

In collaboration with Accenture



# Reflecting Society: The State of Diverse Representation in Media and Entertainment

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# Executive summary

Organizations not only have a social responsibility to represent the consumers of their content, but by doing so also stand to gain significant financial benefits.

From childhood we find our heroes and role models in stories and cinemas, on playing fields and television screens. The media and entertainment industry shapes us throughout our lives. It shows us which stories matter and what is possible for our futures. As US activist Marian Wright Edelman said: “You can’t be what you can’t see.” Content shows us the lived experiences of others, across races, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientation, abilities and ages, and engrains in us attitudes and ways of treating others, and influences the self-perception of those with under-represented identities.

The scale of influence is immense. Film production companies, record labels, publishing houses, news outlets, gaming platforms and sport events command audiences in every corner of the world and every community.

Companies in the industry implicitly sign a social contract to contribute to society by informing, educating and entertaining. Many organizations are realizing that diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) are important for society and for business. In the past six years, corporate diversity roles have more than doubled.<sup>1</sup> Yet few industries can be as impactful in building new narratives and enabling social cohesion.

This report presents a cross-sector perspective of the factors that shape the stories we see and the voices we hear. A simple framework encompassing in-content, creative and corporate diversity is applied to key sectors: gaming, TV and film, news and publishing, advertising and sport and sport media. It draws upon research and insights from leading institutes and organizations that analyse and hold the industry accountable, then offers conclusions on where current efforts fall short and new focus is needed.

We explore five identity attributes: race and ethnicity; gender; sexual orientation and identity; disability; and age. We see where the industry stands and where we lack data and analysis today. We strive to use inclusive language and acknowledge that terminologies vary by region, community or individual. For consistency, we use the term “people of colour” to indicate a spectrum of non-white population. We use “historically under-represented groups” to indicate populations with a smaller represented percentage than the general population area due to past structural discrimination. Similarly, we use “LGBTQ+” as an umbrella term for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning and others.



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# Driving real change in content and creative production

Sectors across media and entertainment have vast opportunities to leverage their scale and reach to advance the voices of unrepresented groups.

Below: @mapodile/  
Gettyimages





In an industry with many players and roles, a complex dynamic between content, creator and audience, and a complex chain of decision-making – from executive to newsreader or actor – progress can be hard to assess. What is the current state and what does progress look like? Where are the common challenges across sectors, and the unique challenges in specific sectors? What is working and what is not? Only by examining these questions can we drive real progress.

Progress starts by acknowledging that diverse societies deserve diverse and inclusive media and entertainment. But progress cannot rely on new corporate roles that “own” the DE&I issue. It requires changes in culture and a recognition that audiences want, demand and will pay for diversity in content and creative production. In a survey commissioned by Facebook, 59% of consumers

polled said they are more loyal to brands that stand for DE&I in online advertising.<sup>2</sup>

New analysis by Accenture shows that more diverse movies make more money, and diverse audiences can be higher-value audiences. Across all three of the most used rating measures (IMDb, Rotten Tomatoes Critic and Rotten Tomatoes Audience), films with above-average diversity scores (as measured by Mediaversity) received higher ratings, regardless of production size.<sup>3</sup>

More representative content is a product of increased in-content diversity (characters, players, actors), creative diversity (producers, developers, authors) and corporate diversity (company executives). In this report, we focus primarily on in-content and creative diversity, both unique and critical components of the media and entertainment industry.

## 1.1 In-content diversity

In-content diversity is what is directly seen, heard or experienced by the audience. Several studies measure the number of diverse characters and

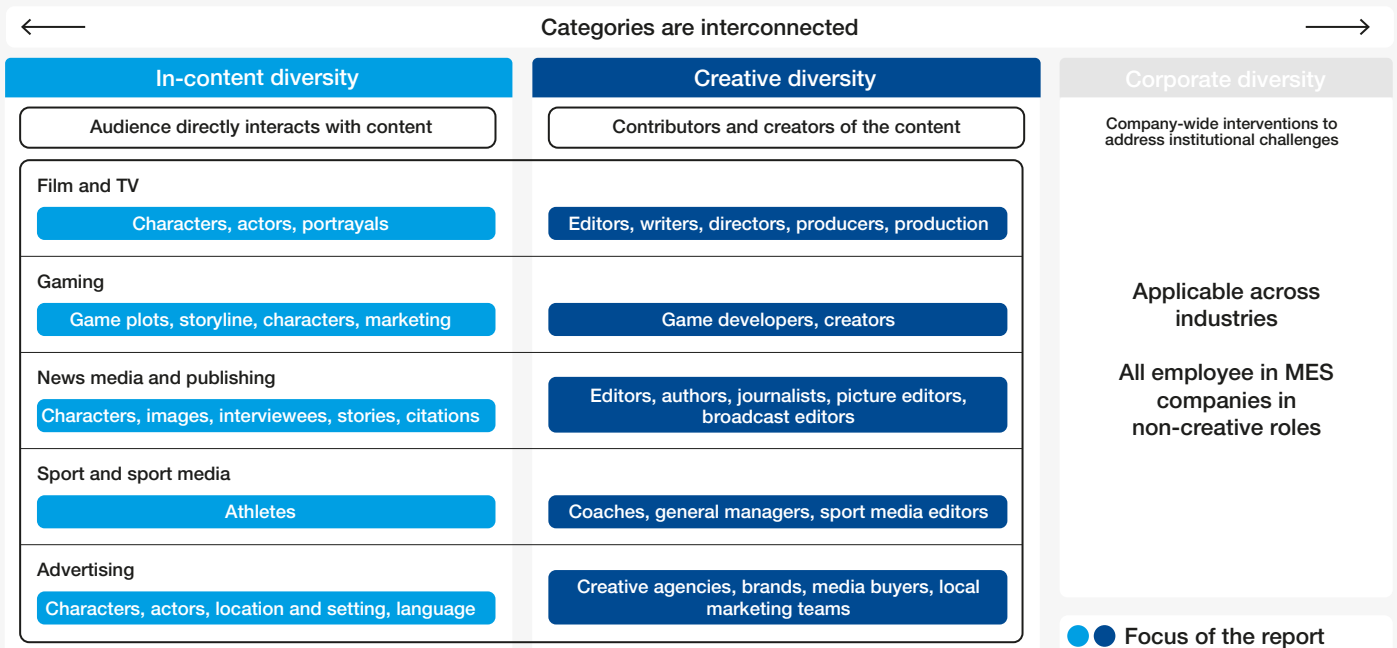
their time on-screen. Others importantly consider portrayal or the stereotypes that are challenged or perpetuated.

## 1.2 Creative diversity

Creative diversity, in the contributors or creators “behind the screen”, is vital to driving content that reflects the lived experiences of diverse audiences. Creative diversity spans decision-

makers, from the producers that hire for key roles through to casting and commissioning agents, to the investors and executives that greenlight projects.

FIGURE 1 Categories of diversity



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# The state of the sectors

Progress varies widely between sectors: gaming, news and publishing lag, while areas of advertising, TV and video have seen progress.

