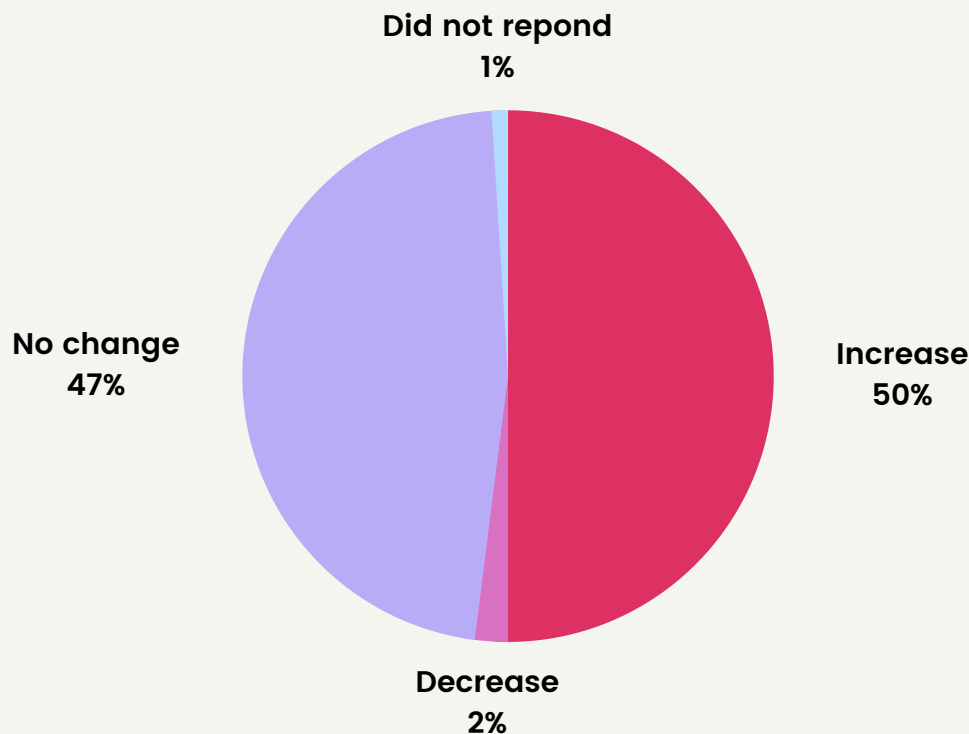
“We are undertaking a review of our collections to ensure a more representative process for new acquisitions, and reviewing the language we use to describe collections items.”

“As a producing venue we are being active in increasing ethnic diversity in the artists and practitioners we employ. We have committed to new metrics in our programming.”

STAFF & BOARD APPOINTMENTS

For systemic change to succeed, there is a clear need for the sector to diversify staff and leadership teams. The Creative Case for Diversity statistics offer data on staffing and leadership the most recent report on ACE NPOs for 2019/20 reveal that still only 10% of managerial positions are held by African diaspora, Asian diaspora and ethnically diverse people, while 18% of board members are people who experience racism.

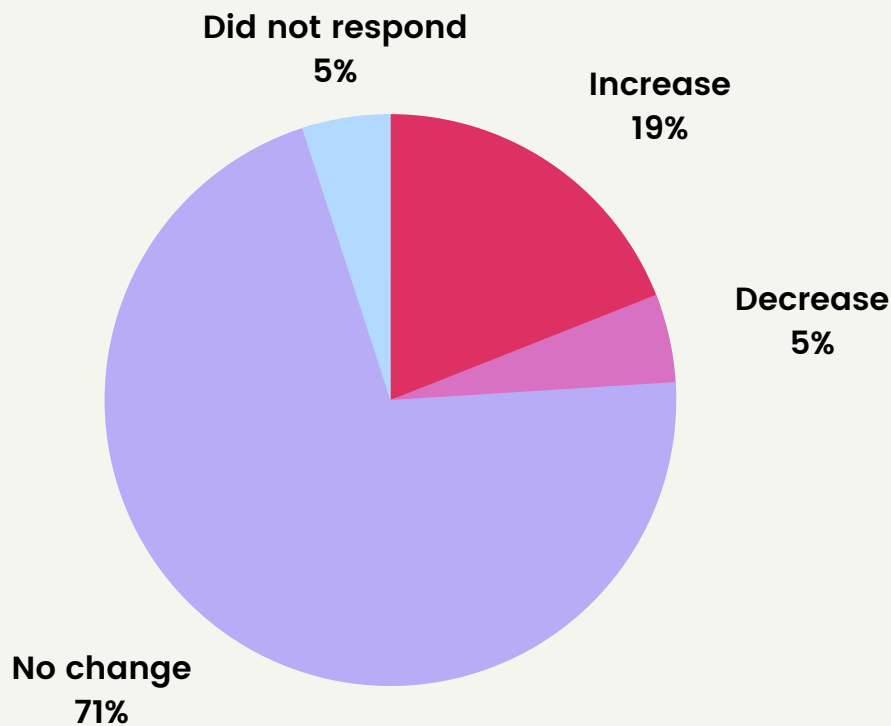
Since October 2020, have you increased the ethnic diversity of your board?



