INCLUSIVE PATHWAYS FRAMEWORK

FOR SCREEN STORYTELLING TALENT

PREPARED FOR AFTRS
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AFTRS

FOREWORD

The current conversation on the lack of diversity and inclusion in the media is not a new one. In 1994 a major study undertaken by Heather Goodall, History Professor and Andrew Jakubowicz, Sociology Professor at UTS pointed out the significant under-representation of people based on their gender, sexuality, disability and race both on screen and behind the scenes. Eighteen years later, Screen Australia's research paper on representation *Seeing Ourselves: Reflections on Diversity in TV drama* shows that little has changed.

AFTRS commissioned this research to understand what the industry can do today to make a lasting change, so that we will not need to be shocked into action in another 20 years. We looked at what has and hasn't worked both here and internationally, and what we found was encouraging. There are a lot of good schemes and people who have made a difference. We also spoke to people about the barriers they feel are stopping underrepresented groups from entering the industry to better understand how to dismantle them.

What became clear is that there is no easy answer. No short term fix. If we are to make a lasting change the industry needs a joined up approach that considers how to develop careers from an early age onwards. We need a way to measure the long-term impact of initiatives. This will all need commitment, consideration and collaboration.

At the School, we are committed to finding and empowering Australian storytellers for the screen – regardless of where they come from or who they are. We believe in bringing new talent, new perspectives and new voices into our cultural industries so that our local screen stories can better engage with the richness and complexity of our contemporary world and from a commercial perspective, reach a wider audience. To do this we need to make sure we are embedding best practice into how we recruit, teach and support our students. We also need to look at how we operate as an organisation and what measurements we will put in place to understand how we are tracking.

Our role is to champion Australian creativity and culture in its entirety. This demands being as open, accessible and diverse as the nation we serve.

Yours truly,

Neil Peplow
Chief Exeutive Officer
Australian Film, Television and Radio School

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1   INTRODUCTION

Australia's screen industries have a diversity problem. PricewaterhouseCoopers' 2016 Media Outlook reported that the average Australian media and entertainment worker is a 27 year-old white man living in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs and that the lack of diversity in the workforce was 'dragging down growth'. Despite the multicultural energy and complexity of our contemporary streets, audiences and society, the overwhelming majority of Australia's screen practitioners and decision-makers continue to be white and able-bodied and in the senior levels of the industry, men.

Our screen practitioners have an impact on what we see reflected back to us on screen. Screen Australia's recent research *Seeing Ourselves: reflections on diversity in TV drama* reported that the majority of characters we see in Australian TV continue to be straight, able-bodied and Anglo-Celtic, despite the increasing diversity of our population and audiences.

This problem is limiting the relevance of our industry and our most popular forms of cultural expression. It is having commercial implications, as audiences seek relevant content elsewhere in material produced overseas. And it is undermining our ability to innovate and connect with the storytelling potential of our increasingly diverse population. Increasing recognition of these issues has created a new momentum and appetite for change across the industry.

1.1   THE VALUE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Australian Human Rights Commission's recent publication *Leading for Change: A blueprint for cultural diversity and inclusive leadership* 2016 makes a compelling, evidence-based case for diversity across all industries. The benefits of diversity outlined in the 'blueprint' include:

- Financial benefits
- Better decision-making
- Overcoming biases
- Drawing from the 'true' broader talent pool
- Reducing risk and cost of diversity's alternative: discrimination (lower productivity, absenteeism, lawsuits, reputational damage)
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Relevance

These factors, especially the last three, hold true for the screen industries.

Screen culture is popular culture. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, cinema attendance is still our most popular leisure activity, and Roy Morgan participation data tells us that free to air television is regularly watched by 94% of the population. The Australian population is now hugely diverse. We need to consider who the audiences now are for these most popular of mediums. The ABS Census reveals that 28% of contemporary Australians were born overseas, while another 20% had a parent born overseas. The Diversity Council of Australia estimate that 32% of Australians have a non-Anglo-Celtic background. To draw on the creative energy of this significant part of our population, to find ways to tell untold stories and to have relevance to them as audiences, the screen industries need to start to engage with, and reflect, this contemporary diversity. As Graeme Mason, CEO of Screen Australia has said: "This is a cultural opportunity, it's a creative opportunity, and it's a moral responsibility."

2   PRACTITIONERS

2.1   CAREER PATHWAYS

The stages of a screen career may vary greatly depending on pathways into the industry. Metro-Screen's 2015 report, *Emerging Visions: Career Pathways in the Australian Screen Production Industry*, identified four main stages of a career trajectory: entry, emerging, mid-career, and established (see figure below).