Below: @olaser/  
Gettyimages





## 2.1 Film and TV

In 2020, approximately 80% of US adults watched movies and TV shows via broadcast TV and streaming services.<sup>4</sup> Given its reach, this sector has the power to influence viewers' attitudes and behaviours for better or for worse. Behavioural science research by the Russian Academy of Sciences identified that young viewers showed a change in their perceptions of elderly people after watching a film about this group.<sup>5</sup> In addition, characters from historically under-represented groups often fall into prescribed struggles and clichéd narratives, perpetuating cultural stereotypes. A study from Chapman University suggests that both the quantity and quality of media representation contributes to racial attitudes.<sup>6</sup> As more Black and Latinx people on TV are shown with high social and professional status, viewers tend to hold more favourable views on these groups.<sup>7</sup>

Some brands have noticed this trend and started to address it. P&G's Widen the Screen programme aims to diversify the portrayal of Black people in the sector. The programme produced a series of short films that depict how Black people have typically been portrayed and then subvert the audience's expectation with logical, life-affirming endings.<sup>8</sup>

Lack of diversity and representation can hurt business. A UCLA study looked at the financial performance of movies based on their level of authentically inclusive representation (AIR) or the extent to which a film included and authentically portrayed diverse groups or cultures. They concluded that large-budget movies (over \$159 million) that rank below average in AIR typically underperform by \$32 million, or 20% of the budget, at opening box office weekend.<sup>9</sup>

TABLE 1 We observe film and TV through four lenses

These lenses are significantly interconnected		
A	<b>Audience diversity</b>	Viewers
B	<b>In-content diversity</b>	Characters, actors and portrayals
C	<b>Creative diversity</b>	Editors, writers, directors, producers and production
D	<b>Focus areas</b>	Industry awards

Creative diversity can unlock content diversity: there is a correlation between diversity in the director's role and diversity on the big screen. For example, of the 37 female-directed feature films released in cinemas between January 2017 and May 2019, 84% (31) featured a female lead or co-lead.<sup>10</sup> Content diversity can unlock

audience diversity: Studies suggest a correlation between a historically under-represented group's representation on-screen and that group's audience turnout, with some groups attending in numbers at more than twice the usual rate.<sup>11</sup> Content can both shape what regular viewers choose to see and activate new audiences.

### A Audience: increasingly diverse viewers prefer diverse content, which outperforms rival productions at the box office

Over the next 25 years, the US population of people of colour will move from a minority (40% in 2020) to a majority, according to the Census Bureau. We also see that all audiences in key demographics prefer diverse content. During the 2018–2019 TV season, for all viewers aged 18–49, regardless of race and ethnicity, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter engagement peaked for shows featuring over 50% historically under-represented characters.<sup>12</sup> Even

among white viewers, where median ratings were highest for shows with casts that were 31–40% traditionally under-represented groups, relatively diverse shows proved popular.<sup>13</sup> Preference translates into box office revenue. UCLA's Hollywood Diversity Report shows that in 2020, films with diverse casts out-earned less-diverse content.<sup>14</sup> Films with less than 11% casts from historically under-represented groups were the poorest performers.<sup>15</sup>

## B In-content: there has been progress in the representation of women and people of colour on-screen

Recently, there has been material progress in lead roles for women and people of colour. According to UCLA's Hollywood Diversity Report, women accounted for 48% of film lead actors in 2020, up from 44% in 2019 and nearly double 2011 levels.<sup>16</sup> People of colour accounted for 40% of film lead actors in 2020, up from 28% in 2019 and nearly quadruple their 2011 share (11%).<sup>17</sup>

The recent audience shift to streaming has significant implications for representation. Of

the top 185 films of 2020, more than half were released solely via streaming platforms.<sup>18</sup> Nielson in December 2020 reported that streaming services are relatively more inclusive platforms.<sup>19</sup> While data for 2020 is not yet available, Netflix's report from 2019 shows that its content is more diverse than that of the sector as a whole. From 2018 to 2019, 52% of Netflix films and series had females in leading roles, and 36% of all Netflix leads came from under-represented groups, compared with 28% in the top 100 grossing theatrical films.<sup>20</sup>

## C Creative diversity: creative representation trails on-screen for people of colour and women

TABLE 2 Select data comparing women and people of colour's representation on-screen and in creative roles in 2020

	On-screen	Creative	Population
Women	48% of film leads 4% increase from 2019	21% of film directors 6% increase from 2019	50%
People of colour	40% of film leads 12% increase from 2019	25% of film directors 11% increase from 2019	40%

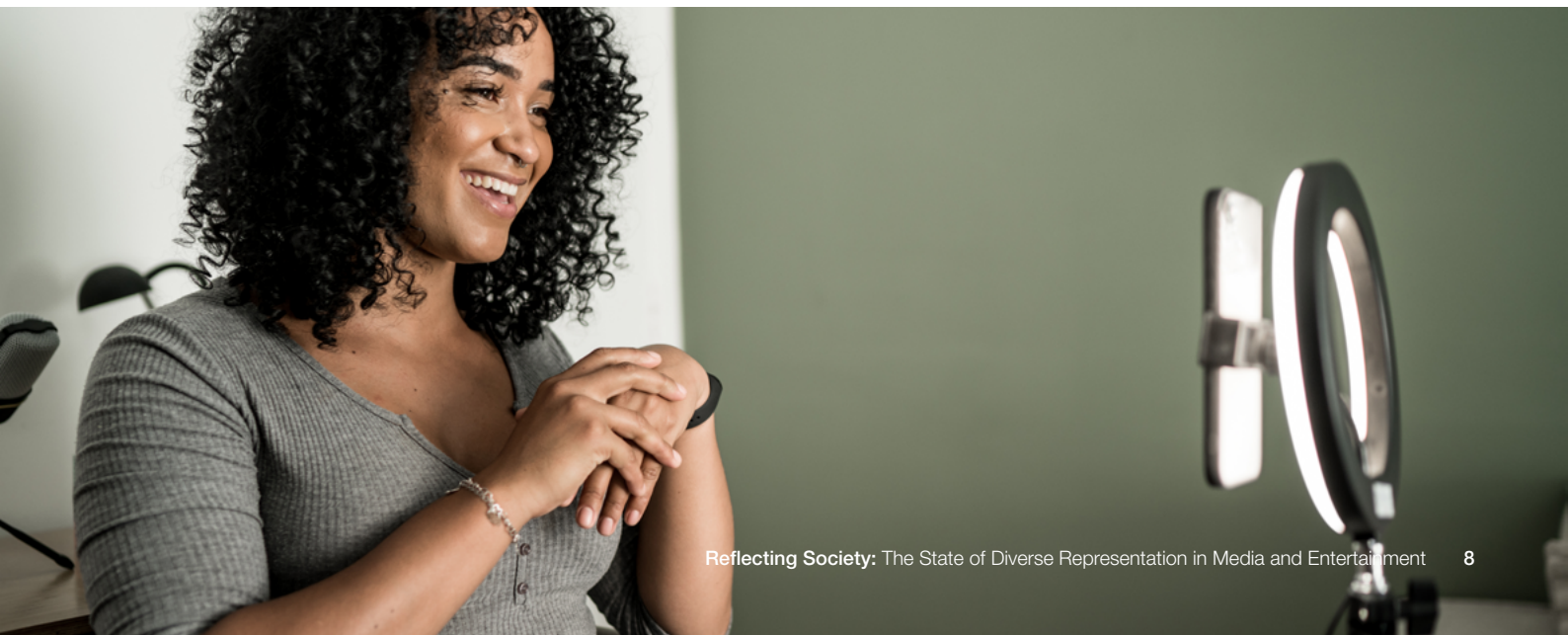
Source: UCLA's Hollywood Diversity Report 2021<sup>21</sup>

Despite progress in the proportion of women and people of colour among film directors, diverse representation in creative roles is still lacking. In 2020, 21% of directors of the year's top films were women, a 6% increase from 2019 and 16% increase from 2011, but still far behind parity.<sup>22</sup> Some 25% of directors were people of colour, an 11% increase from 2019, but still significantly under-represented.<sup>23</sup> In the UK, a parallel story exists, where diverse groups are represented at a higher rate in content (22%) than they are in creative roles (12%).<sup>24</sup>