“Our board already had strong ethnic diversity representation.” “Our board of trustees are appointed by DCMS.” “We have not had any Board vacancies since October – but we have committed to increasing the diversity at the next opportunity.”

When it comes to the workforce and salaried roles, the picture is very different, though possibly less surprising within the wider context of the COVID-19 pandemic and widespread redundancy:

Since October 2020, have you increased OR seen a reduction in the ethnic diversity of your senior management team?



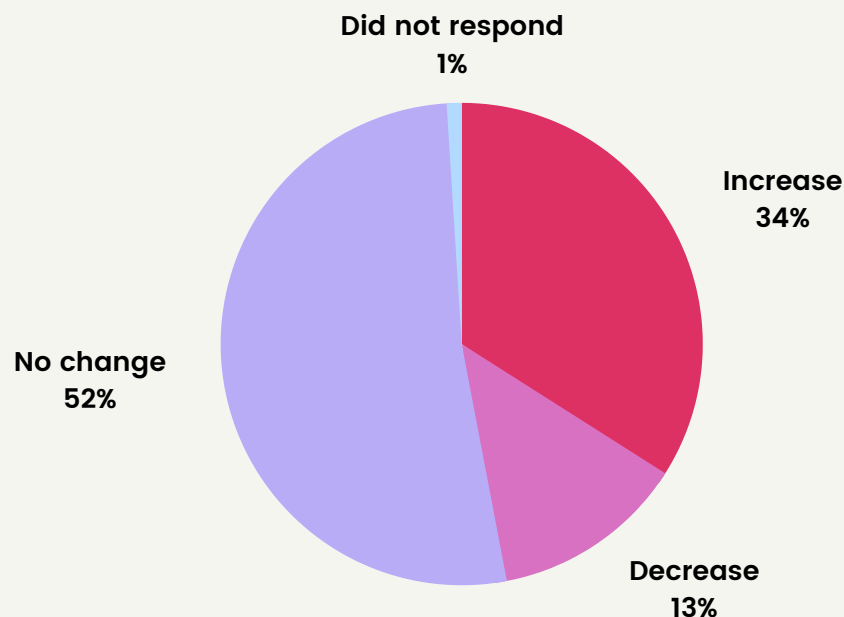
“We have been reducing our team numbers rather than decreasing. However we did not change our ethnic diversity profile through the loss of over 110 roles.”

“Because of Covid we have contracted rather than recruited staff (there were no compulsory redundancies) hence the reduction in the diversity of the workforce. We have however used this as an opportunity to provide employment to freelancers and have been specifically offering work to a range of ethnically diverse individuals.”

Many organisations explained that the lack of change to their senior management teams was due to high staff retention rates combined with pandemic-related furlough, recruitment and spending freezes. Some reported other creative ways they are trying to overcome this.

Worryingly, some 13% have seen a reduction in the ethnic diversity of their wider staff team, most attributing this reduction to pandemic-related redundancies.

Since October 2020, have you increased OR seen a reduction in the ethnic diversity of your wider staff team?



“Regular attendance at all SMT meetings by [a resident Director in the venue], to improve diversity of thought.”