ENTRY
Students and non-graduates with little-to-no production or industry experience. No reputation within the industry. Not endorsed by marketplace. Little-to-no industry networks.

EMERGING
Some professional industry or production experience. Have produced work but not in a professional format. Not yet endorsed by marketplace. Some reputation and industry networks Demonstrated commitment to a career over the long term.

MID-CAREER
1–2 production credits on professional formats with some reputation amongst the public or peers in the local industry. Endorsed by marketplace.

ESTABLISHED
More than 3 relevant credits on professional formats. Endorsed by the marketplace. Significant reputation and international networks.

Source: *Emerging Visions: Career Pathways in the Australian Screen Production Industry*, Metro Screen, 2015

Several of the interviewees for this report added some pre-conditions to these stages, including the generation of interest and aspiration around content production as early as primary or high school, self-generating content and experiential training and/or access to more formal courses of study (and retention within that program of education).

Barriers to progression into professional careers can occur at every stage of this trajectory. For those from under-represented groups, there tend to be few clear pathways into professional

practice in the industry, leading to low levels of entry, retention and success for creative practitioners outside current industry norms. There tends to be a 'career wilderness' after entry-level and before mid-career practice.

A key support that several consultees for this project mentioned was tracking opportunities for career progression and making them known to aspirants to kindle ambitions and find ways to address barriers, several of which are outlined below.

2.2 BARRIERS

There are multiple barriers to screen careers reported by communities under-represented in the Australian screen workforce (women, culturally and linguistically diverse – or CALD – Australians, people living with a disability and LGBTQI). Many of these barriers are common to a combination of diverse groups, and some are not. We should not assume, for example, that all culturally and linguistically diverse groups are financially disadvantaged, or that the experience of any person with a disability can be equated with another. In an industry that has favoured a certain profile of practitioners working in a competitive environment, key themes emerge. They include:

A perception amongst potential practitioners that the industry is not 'for them'

Many interviewed for this study, particularly those working closely with disadvantaged or under-represented groups, noted that there was a sense that the professional screen production industry was either inaccessible or irrelevant to them. Several attributed this attitude to the lack of on-screen diversity (see *Seeing Ourselves* 2016) and others said that funding eligibility criteria were set too high, without enough accessible entry points for under-represented groups.

— *When I began my career there were very few women working in film or the media and even less in positions of influence. Drawing a parallel comparison with the perspective of someone from a CALD community today, if you don't see anyone who looks like you working in an industry you may already feel at a disadvantage and therefore less likely to choose this as a viable career option.* (Helen Kapalos, Victorian Multicultural Commission)

— *This can be an issue for film schools as well. For many groups they just don't believe it's for them, as if it's not an expectation they can have. They think "that's not possible for me."* (Caroline Waters, Open Channel)

A concentration of industry funded screen work in the eastern suburbs and inner west of Sydney and the eastern suburbs of Melbourne

These areas have high rental costs, less cultural and linguistic diversity and a demographic profile of higher socio-economic agency – this can create barriers for participation for practitioners from other areas and backgrounds. There are some groups that are working to counter this concentration, such as Parramatta-based Information Cultural Exchange (ICE) who actively promote the development and retention of cultural intellectual property in Western Sydney. Others noted a sense of disconnection from the world of professional practice due to sheer geographic distance.

— *We give people work experience, with real tasks to perform, and move them towards employability. But there are very limited places to go in Alice Springs and a lot of young people have to think about moving to Sydney or Melbourne if they want to sustain a career in the industry.* (Nick Lee, CAAMA)

Socio-economic barriers to participation in a competitive and financially challenging industry

Many interviewees described a period in the early stages of (and even perhaps throughout) screen careers, during which creative practitioners could expect little or no income. These periods were described in MetroScreen's Emerging Visions report as the 'dark hours' in which periods of intense activity could be followed by "long months where there is no activity at all, with no income…"

— *There is an issue of privilege in the screen industry – the film industry requires periods in which people can survive without income. In many communities, expectation is that the next generations' income will support the broader family.* (S. Shakthidharan, Curiousworks)

Indeed, there was a substantial amount of comment around disincentives for creative roles in the sector overall due to their limited financial sustainability. However this can be an 'easy out' for the industry to dismiss the appetite for screen careers amongst under-represented groups.