Production teams, which include camera, hair and make-up artists, costume and set design, remain

overwhelmingly white. In Variety's study of more than 51,000 names from Hollywood union rosters, only 16% are Latinx (compared to 39% of California's population) and 5% are Asian (vs. 16%).<sup>25</sup> Three unions – Plasterers Local 755, IATSE Local 700 and IBEW Local 40 – had Black membership of 4–5% (vs. 7% in California).<sup>26</sup> Brian Williams, Vice-President of Los Angeles Urban League, which runs apprenticeships in the sector for under-represented communities, summarizes the issue in a Los Angeles Times' interview: "You can't work on set unless you're in the union. You also can't get into the union unless you've worked on a set for a certain number of hours and days. So that chicken-and-egg game favours people who have connections."<sup>27</sup>

Below: @FG Trade/ Gettyimages





## D Industry awards: structural changes are happening, but gains need to be maintained

Awards raise profiles and the earnings of winning actors and of the films and shows that are recognized. Oscar winners are estimated to get a 20% boost in their pay package on their next role.<sup>28</sup> From 2014 to 2019, the films nominated in each category saw a boost of 247% in box office earnings.<sup>29</sup>

The issue of diversity and representation in awards is acute. The data shows that for every woman who has won a screenwriting award, there have been 12 male winners.<sup>30</sup> In 2016, for the second year running, no actors from historically under-represented communities were nominated in either the leading or supporting categories, sparking the #OscarsSoWhite backlash. The Golden Globes also faced a backlash after the Los Angeles Times revealed that its group of 87 journalists who serve as the voting party had no Black members.<sup>31</sup> NBC dropped its broadcast of the Golden Globes ceremony in 2022 as a result.<sup>32</sup>

In recent years, attempts have been made to address structural barriers, including increasing the number of diverse voting members, developing qualification policies and implementing programmes to encourage diversity and representation in the

creative pipeline. In 2020, the Academy added 819 new voting members, of which 45% are women and 35% are from historically under-represented groups.<sup>33</sup> While a marked improvement, it remains below the proportion of women and people of colour in society. Nevertheless, the Oscar 2021 shortlist was the most diverse ever in the top four acting awards.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to making progress in their nominations, the Academy pledged that, from their 2025 awards onwards, only films meeting two of four diversity standards will be considered for Best Picture.<sup>35</sup> Their diversity standards require under-represented groups to be represented in on-screen or in-creative roles or to be provided with paid training opportunities as part of production. Following criticism after nominating all white actors in 2020, the BAFTA awards similarly made progress. Two-thirds of the acting nominations in 2021 are for performers of colour.<sup>36</sup> The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA), which hosts the Golden Globes, also revealed a diversity reform plan in March 2021, including the addition of at least 20 new Black members in 2021.<sup>37</sup> Awards are emblematic of an industry and require ongoing scrutiny to ensure this progress persists.

## 2.2 Gaming

Some 65% of US adults identify as gamers. Global gaming's growth (including console gaming, casual gaming and e-sports) will outpace much of the media and entertainment industry. Accenture estimates that the full value of the industry already exceeds \$300 billion.<sup>38</sup>

Gaming is almost unique in the industry. At its best, the gaming industry creates a shared experience, allowing people of all backgrounds and identities to participate equally, inhabiting characters they identify with. At its worst, it provides a toxic environment that bullies and belittles certain groups. Gamers demand better. According to an Intel and

Newzoo study, over half of gamers – irrespective of race, gender identity, expression or sexual orientation, or disability status – feel brands should take an active stance on societal issues.<sup>39</sup>

The relationship between content and creative diversity is close in gaming and felt by audiences. Some 47% of gamers don't play games they feel are not made for them in terms of character identities.<sup>40</sup> Greater diversity in characters can fuel diversity in creatives. When video game developers Beenox and Raven Software added more gender options to Call of Duty: Black Ops Cold War, Beenox reported an increase in the gender diversity of its creator applicant pool.<sup>41</sup>

TABLE 3 We observe gaming through four lenses

These lenses are significantly interconnected		
A	<b>In-content diversity</b>	Game plots, storyline, characters, marketing
B	<b>Creative diversity</b>	Game developers, creators
C	<b>Audience diversity</b>	Gamers, e-sports audiences
D	<b>Focus areas</b>	Accessibility, toxicity, community

## A In-content: historically under-represented groups are under-represented in gaming characters

Although recent studies indicate an increase in games featuring playable women characters (up by 189% in the past decade),<sup>42</sup> only 18% of games launched in 2020 featured women characters.<sup>43</sup> Game covers, a prominent visual cue of primary characters, predominantly feature men; only 4.2% of games analysed by TechTalk in a study of women and gaming feature a woman as the focal point on the front cover.<sup>44</sup>

A separate study by TechTalk of ethnicity in gaming examined games nominated for awards from 2003 to 2018, finding that only 3% of games had a primary character of colour, and only 23% of games allowed gamers to choose their character's ethnicity; 60% of games defaulted to a white character assignment.<sup>45</sup> Diverse characters and storylines are often withheld from games' original release to be sold as optional add-ons.<sup>46</sup>

Representation in characters matters to gamers of historically under-represented communities, especially the LGBTQ+ community. While half of all respondents to Intel and Newzoo's study placed importance on diverse characters, the sentiment was higher among LGBTQ+ respondents and those with disabilities, and highest for transgender or non-binary gamers.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps correspondingly, the LGBTQ+ experience is rare in gaming content. Only 11% of the games nominated for an award offer significant LGBTQ+ storylines.<sup>48</sup> However, a 2021 Nielsen survey shows that LGBTQ+ consumers are more likely to have a gaming system (54% vs. 44% non-LGBTQ+ consumers) and spend more on games each month (\$13 vs. \$10).<sup>49</sup> Given the gap, the LGBTQ+ community – and content that reflects it – presents a growth opportunity in gaming.

## B Creative: as players become more diverse, the diversity of developers lags

One major contributor to identities being under-represented in games is the under-representation of diverse creators.

A 2020 study of the top 14 global gaming companies reveals that only 16% of gaming executives and 24% of non-executive employees are women, suggesting that the hiring, progression

and retention of women must become priorities.<sup>50</sup> International Game Developers Association (IGDA) data also suggests an over-representation of developers identifying as white (81%) and under-representation of those identifying as Hispanic (7%) and Black (2%). Progress is poor; the percentage of Black game developers has stayed at 1–2% for 30 years.<sup>51</sup>

## C Audience: more women becoming gamers

The community has gained more women gamers in recent years. According to the Entertainment Software Association (ESA) in 2021, women make up 45% of the 227 million US gamers in 2021<sup>52</sup> versus 38% in 2006.<sup>53</sup> However, a gender gap

persists, according to women, due to the influence of traditional gender expectations, a male-focused community, violence and aggression as focal points of video games and lower identification with male avatars.<sup>54</sup>

Below: @CasarsaGuru/  
Gettyimages





## D Community and toxicity: abuse or online discrimination continues

The industry continues to struggle to create an online gaming community where all feel welcomed and accepted. Some 35% of women gamers have been sent inappropriate content or messages from other gamers.<sup>55</sup> As increasing numbers of under-represented groups participate, the community is grappling with how to address toxic behaviours. Some 31% of women playing online games agree that: “I often don’t reveal that I am a female gamer when playing online multiplayer games.”<sup>56</sup> Creating a safe gaming environment will require clear and enforced policy, with real consequences for transgressors, including permanent exclusion.