“With our Diversity in the Workforce Working Group our aim is to increase ethnic diversity to at least 15% to match the current city and conurbation (and to increase as diversity figures are updated).”

COMPARING RESULTS:

ARTS COUNCIL AND THE CREATIVE CASE FOR DIVERSITY

The recent publication of Arts Council England's 2019/20 Creative Case for Diversity ratings is perfectly timed.

The details refer to the sector's progress on inclusion before April 2020 – on the eve of the world's biggest demonstration of anti-racist action and subsequent promises to change. Since gathering this data ACE has introduced Inclusion and Relevance as guiding principles for funding, with the stated commitment to revise awards to organisations that fail to demonstrate sufficient inclusive progress across programming, staffing and leadership.

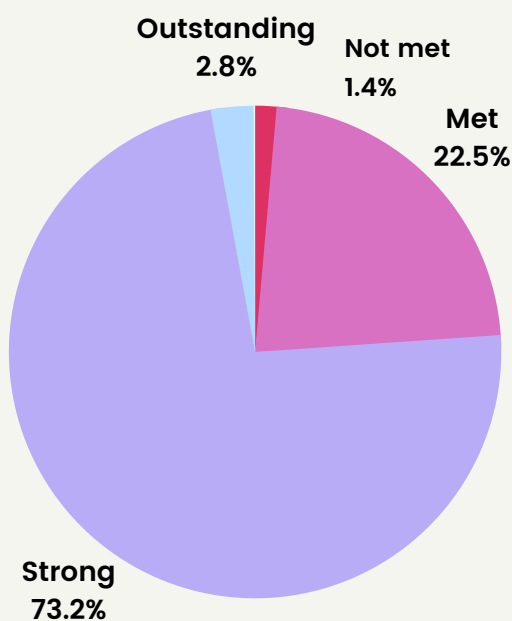
What has been fascinating is the huge disparity of responses by organisations called out by those who've received racist treatment at their hands. And what's even more interesting is how these organisations have fared in their Creative Case for Diversity ratings.

CREATIVE CASE FOR DIVERSITY

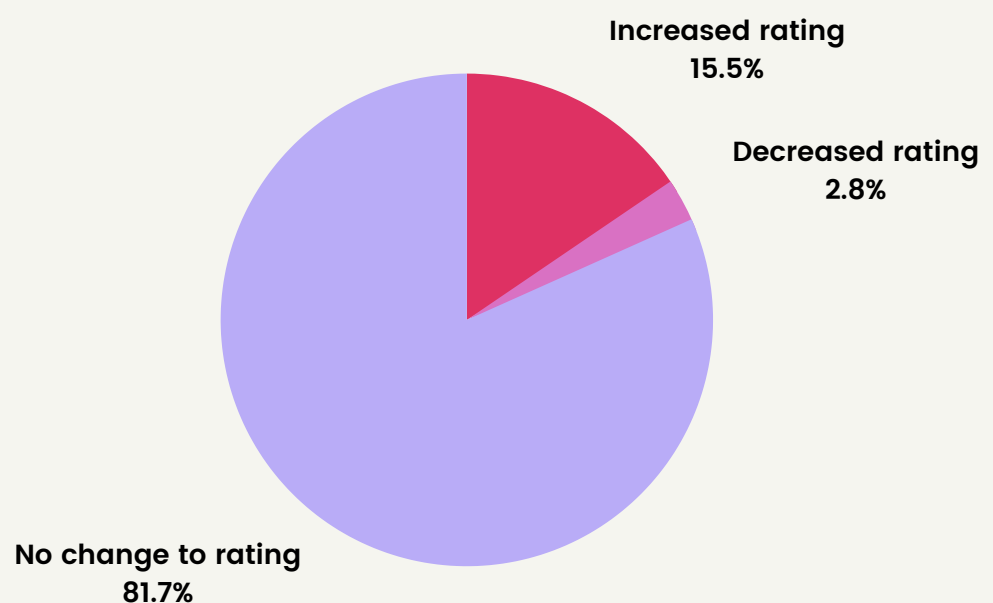
Of the 81 organisations we surveyed, 71 had received a Creative Case for Diversity rating in the Arts Councils 2019–20 Diversity report.