— *There is certainly a disincentive to pursue creative ambition, particularly for migrant families that have gone through great hardships. But I don't think it's confined to CALD groups – everyone in this industry is told they should try to 'get a real job'. But that's why it's up to us in the industry to find ways to nurture talent and ensure there are career pathways. (Annette Shun Wah, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance)*

— *Until people with a disability or under-represented background can see that they have a career path in this area, they are not going to put in the hard years to develop their skills. The risk that you are taking is much greater. You could expend a lot of money and not have any opportunities. It is costly. There's also the question of whether people can afford to go off and do the courses and the classes – they are quite expensive. (Annie Murtagh-Monks, FTI)*

— *There are people within all cultures who want to work in the arts – perhaps even more so when they feel the need to have a voice and be political. (Sally Riley, ABC)*

Practical barriers for practitioners with a disability

Sofya Gollan, Deaf Arts Officer at Accessible Arts and Development and Production Executive at Screen NSW, described a lack of financial support in training environments for crucial enabling structures such as interpreters. She also said that these roles tended to be questioned as budget line items in the context of production investment funding. Speaking at the AFTRS "Diversity: Building a Platform for Change" event Ade Djajamihardja described a lack of understanding about how to make shoots, industry events and meetings accessible for wheelchairs. Veronica Pardo of Arts Access Victoria noted that access requirements often appear 'expensive and frightening'. Sofya also noted a deeper barrier to building relationships across the sector based on sheer lack of understanding and fear.

— *There still exists fear and stigma from people without any experience working with people with disabilities. (Sofya Gollan, Accessible Arts)*

— *The thing about disability is that it is assumed that it is a homogenous group. You can never assume that because you get the needs of one person you can understand a whole community. (Veronica Pardo, Arts Access Victoria)*

Specific gender-related issues like child-care and time out of the workforce

One of the key issues that has been identified in relation to women in screen careers has been around balancing work and family in the context of screen practice, which can be inflexible and unpredictable. Eligibility requirements for recent credits can also preclude women accessing funding on returning to work.

— *Time out of the workforce to raise children is a barrier to career progression that primarily affects women. The freelance nature and intensive, irregular hours of much employment in the screen industry exacerbates the difficulty of balancing family responsibilities and work. (Screen Australia 'Gender Matters: Women in the Australian Screen Industries' report)*

— *There's an issue around women with children – it's such a demanding industry, there's a sense that they have to be out of it. Women may be successful, go out of the workplace to have their children, then they feel like they can't have any interaction because they can't give 120%. How do we keep them engaged? (Monica Penders, Screen ACT)*

Conscious and unconscious bias amongst industry leaders and decision-makers

Interviewees for this report indicated bias amongst decision-makers in the industry, even the well-intended. The skills, talents and stories of diverse communities are often not recognised. Much of this was seen as due to a lack of exposure to diversity amongst decision-makers.

— *Performers and workers face discrimination in education and training; employment; writing; directing; casting; marketing and distribution. Although racism itself is rare, less rare is the practice of sticking to known networks and contacts when time is tight. It's also rare to have educators and casting agents with expertise in Indigenous culture, cultural diversity or disability. These are perceived to be in the too-hard basket rather than being an essential part of the job.* (Esther Anatolitis, Regional Arts Victoria)

— *A major issue is that the content they want to create is not being respected or valued. They hear "It's not a universal story" or "it doesn't resonate". That has definitely had an impact on lots of young people.* (Lena Nahlous, Kultour/Diversity Arts Australia)

— *Many professionals underestimate the ability, skill and eagerness that people with disability have to contribute as professional creators to the screen sector.* (Sofya Gollan, Accessible Arts)

A tendency to underestimate the appetite for diversity amongst audiences

There can be a self-limiting perception amongst commissioners and decision-makers that 'mainstream' audiences will not tune in for diverse or challenging content.

— *The perception of different or more challenging content can be: "our audience isn't going to watch that" or "it's a bit heavy".* (Sally Riley, ABC)

Many interviewees expressed the view that this kind of thinking could only be fully overturned by broadening the range of backgrounds amongst our key decision-makers, and hence the lived experience they could draw from in responding to new and original stories.

— *Being diverse isn't going to make white, cis (cisgendered or non-trans) or hetero people switch off. Give them more credit.* (Jordan Raskopoulos, digital content creator)

The tendency to be seen as eternally emerging rather than taken seriously in own creative practice

There is a tendency in Australian arts practice to confine under-represented practitioners to 'community arts' rather than mainstream, professional content development. This can involve being stuck in the 'opportunity' pipeline of short initiatives and attachments that may never quite enable the practitioner to take the next step with backing for their own independent work.