Some new practices have been developed to tackle the problem:

- Blizzard, the company behind Overwatch, started implementing an in-game endorsement system to reward good player behaviour. Some 50–70% of players actively gave endorsements, resulting in a 40% reduction in overall toxicity in 2019.<sup>57</sup>
- Valve, the company behind CS:GO, developed an artificial intelligence (AI) tool (“Minerva”) that scans for toxic language and can flag players and disable their microphones for a number of games. Valve reported a 20% reduction in toxic messages.<sup>58</sup>
- In 2016, Twitch introduced an AutoMod tool, now enabled by default for all accounts, that blocks what its AI deems inappropriate. Twitch revealed that 96% of live content on Twitch was moderated by either AutoMod or a human moderator.<sup>59</sup>

## E-sports: while e-sports is growing, there is sparse data to assess diversity

The growth of e-sports is correlated with increased participation in video games broadly, and the audience is changing. According to a Nielsen report in 2018, fans who started following e-sports after

2017 make up 29% of the US e-sports base, and are less likely to be male or millennials.<sup>60</sup> For such a material part of the industry, DE&I analysis is sparse, and it deserves greater scrutiny.

## 2.3 News media and publishing

While traditional audiences in both the global newspaper market and publishing industry are declining, they remain significant both in terms of business (\$80 billion<sup>61</sup> and \$110 billion<sup>62</sup> in

revenue, respectively, in 2020) and influence. Publishing and news can bring attention to otherwise overlooked events, experiences or identities.

TABLE 4 We observe news and publishing through three lenses

These lenses are significantly interconnected		
A	<b>Audience diversity</b>	Readers, viewers
B	<b>In-content diversity</b>	Characters, images, interviewees, stories, citations
C	<b>Creative diversity</b>	Editors, authors, journalists, picture editors, broadcast editors
D	<b>Focus areas</b>	N/A

## A Audience: an increasingly diverse audience presents a growth opportunity

According to Nielsen, news viewers are increasingly more diverse: Asian viewership rose by 86%, Hispanic by 66% and Black viewership by 58% from 2018 to 2020.<sup>63</sup> Young audiences are leaning into TV news; consumers aged 18–34 increased their total news consumption by 134% between 2019 and 2020.<sup>64</sup> Younger readers are driving the rise in digital subscriptions. However, studies find that they feel the concerns of their generation, including minority rights, are not properly presented.<sup>65</sup>

The first academic research on diversity in UK publishing has found prevailing industry assumptions that the core audience is white and middle-class, a perception that could lead publishers to deprioritize writers of colour.<sup>66</sup> However, in UK research by Spread the Word in 2020, “publishers claim that they would like to reach more diverse audiences but do not know how to or are reluctant to expend resources on doing so”.<sup>67</sup> Publishers need to better understand and internalize the economic value of diversity.

## B In-content: few books feature under-represented characters and women are less cited or interviewed

Diverse characters and fair portrayals allow audiences to hear their stories being told. However, the number of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds is low. Of the approximately 3,644 books received at the Cooperative Children’s Book Center (CCBC) in 2018, 11% had significant African or African American content or characters, 1.5% had Native American, 9% Asian/Pacific and 7% Latinx.<sup>68</sup>

Children and teen books are a specific area where representation can shape worldviews, including regarding identities such as LGBTQ+. However, the 2017 CCBC study found that less than 4% of books contained significant LGBTQ+ content.<sup>69</sup>

When looking at gender diversity in publications, a study by the journal *Politics & Gender* reveals that, while 75% of total published articles were authored by women, male authors cited women’s work at a 14% lower rate than women peers. Globally, media cite women as sources on front pages about 20% of the time.<sup>70</sup> Bloomberg News says that who gets cited often determines who gets called for on-air interviews, creating a negative feedback loop.<sup>71</sup>

More recently, women were under-represented as COVID-19 spokespeople on TV news channels. Although 41% of medical school faculty are women, of 220 unique expert guests speaking on COVID-19 from 18 May to 19 June 2020, only 30% were women, comprising only 27% of total speaking time.<sup>72</sup>

## C Creative: creative diversity in news and publishing is not changing quickly enough; self-publishing is helping creators find a voice but not an audience

The identity of journalists and authors shapes the stories told and views represented. A study analysing local news coverage of 3,400 state legislative candidates in 14 US states found that diverse newsrooms are significantly more likely to cover race-related issues.<sup>73</sup> And, according to a study by Reuters in the wake of social events in 2020, improving ethnic diversity (42%) is the most pressing priority in the year ahead – ahead of improving gender diversity (18%).<sup>74</sup> However, data shows that racial diversity in publishing has not improved materially since 2015, with non-white publishers increasing by only 3%.<sup>75</sup>

The racial composition of newsroom management shows a similar imbalance. A 2019 American Society of Newspaper Editors diversity survey showed that only 19% of print and online newsroom managers were people of colour.<sup>76</sup> A Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) 2019 survey showed that only 17% of TV news directors and 8% of directors were people of colour.<sup>77</sup> A recent Reuters

study showed that only 23% of the executive or chief editors across 10 markets analysed are women, while 40% of all editors are women.<sup>78</sup> Another Reuters survey shows that while many respondents say their media organization is doing a good job on diversity at junior levels (84%), only a minority (37%) feel the same of the senior leadership level.<sup>79</sup> Of particular concern is that executives feel otherwise – 34% of news executives disagree that “women and/or members of minority groups face barriers to career progression in the news media industry”.<sup>80</sup>

Increasing the number of ethnic and racial minorities among the news and publishing workforce is necessary but not sufficient to change narratives. Spread the Word’s report found that Black and Asian authors felt they were steered into reproducing ethnic and racial stereotypes, whether in their stories or in the way their books were packaged and promoted.<sup>81</sup>

The rise of self-publishing online has allowed authors to publish stories or news that resonate



with readers, including stories that traditional publishers or newsrooms overlook. Of Amazon's e-book subscription programme, Kindle Unlimited (KU), 85% of e-books read are from self-published authors.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, with the growth of platforms such as Substack, individual writers can curate and send digital newsletters directly to their readers. There is a vast diversity difference between self-publishing and trade publishing.

FicShelf found that 67% of top-ranking self-published titles were written by women, versus only 39% of the top traditionally published titles.<sup>83</sup> However, reaching a large audience remains the preserve of traditional publishers and newsrooms. Widespread progress towards more diverse stories and storytellers will require traditional decision-makers to prioritize helping diverse creators reach their audiences.

## 2.4 Sport and sport media

In a June 2021 survey, 72% of US respondents indicated that they were either avid or casual sport fans.<sup>84</sup> From 2010 to 2018, sporting event revenue grew by 40% in North America, fuelled by media rights and sponsorship funds.<sup>85</sup>

As of April 2021, five out of the top 50 most followed people on social media were athletes; footballer Cristiano Ronaldo tops the list with 500 million Instagram followers.<sup>86</sup> With their enormous influence, sport stars have tremendous platforms to discuss racial equality issues. As an example of sport stars' influence, Manchester United and England footballer Marcus Rashford pressured the UK government to provide food vouchers to England's poorest families

during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>87</sup> In the US, a number of National Basketball Association (NBA), Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), Major League Baseball (MLB) and Major League Soccer (MLS) players went on strike ahead of games in the wake of the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Wisconsin.<sup>88</sup> According to an ESPN survey, 71% of fans support teams and athletes speaking out on social justice issues.<sup>89</sup>

The opportunity for positive impact and attitude-shaping remains strong. Studies show that team affiliation may be more important to fans than work and social groups, professional and even religious affiliations.<sup>90</sup>