(DCMS and ACE bridge organisations not on the 2020 CCD table)

Creative Case for Diversity rating 2019/20

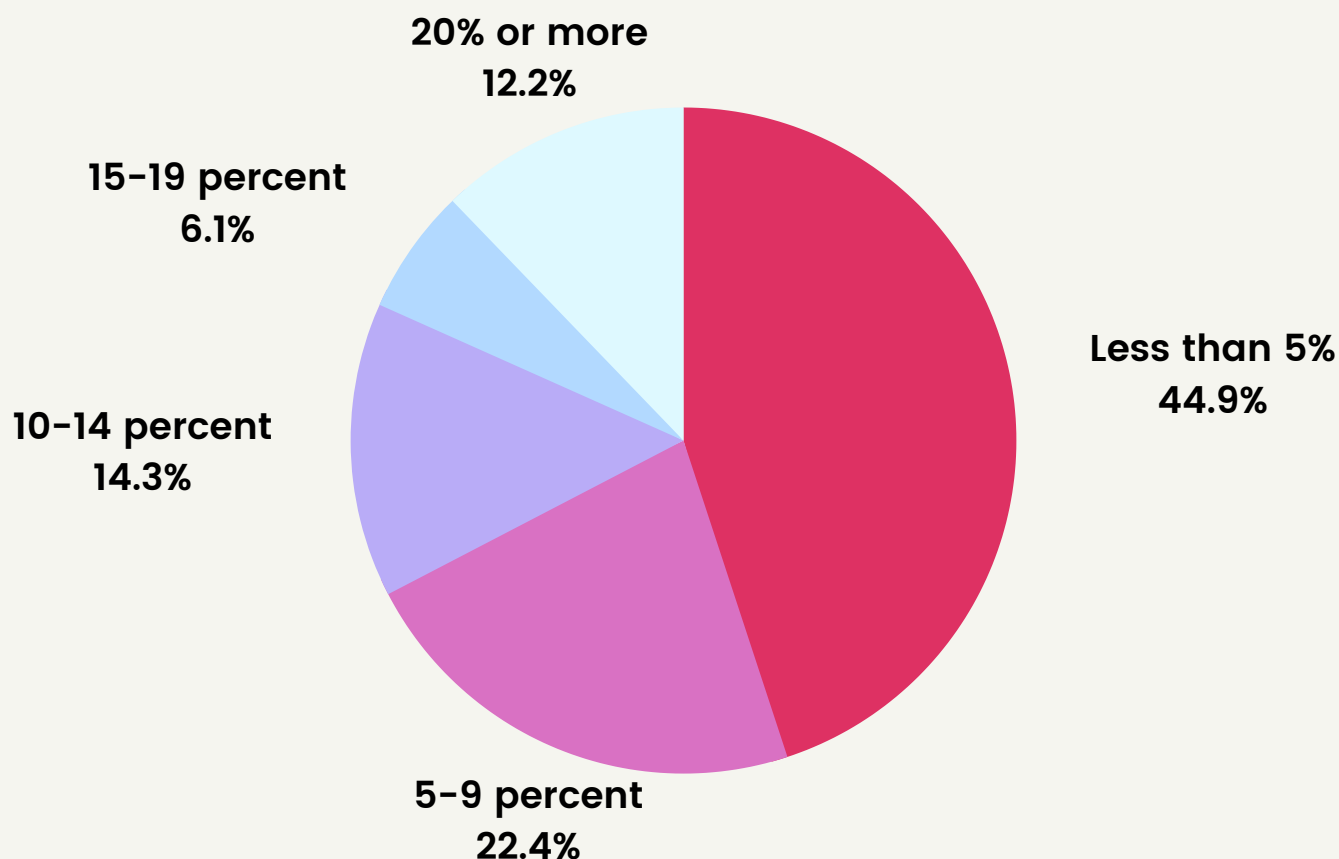


Creative Case for Diversity rating from 2018/19 – 2019/20



We then looked at the Ethnicity breakdown of these organisations, of which 49 were applicable. ACE only published the ethnicity data of organisations with 50 or more members of permanent staff.