— *NESB (Non English Speaking Background) artists tend to be funnelled back into the community space. Those doors are more easily open to them. So there is a sense of security there, in terms of financial safety as well as supportive groups. The challenges are very different for an independent artist. Independent artists, among other things, have to work out how to get their own backing and how they are going to be valued.* (Cecelia Cmielewski, WSU)

— *The thing that really needs to happen is work of companies like Curiousworks, ICE, Footscray Community Arts and similar organisations should not solely be seen as "community arts" or "social good". It's a way of othering the work and the organisations. Grass roots organisations like this are working with a sophistication and complexity to undertake this development work, and they should be genuinely connected to the screen industry, so that the screen industry is saying – this is where our future stories are coming from, let's work with this young collective to create a pathway (e.g. into AFTRS). They should be asking: "what do your people need? How can we create a pathway for them?"* (Lena Nahlous, Kultour/Diversity Arts Australia)

3 PROGRAMS

3.1 EXISTING INITIATIVES

A range of initiatives are in place across the sector to address diversity issues. Some are long-standing, such as some strands of Indigenous funding and schools outreach, but the majority are relatively recent, including a significant number of gender-related initiatives and a key disability attachments program announced in the last year. These have been classified into broad types, each with their own benefits. Some examples of each type of initiative are included below.

TYPES OF INITIATIVE	BENEFITS	EXAMPLES NB this is not an exhaustive list
EDUCATION AND TRAINING – ENTRY LEVEL INTERVENTIONS		
Schools outreach targeting under-represented groups	Encourages participation Broadens potential talent pool	AFTRS' schools and youth program Curiousworks' schools program Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience ICE/AFTRS links to learning for students
Scholarships into tertiary study	Provides opportunities for access to study for socio-economically disadvantaged groups and target communities	AFTRS Indigenous scholarships Foxtel/AFTRS exceptional new talent scholarship
Skills development and training	Focus on key craft skills Develops networks Great opportunities to find and nurture talent	ICE and SPA Produce Perfect, Pitch Perfect and Slingshot writing training and Pitch Pleez Screenworks' Elevator Producer program Curiousworks' Curious Creators CAAMA training AFTRS, Screen NSW and Women NSW 'She Shoots' camera and sound training for women
Recruitment for training initiatives through networks and targeted call outs	Finds participants outside usual scope of recruitment and applications processes Can provide feedback into needs/barriers/interests of particular groups	Screen Australia Indigenous creative producers scheme ICE training Contemporary Asian Australian Performance Lotus Scheme Screen Qld/Clear Horizons partnership on practitioners with disabilities Screen NSW Screenability NSW program for practitioners with disabilities
Training co-developed with production companies	Training tailored to identified needs and linked to potential outcomes	FTI Get Your Foot in the Doc partnership with Prospero, Electric Pictures and Showrunners – training tailored to actual production needs (soon to extend into advertising) Foxtel/Goalpost writers' room placement
SUPPORTED CONTENT DEVELOPMENT – EARLY CAREER PRACTICE		
Creative collaborations and content partnerships	Experiential learning Good platform for emerging talent Concrete outcomes 'Calling card' creative product	Curious Creators "Islam I am" ABC/ICE/Jungle/Screen NSW emerging documentary call out ICE 'Custom Made' writers workshops and *My Life My Art* shorts by directors with disabilities Screenworks Createability short film program with ABC Open Screen NSW/ABC Open SEED: Regional Shorts for emerging practitioners in regional NSW – must include female key creatives

TYPES OF INITIATIVE	BENEFITS	EXAMPLES NB this is not an exhaustive list
Short film initiatives	Creates a 'calling card' and demonstrates creative talent	Screen Australia Hot Shots Screen Tas Indigenous short-form docs ScreenWest FTI Elevate 30 and Elevate 70 short film funding Screen NSW: GENERATOR Emerging Filmmakers Fund, projects must have female director
Online/multiplatform content support	Lower barriers to entry Develops audiences and feedback at early stages of creative practice	Screen Australia/YouTube Skip Ahead Curiousworks and AFTRS webisodes proposed initiative