TABLE 5 We observe sport and sport media through three lenses

These lenses are significantly interconnected		
A	<b>Audience diversity</b>	Viewers and fans
B	<b>In-content diversity</b>	Athletes
C	<b>Creative diversity</b>	Coaches, general managers and sport media editors
D	<b>Focus areas</b>	N/A

Below: @Phil Noble/Reuters



## A Audience: the fan gender gap is closing, but the athlete pay gap remains wide

In 2020, women made up 47% of highly engaged, passionate sport fans across a group of 13 of the world's most popular sports.<sup>91</sup> The aggregate data hides a phenomenon known as the “fan gender gap” between specific sports and regions, as there is a relatively high proportion of women fans in swimming, tennis and volleyball.<sup>92</sup> In the US, basketball is narrowing the fan gender gap – 43% of basketball fans were women in 2020, a 4% increase from 2017.<sup>93</sup> In football (soccer), there is a narrowing fan gender gap in Brazil (from 42% women fans in 2017 to 46% in 2020), the UK (33% to 37%) and the US (43% to 45%).<sup>94</sup>

The 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup drew more than 1 billion viewers across TV and online platforms.<sup>95</sup> However, the closing gender fan gap does not

translate to athletes' compensation. Female athletes are underpaid and receive minimal media attention in most markets. In Forbes's 2018 list of the world's highest-paid athletes, the top 100 were all men.<sup>96</sup> Organizations such as Sports Innovation Lab are looking to accelerate investment in and media coverage of women's sport.<sup>97</sup> Sports Innovation Lab Chief Executive Officer and four-time Olympic medallist Angela Ruggiero estimates that women's sport gets only 4% of sport media attention today.<sup>98</sup> Some progress has been seen in recent years; in 2019, the WNBA started to rebrand with a refreshed image and revived mission to target “very diverse, very socially conscious” millennials aged 16–24.<sup>99</sup> In 2019, early-season viewership saw a 64% increase over 2018.<sup>100</sup>

## B In-content: racism targeted at under-represented athletes is still prevalent; inclusivity in sport starts early

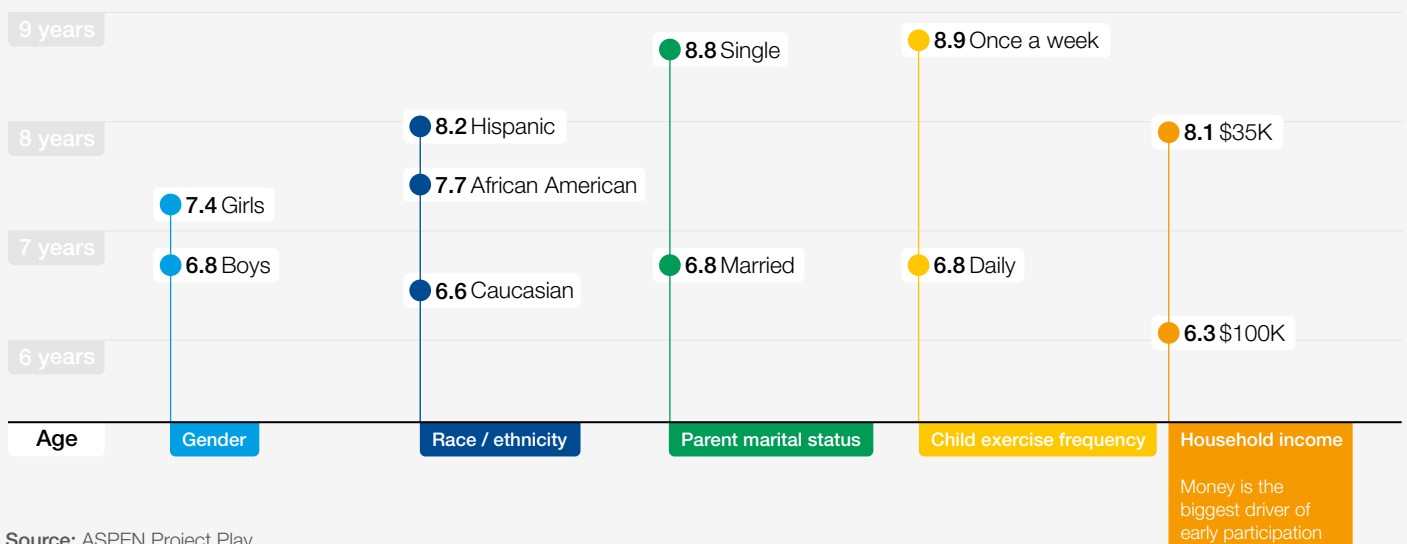
Although in-content diversity is comparably quite high in the sporting sector, with 74% of National Football League (NFL) athletes and 83% of WNBA and NBA athletes being players of colour,<sup>101</sup> racism remains prevalent. In 2019, there were 131 international documented acts of racism in sport.<sup>102</sup> In 2021, three Black players who missed penalty kicks in the England–Italy Euro 2020 final were subjected to racist abuse online.<sup>103</sup> An environment where racism is called out and actively countered and where athletes are supported in speaking out – by clubs, leagues, governments and fans – is paramount. There are some recent positive examples of acknowledging and fixing issues related to inclusive language. Specifically, the Cleveland Indians baseball team renamed itself

the Cleveland Guardians and the Washington Football Team (formerly the Redskins) is looking to unveil a new name in early 2022.

Participation at all levels must also embrace diversity to ensure inclusivity. The Australian government recently released Sport 2030, a comprehensive plan to reshape Australian sport. The policy dictates that, by 2030, Australia will “have a diverse and inclusive sport and physical activity sector that supports more Australians to be more active more often”.<sup>104</sup> The government is partnering with a wide range of organizations to increase participation by people with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and low-medium income households.<sup>105</sup>

FIGURE 2 Important indicators of early access

### Average age at entry into organized or team sports



Source: ASPEN Project Play

Income and socioeconomic factors affect participation in sport. The Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) found that 33.4% of US children aged 6–12 from homes with income of \$25,000 or less were physically inactive, compared to just 9.9% of kids from \$100,000+ homes.<sup>106</sup> Research shows a lack of access for children from historically under-represented groups. The average age for white children to start organized or team sport is 6.6, compared to 7.7 for Black children and 8.2 for Latinx.<sup>107</sup> This unequal level of early participation in sport

carries through to older age groups. Participation is reflected in the fan base; research shows that people who participated in an organized sport are three times more likely to become an avid fan of that sport.<sup>108</sup>

Across the industry, from participation in sport to unpaid internships in film and TV, wealth means opportunity. Sport needs to be inclusive from day one so that early opportunity is open to all, regardless of structural inequity, and thus fans emerge from equal participation.

## C Creative: there is a serious lack of diversity across sport team management and sport media

TABLE 6 2020 Diverse Hiring Practice Scorecard by the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports

	Racial/ethnically diverse hiring	Gender diverse hiring
WNBA	A+	A+
NBA	A+	B
NFL	B+	C
MLS	A	C-
MLB	B+	C

Source: The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports (TIDES) at the University of Central Florida serves as a comprehensive resource for gender and racial diversity in amateur, collegiate and professional sport and the media.<sup>109</sup> It assesses leagues annually and publishes scorecards on their racial and gender hiring practices.

TIDES shows the sporting sector where it is progressing or regressing. The public spotlight has consistently shone on diversity in head coach and general manager positions. Historically, results were poor. In March 2021, the 2020 complete scorecard rated NFL and MLB a grade of C and MLS a grade of C- in gender-diverse hiring practices. With regards to racial hiring practices, the WNBA and NBA continue to set the industry standard as the only leagues to receive an A+.<sup>110</sup>

The NFL racial hiring grade declined between 2015 and 2019. In 2003, two civil rights attorneys circulated a document asserting that Black coaches are disadvantaged, giving the NFL an ultimatum: hire more Black coaches or face a major lawsuit.<sup>111</sup> The NFL, recognizing the issue at hand, adopted the “Rooney Rule”, which requires teams to interview at least one candidate from historically under-represented groups for head coach or general manager positions. When

the NFL established the Rooney Rule, there were only three Black head coaches. By 2011, there were eight.