**% of African diaspora, Asian diaspora
and ethnically diverse staff (2018/19)**



We put our data up against ACE's Creative Case for Diversity 2019/20 data and found that in **nearly half (49%)** of the organisations surveyed by Inc Arts, **less than 5%** of their staff were ethnically diverse in 2018/19. And of that selection, almost **another half (46%)** reported no change to the diversity of their staff to us in 2021.

Yet the majority of these organisations (60%) were given a 'strong' Creative Case for Diversity rating by the Arts Council.

There are two questions here:

What does a 'strong' CCD rating actually mean?

When ACE talks about diverse artists and practitioners from “protected characteristic groups”, they cover a range of definitions defined by the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Socio-economic status is a recent addition to the criteria.*

Was ethnic diversity not on the radar?

It appears that it is easier for an already ethnically diverse organisation to continue to increase their ethnic diversity, but those with low numbers of ethnically diverse staff have struggled to. Could it be that ethnic diversity in the arts sector workforce was not on the radar of these organisations until June 2020?

* Class or socio-economic status is not considered a 'protected characteristic' in the 2010 Equality Act but ACE included it as a 'measure' of diversity upon feedback from the arts community about the impact of class on social mobility.

REFLECTIONS

KEY FINDINGS

- The majority of organisations surveyed made pledges on social media and since have increased the ethnic diversity of their boards and in their commissions and artistic programming.
- However, there was little change in wider staff.
- Less ethnically diverse organisations still received 'strong' rating in Creative Case for Diversity results.
- ACE NPOs generally have made a more holistic commitment to inclusion across the board, from public commitment and programme changes to deeper internal reflections and changes.
- Of the DCMS funded organisations, action towards anti-racism has mostly been reflected in their programming rather than staffing. Overall, there is slower pace of commitment to change. They've demonstrated less public commitment to anti-racist action, however are embarking on this action in private.

ACTIONS OVER SYMBOLISM

The results of the survey have shown that change towards anti-racism is iterative; it takes time for solidarity to become action, but it is happening.

Anecdotal reports from organisations suggest that some organisations chose not to make public statements because they were unsure what to say. For some this was through a desire to 'get it right', and for others we spoke to there was uncertainty as to whether the protests they were witnessing had any relevance to their own work.

Many organisations saw beyond the symbolism of a black square. They chose to act quietly, initiating anti-racism working groups and task forces, inviting anti-racist discussions in their workplace and forming reading groups amongst colleagues. Action has shifted from top-down decisions to a collective effort of solidarity.

BOARDS ARE MORE DIVERSE

Board appointments are becoming diverse, and we welcome those who have made accountable, actionable change. However many of these positions in the creative sector are unpaid, and the survey results show that ethnic diversity in senior leadership and wider staff positions has not increased.

Racism takes a financial and material toll on professionals in the sector, and we must recognise our ethnically diverse cohort with the security and stability of paid roles.

DIVERSE HIRING

The lockdowns during COVID-19 have allowed organisations the time to reflect on policies and structures that have shut ethnically diverse people out. It is imperative that the hiring process keeps the African diaspora, Asian diaspora, and ethnically diverse people at its core.

Organisations that had to make redundancies took ethnicity into account – they were aware of the disproportionate effects that widespread redundancies have on ethnically diverse workers, and tried to mitigate this impact.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, arts and culture organisations have been doing more than just posting black squares in the last year. This survey continues a long-standing dialogue we have with our colleagues in the sector, and they have shared with us the details of their anti-racism action plans and actions to combat historical inequities which are meaningful, practical and significant.

These plans are also collaborative, and have been built on the testimony and demands of people who experience racism. However, these are just plans and first steps, and action is just beginning. We are looking forward to seeing this action in practice. We acknowledge that whilst inclusive change is incremental, systemic change is iterative.

In April 2021, Inc Arts launched Unlock: the anti-racism toolkit for the sector. The 100 actions within Unlock was built on the recommendations and demands of ethnically diverse, under-represented and marginalised people. At the time of publication, almost 270 organisations have signed up to Unlock and have begun building their anti-racism action plans.

It is an exciting time in UK arts and culture. We are at the start of a journey to becoming a truly anti-racist sector. Anti-racist action is tough, anti-racist action requires partnership, and we are witnessing solidarity becoming action.

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