However, opinions vary on how successful this initiative has really been. A 2016 study found that the rule is “probably the best diversity initiative we’ve come up with thus far in terms of trying to close the gap”, while also showing that there is a persistent racial disparity in the rate at which minorities are promoted, which the rule does not consider.<sup>112</sup>

Black assistant coaches question whether the Rooney Rule provides “real” interviews or an opportunity for owners to check a box.<sup>113</sup> In 2021, the number of Black head coaches dropped back to three. The NFL amended the Rooney Rule in 2020 to establish a minority coaching fellowship programme.<sup>114</sup> Policies such as the Rooney Rule can be adapted across other industries as needed but should be stress-tested, evaluated over time for cause and effect, and developed based on context, with transparency in reporting.

In international sport, women of all backgrounds are still finding it difficult to get into positions of leadership. The Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) in 2020 reported that only one international sport federation had a board that was more than 40% composed of



women while the majority had below 25% female representation.<sup>115</sup>

Working environment matters. Women in Sports, a non-profit looking to break down gender inequalities within the sporting sector, conducted a survey of 1,152 sporting sector practitioners and identified discrimination and negative workplace culture as the top issues. Some 38% of women reported experiencing gender discrimination.<sup>116</sup> Perhaps unique to the sport industry, there is an emphasis on sporting competence as a measure of professional value, as 34% of women have seen their professional ability judged by their sporting ability.<sup>117</sup>

The International Olympic Committee’s Science Panel has released three consensus statements since 2007, the most recent in 2019, saying LGBTQ+ athletes are at uniquely “high risk” of abuse and discrimination.<sup>118</sup> Out of the Fields, the

first and largest international study of the experience of LGBTQ+ people in sport, shows that nearly 90% of LGBTQ+ people in 2019 believe homophobia and transphobia remain current problems.<sup>119</sup> In May 2021, it reported that “more than 30 studies have found that sports organizations and governments largely ignore discrimination experienced by LGBTQ+ people in sports”.<sup>120</sup>

TIDES has also highlighted a serious lack of diversity in sport media. Its 2017 report, one of the only studies evaluating diversity in sport media, was requested by Associated Press Sports Editors (APSE) and evaluated more than 75 newspapers and websites. It showed that 85% of people holding key reporting positions at newspapers and on major websites in both the United States and Canada were white men.<sup>121</sup> But the data is there for all to see. The author of the report “applaud[ed] the APSE for ... continuing to be transparent”.<sup>122</sup>

## 2.5 Advertising

Advertising is designed to shape attitudes and behaviours. Its effects can extend beyond purchasing and brand-building. A research study by Ohio State University found that, after receiving a targeted ad for an environmentally friendly product, study participants adjusted their self-perceptions to rate themselves as more “green” and were more likely to donate to an environmentally focused charity.<sup>123</sup> However, the effects can also be negative when ads portray groups in a certain way or reinforce stereotypes. The impact is amplified as advertising becomes increasingly pervasive. A 2021 study estimated that a person can encounter up to 10,000 ads per day.<sup>124</sup>

When brands do reflect an inclusive picture of society, they play a role in redefining what is considered mainstream, sparking national dialogues and expediting the public acceptance of under-represented groups. P&G released a video called “The Talk” that shows Black mothers discussing the bias they faced in the US with their children.<sup>125</sup> The ad makes no mention of P&G products but received more than 7 million views, even airing on TV.<sup>126</sup> Damon Jones, a company spokesman, said not including products in “The Talk” was a conscious decision so that viewers would focus on its message.<sup>127</sup> The ad won the Outstanding Commercial Emmy in 2018.<sup>128</sup>

TABLE 7 We observe advertising through three lenses

These lenses are significantly interconnected		
A	<b>Audience diversity</b>	Viewers and social media users
B	<b>In-content diversity</b>	Characters, actors, location and setting, and language
C	<b>Creative diversity</b>	Creative agencies, brands, media buyers and local marketing teams
D	<b>Focus areas</b>	N/A

## A Audience: opportunity left on the table to reach multicultural consumers

According to a Facebook survey conducted in Brazil, the UK and the US, 54% of customers do not feel fully culturally represented in online advertising.<sup>129</sup> The gap has serious business consequences. According to Nielsen, African American women spend nine times more on beauty and grooming products than white women.<sup>130</sup> However, brands are significantly underspending to target so-called “multicultural consumers”, as the

advertising spend targeting these customers was only 5% of total spending.<sup>131</sup>

Marc Pritchard, Chief Brand Officer of P&G, the largest advertiser in the world, explained that if P&G’s brands matched their general-market performance with multicultural audiences, “the size of the prize is big – up to \$1 billion in extra sales”.<sup>132</sup>

## B In-content: several groups are absent or typecast in ad content

Inclusive ads can be more effective. According to a study by Google and the Geena Davis Institute, advertising videos uploaded on YouTube receive more views when the advertisement is gender-balanced or women-led.<sup>133</sup> Some 64% of consumers surveyed by Google said they took some sort of action (e.g. considered or purchased a product) after seeing an ad that they considered to be diverse or inclusive.<sup>134</sup> This rate is higher among specific consumer groups including Latinx (85%), Black (79%), Asian/Pacific Islander (79%), LGBTQ+ (85%), millennial (77%) and teen (76%).<sup>135</sup> Microsoft’s research also demonstrated that companies running inclusive ads are regarded as “more trustworthy” by 68% of women and 60% of men.<sup>136</sup>

Specific groups are notably absent. According to Facebook, people with disabilities were severely under-represented in online ads (1% of the ads examined) as were members of the LGBTQ+ community (0.3%).<sup>137</sup> United Nations data shows that across 3,500 advertisements from 56 countries, 30% of ads cast a man who appears 40 or older and only 19% cast a woman who appears 40 or older.<sup>138</sup>

groups are represented matters. Getty Images research shows that nearly 80% of people surveyed globally expect companies to do a better job of capturing people’s true lifestyles and cultures.<sup>139</sup>

According to Unstereotype Alliance, a United Nations initiative aimed at eradicating harmful gender-based stereotypes, only 7% of women are shown in non-traditional and non-stereotypical roles.<sup>140</sup> The most prevalent stereotypes of women depicted in ads include women as mothers (39%) and housewives (27%).<sup>141</sup> The Facebook study also shows that women are 14 times more likely to be shown in revealing clothing and are seven times more likely to be visually or verbally objectified.<sup>142</sup> A Kantar study reveals that ads that are considered to be progressive are 25% more effective, measured through higher viewer satisfaction and recall.<sup>143</sup>

Adapting advertising overseas is a sensitive and nuanced topic. British perfume company Jo Malone attracted criticism by taking a video created by and starring John Boyega, in his role as their first male global ambassador, and reshooting it for the Chinese market with a Chinese star.<sup>144</sup> Boyega resigned from his role with the company following the controversy. Global brands are judged by whether they hold true to brand values in the face of pressure to localize content.

The rate at which under-represented groups appear in advertisements is just one consideration. How

Below: @Andre Benz/  
Unsplash



## C Creative: ad agencies are improving data transparency while advertisers are focusing on supplier diversity

The American Association of Advertising Agencies (4A's) released a report in 2020 collecting data from 165 ad agencies representing more than 40,000 employees.<sup>145</sup> The report found that Black employees make up just 6% of the advertising sector (compared to 71% for their white counterparts) and 68% of those positions are admin or entry-level work.<sup>146</sup> While 4A's is the first to collect sector-wide data, some major agencies have already joined forces to promote transparency in the sector. In 2020, more than 30 ad agencies pledged to a commitment from 600 & Rising, a non-profit organization dedicated to advocating for Black employees of US advertising agencies, to publicly disclose diversity data.<sup>147</sup>

Brands and advertisers are addressing the lack of diverse creatives in the sector by developing supplier (ad and production agencies) diversity strategies. Tiffany Edwards, Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion for Droga5, a leading creative agency, said, "In 2021, Droga5 has received more requests for new business that require the agency to have a commitment to diversity and inclusion [D&I] and policies and practices that support this commitment. This opens

an opportunity for Droga5 to come to the table with a specific point of view, demonstrating how we as an agency have imbedded D&I into our ways of working and partnering with clients to help them develop D&I-focused metrics and KPIs. Some clients come into the relationship with their own D&I KPIs that partner agencies have to meet." Antonio Lucio, HP's former Global Chief Marketing Officer, sent a letter to HP's agencies demanding they "radically improve the percentage of women and people of colour in leadership roles" in the creative department.<sup>148</sup>

According to the Association of National Advertisers' (ANA) survey of 112 marketers, 69% of respondents have a supplier diversity strategy for marketing/advertising and 89% of respondents indicated that the importance of supplier diversity has increased over the past year.<sup>149</sup> At the same time, the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) recommends that brands champion real equality within their supply chain and monitor metrics on progress, such as "creating a dashboard of progress for each market covering metrics such as at least one opportunity for a female director in every production bid".<sup>150</sup>

## 2.6 In summary

Despite modest improvements across disparate areas, under-representation persists across certain groups in the industry. While all media industry sectors face unique challenges, they share common opportunities to drive progress in both in-content and creative diversity.

Audiences are becoming more diverse. Historically under-represented groups are spending more time and money on media and entertainment. However, we still see diverse groups under-represented on-screen and behind the scenes across sectors.

Audiences are demanding more diverse characters and more authentic portrayals and intersectional representation that moves beyond a "check-the-box" mentality. More scrutiny falls on decision-makers "behind the scenes"; diversity in leadership ranks and managerial positions matters, not for the optics of inclusivity, but to drive the creation and distribution of more diverse content.

Notwithstanding the challenges, there are positive examples of change.



3

# What now? Opportunities for change

To help better understand the challenges and harness the collective power of the industry to drive progress, the World Economic Forum has created the Power of Media Taskforce on Diversity, Equity

and Inclusion. This task force consists initially of 25 companies, represented through one or more senior executives, committed to collaboratively driving real change in the industry.

The task force has identified challenges and opportunities under three themes:

1. Diversifying decision-making
2. Driving measurement, transparency and accountability
3. Enabling discourse and learning

Below: @Blvck Paris/  
Unsplash



## 3.1 Diversifying decision-making

Diverse leaders and decision-makers are essential for telling diverse stories. However, existing studies point to a lack of diverse creative leadership in the industry. There is a pyramid problem; diversity in hiring falters at more senior levels. Hearst's 2020 diversity report shows that, while 36% of new hires

were people of colour, only around 20% are in management and leadership positions.<sup>151</sup>

Initiatives need to address systemic challenges in terms of retention and skilling, lack of diverse networks and mentors, and leadership opportunities.

### Industry examples

TABLE 8 Investing in early talent






Notwithstanding the need to address leadership diversity, some progress is being made in hiring the next generation of diverse creators and executives.	
	<b>Netflix</b> partnered with academic institutions to host technical boot camps to upskill 130-plus students from under-represented populations <sup>152</sup>
	<b>Verizon</b> launched Ad Fellows, a fellowship programme at a variety of advertising agencies to help encourage DE&I in advertising. Ad Fellows has a 94% post-programme job placement rate <sup>153</sup>
	<b>Major League Baseball</b> created the Diversity Fellowship Program to create positions for people of colour and women in front office positions <sup>154</sup>
	<b>Ubisoft</b> launched a Women Develop initiative to provide women candidates in programming and game design with mentorship and apprenticeships. <sup>155</sup> It also doubled its investment in the Ubisoft Graduate Program for recent graduates from under-represented backgrounds seeking careers in the gaming industry <sup>156</sup>
	<b>Enlight</b> partners with companies such as Riot Games, Twitch and Twitter to educate historically under-represented groups on career paths in e-sports <sup>157</sup>

TABLE 9 Career progression programmes







Retention and promotion among middle management is another priority area identified by leaders in the industry, focusing on targeting mid-level talent with development, skills-creation and promotion opportunities. Additionally, other best practices that have been seen across industries include creating greater visibility of internal mobility opportunities; evaluating career paths to address systemic barriers; and developing sponsorship programmes to hold leaders accountable for creating paths to promotion.	
	<b>ITV</b> created the Step Up 60 initiative to provide 60-plus employees from under-represented groups with the opportunity to temporarily “step up” to more senior roles, gaining experience and accelerating career progression <sup>158</sup>
	<b>The BBC</b> committed to five initiatives on fair pay, along with a public campaign to share its targets and progress transparently; the results have shown a reduction in the gender pay gap of 32% in three years <sup>159</sup>
	<b>USA Today</b> launched an emerging leaders’ programme to train future leaders. Over half of the latest cohort were people of colour. The programme has a 93% retention rate, with over 75% of participants earning promotions <sup>160</sup>

TABLE 10 | Addressing structural inequality

Industry institutions and award organizations are promoting structural changes by setting industry-wide targets and taking the lead in conducting internal audits on the make-up of their workforce and supply chain.	
	<b>UK Music</b> outlined industry-wide diversity targets, requesting its members to increase diversity on their executive bodies and boards – 30% diverse (race) and 50% (gender). Since then, under-represented leadership increased by 10%, reducing the representation gap by 50% <sup>161</sup>
	<b>Recording Academy</b> commissioned a task force that recommended a set of 18 actions to promote diversity, including governance and operational reforms that resulted in it signing 200 new under-represented artists <sup>162</sup>
	The <b>BBC</b> started the 50-50 Project to push for gender equality among on-air guests on all of its programmes <sup>163</sup>

### 3.2 Driving measurement, transparency and accountability

Demands for greater transparency have led to the creation of new initiatives, tools and metrics. Existing data largely skews towards visible forms of diversity

and visual media (e.g. gender and race/ethnicity; film and TV; corporate diversity solutions) and less towards industry-wide commitments, metrics or initiatives.

#### Industry examples

TABLE 11 | Studies and research programmes to improve representation






Research organizations play a big role in holding the industry accountable through studies and reports. More companies are reaching out to collaborate with third-party, academic and research organizations to contribute their data.	
	<b>GLAAD</b> publishes an annual Where We Are on TV report to propel national conversations about LGBTQ+ representation <sup>164</sup>
	<b>Nielsen</b> created the Diversity Intelligence Series, a collection of insights on current trends among groups such as veterans, LGBTQ+ and consumers with disabilities (e.g. Being Seen on Screen, a report on diverse representation and inclusion in TV) <sup>165</sup>
	<b>Universal Music Group</b> extended its partnership with USC Annenberg to study how to create change in the music industry, including researching the exclusion of people of colour from leadership ranks <sup>166</sup>
	<b>P&amp;G</b> partnered with GLAAD to release the LGBTQ Inclusion in Advertising and Media study, measuring the attitude of non-LGBTQ Americans to exposure of LGBTQ people and images in the media <sup>167</sup>
	<b>MLB</b> partnered with ADCOLOR to launch ADCOLOR in sport. This partnership will recognize and celebrate diversity in sport and encourage conversation through an annual conference and events



TABLE 12 Frameworks, tools and technologies to improve representation











Tangible tools to help improve representation have been developed in recent years, some incorporating machine learning to automate measurement.	
	The <b>Financial Times</b> introduced the She Said He Said bot to diversify sources in articles and attract more female readers <sup>168</sup>
	<b>NBCUniversal</b> partnered with the Geena Davis Institute to test the AI tool Spellcheck for Bias to measure representation and inclusion of under-represented groups in front of and behind the camera <sup>169</sup>
	The <b>United Nations</b> developed an Unstereotype Metric, which is an open-access tool that measures whether a piece of advertising portrays characters in stereotypical ways <sup>170</sup>
	The <b>World Federation of Advertisers</b> launched a guide highlighting 12 key stages at which unconscious bias can occur and proposing questions that can be used as a litmus test for each stage <sup>171</sup>
	<b>Nielsen</b> launched Gracenote Inclusion Analytics to measure representation on-screen relative to audiences and population, providing a set of metrics that help content creators, distributors and advertisers understand areas for progress <sup>172</sup>
	<b>Electronic Arts</b> developed and embedded an Inclusive Design Framework in its development process to help guide developers to create inclusive player experiences that enable diversity and authentic representation in video games <sup>173</sup>
	<b>Ubisoft</b> created a content review group to provide feedback on its production and marketing assets. It is also building an Inclusive Games and Content team to embed DE&I across various checkpoints in its creative design and production process

TABLE 13 Tools to track progress and promote transparency

Companies are taking responsibility for defining targets, collecting data and measuring progress to improve internal and external awareness.	
	<b>Twitter</b> launched an internal dashboard to provide employees with transparency into organization-wide demographic data <sup>174</sup>
	<b>Netflix</b> collaborated with USC Annenberg to release a new study on inclusion across <b>Netflix</b> scripted series and films. The initiative analysed Netflix's US original live-action films (126) and series (180) released in 2018 and 2019 <sup>175</sup>
	<b>Edelman</b> joined the Business for Inclusive Growth pledge: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By 2020, women will hold 50% of senior leadership positions globally (Progress: met the goal in 2020)</li> <li>2. By 2022, Edelman will reach a racial/ethnic workplace diversity ratio of 30% in US (Progress: on track to achieve by 2022)<sup>176</sup></li> </ol>

### 3.3 Enabling discourse and learning

The media and entertainment industry has often been reactive to social issues and has rarely pooled common resources and capabilities. But the reach and influence of the industry creates

a unique opportunity to educate audiences, create content that challenges the status quo and bring social issues to the forefront of public consciousness.

#### Industry examples

TABLE 14 Examples of awareness campaigns




The industry should get ahead of social issues and proactively inform the public, advance the topics and shape the dialogue.	
	<b>Manchester United</b> launched #allredallequal campaign on Twitter to publicly showcase commitment to DE&I and challenge discriminatory behaviours that can take place in games <sup>177</sup>
	<b>Dentsu</b> helped found #SeeHer in collaboration with the ANA, to increase the percentage of accurate portrayals of women and girls in US advertising <sup>178</sup>
	<b>Verizon</b> celebrated women in leadership by hosting a podcast series, “Lifting Up: Lessons from Verizon Women Leaders”, which showcases success stories and amplifies diverse voices <sup>179</sup>

TABLE 15 Elevating the visibility of under-represented groups





The industry must continue to elevate diverse groups once they enter the industry. Leaders in the industry are actively becoming allies and supporting the progress of diverse groups.	
	<b>Array</b> was founded with the goal of introducing under-represented film-makers to a wider network and audience. Its database of more than 3,000 under-represented film-makers is used by more than 70 media production companies <sup>180</sup>
	<b>Unilever</b> partnered with Getty Images to establish Project #ShowUs, the world’s largest image library created and curated by women to shatter beauty stereotypes. The collection of 10,000 images offers a more inclusive vision of beauty for all media and advertisers to use <sup>181</sup>
	<b>Mindshare</b> created an “intentional media programme” to invest in media owned/ run by/for those from diverse communities. As a part of the programme, Mindshare launched Inclusion Private Marketplaces to financially support under-represented publishers, content creators and artists with advertising revenue <sup>182, 183, 184</sup>
	<b>Twitter</b> tapped into the historically under-represented groups when shaping Spaces, its live audio chat product. It enables live captioning to help people with hearing impairments follow the content <sup>185</sup>

TABLE 16 | Measures to promote accurate portrayal

Audiences demand authenticity and accurate portrayals. Companies are making efforts to remove stereotypes from their content.



**Unilever** launched Act 2 Unstereotype as their commitment and action plan to rewire the way we approach marketing. It takes a forensic approach to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) is embedded at every point of the end-to-end marketing journey<sup>186</sup>



**Verizon** used the Gender Equality Measure (GEM) tool and partnered with ANA's #SeeHer to create training and boot camps for internal and agency teams to ensure women and girls are accurately represented in all aspects of content creation<sup>187</sup>

Below: @LumiNola/  
Unsplash





# Conclusion

Real progress requires initiatives and policies that remove structural barriers by focusing on measurement, accountability, community and collaboration.

Thanks to the global reach of their platforms, the organizations in the media ecosystem are uniquely positioned to drive inclusive change through more intentional investments in their content and creative production.

While the context and challenges faced by each media sector may differ, there are opportunities to adopt leading practices and design creative solutions to advance voices of under-represented groups and help break down systemic barriers, including:

- Quotas: Examples such as the Rooney Rule can be adapted to require a minimum number of candidates be considered for important leadership and board positions
- Industry-wide reporting: Sector reports such as those from the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports (TIDES) can be expanded across the industry. Given the sensitivity of the topic, the reporting organizations should seek to build a safe avenue for companies to voluntarily disclose their diversity data and explore improvement opportunities
- Voluntary organization-wide reporting: Companies should commit to publish in-content and creative diversity data directly or through existing reports. The companies that voluntarily report their diversity data can gain the trust and favour of consumers and investors
- Embed DE&I as eligibility criteria: Industry organizations and companies can create policies to enforce DE&I. For example, BAFTA established DE&I as eligibility criteria for industry awards and funding opportunities, and Bloomberg requires its employees to join only panels and events with diverse line-ups of speakers

Safe avenues for transparency are required for organizations to disclose their representation statistics, compare leading practices and collectively report at an aggregate level to truly measure progress.

The World Economic Forum's Power of Media Taskforce on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is bringing together leaders from across the industry, including creative leadership roles, independent non-profits focused on DE&I, corporate executives, creators and DE&I professionals, to answer this call and drive change as a community. The following initiatives will be the first in a journey to support change:

- Cross-sector industry report: this report, as the first of a planned annual series, aims to understand the baseline and enable the adoption of best practices
- Industry-wide commitment: the task force intends to define a set of high-level principles and commitments from organizations to work together on change, based on shared experience and effort
- Metrics and industry index: coordinated efforts across this industry will align on a common set of metrics and goals to measure progress and hold all players accountable

The Power of Media Taskforce supports media companies and platforms to drive social good and achieve tangible results in improving health, equity and cohesion in society. As Rachel Lowenstein, Director of Inclusive Innovation at Mindshare, said, "It is time to view diversity as a valued currency of creativity as opposed to a checkbox." The task force will start by shining a light on progress through the voice of the audience and will be driven by the adoption of leading practices and new cross-industry initiatives for content and creative production.

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