INTERNSHIPS, ATTACHMENTS, PLACEMENTS AND FELLOWSHIPS – EMERGING PRACTITIONER OPPORTUNITIES

Internships	Early exposure to industry, adds value to other forms of learning	SBS – Macquarie University partnership for media students of CALD backgrounds
Mentorships	Two-way learning Development of understandings through interpersonal contact Deepening and extension of networks	SBS 2-way Indigenous leadership model SAFC MATCH-ME Mentorships for women CAAMA intensive mentorship model ICE/SPA Pitch Perfect practitioners participation in SPA 'Ones to Watch' program
Attachments	Builds relationships Provides on-the-job training Creates better understandings of particular aspects of production Credit outcomes Opportunities to prove talent	Screen Australia Gender Matters – Brilliant Careers ABC – requirements for CALD attachments on all scripted programs Screen NSW: requirements for attachments on all productions funded with more than $100,000 Screen NSW/AFTRS/AiMedia/Bus Stop Films/Carriageworks 'Screenability' production company attachments for practitioners with disabilities Screen NSW/Goalpost – attachments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners on *Cleverman* season 2
Placements	Exposure to a range of elements of production and screen business across active companies	FilmVic Company Placements SAFC Placement L.A. for women producers ICE paid placements for emerging writers and producers in production companies Screen Australia Talent Plus program for attachments, mentorships and overseas placements
Fellowships	Development of individual careers with a range of opportunities	Natalie Miller Fellowship FilmVic Women in Games Fellowship SHE Doc – Documentary Australia/Screen NSW/RØDE Microphones Fellowship for NSW female documentary makers

FUNDING AND DECISION-MAKING – EARLY TO MID-CAREER ACCESSIBILITY

Lowered barriers/waived eligibility for funding	Greater accessibility for talent from under-represented groups Recognition of non- traditional forms of learning	Screen Australia Brilliant Stories and Development Wild Card Screen Qld SVOD partnership call outs ICE Indigenous Screen Talent Escalator

TYPES OF INITIATIVE	BENEFITS	EXAMPLES
		NB this is not an exhaustive list
Funding decision-making and process reviews	Can uncover unconscious bias Ensures access	Screen NSW assessment processes with key creatives diversity checklist
Funding conditions	Inducement to ensure diversity of teams/provision of opportunity	Screen NSW: where project involves multiple writers or directors, must include women and projects including practitioners from under-represented groups prioritised Screen Australia Gender Matters, all feature and drama projects funded with over $500 must include female attachments above or below the line (to be included in the budget)
Targeted funding and call outs	Story support for new areas Opportunities for creative practitioners Inducement for collaborations	Screen Australia Indigenous Department funding ScreenWest targeted Indigenous funding Gender Matters Brilliant Stories
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORKING – THROUGHOUT CAREERS		
Professional development	Provides targeted finessing of skills for those already practicing Applicable skills development	Screen Australia Gender Matters Athena Project for regional female writers and directors (supported by states and territories) ICE and SPA Produce Perfect ScreenWest Emerging Producer Program Curiousworks cultural leaders program
Networking opportunities	Insights from others in industry Can build relationships in sector Peer-to-peer support outcomes Sense of community	Lotus Networking Screen ACT meet and greet events Hot Desk West at ICE for Screen Australia and ArtsLaw staff
Bespoke programs	Tailored to actual needs of participants	Screen Australia Indigenous Creative Producers Scheme
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT – THROUGHOUT INDUSTRY FOR ALL STAGES		
Cultural competency training	Builds awareness of cultural issues amongst industry workforce Long-term cultural shifts	SBS soon to launch "Cultural Competency' online resource ABC training guide for content divisions, *Diversity: The Whole Story* ABC *Cultural Diversity Tool* resources and Indigenous Cultural Awareness eLearning tool for staff
Targets	Creates accountability Trackable outcomes Set new industry benchmarks	Screen NSW gender targets ABC Equity and Diversity Plan targets ABC Stretch Reconciliation Plan MediaRING employment targets SAFC Aboriginal Screen Strategy targets + Gender Agenda targets
Diversity plans and strategies	Reviews of processes to ensure accessibility Encourages commitments tied to business outcomes	Reconciliation Action Plans Screen Qld Aboriginal and TSI strategy ScreenWest Indigenous strategy and planned Inclusion & Diversity plan (in development) SAFC Aboriginal Screen Strategy
Industry networks	Opportunities for shared data and learnings – success and issues Opportunities for partnerships	MediaRING Kultour/Diversity Arts Australia

3.2   GOOD PRACTICE IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

— *We mustn't do this because we 'should' or because the law says we have to.*

People with disabilities have amazing stories but 99% of the ways they are told is based on someone else's imagined experience of their lives. Given the opportunity, they will tell it differently. What they can tell us about what it means to be human and to live in a community is compelling. Imagine if we had an authentic lens on these issues. It might completely change our attitudes in society about who we are and how we live. That's why we have to address this – not because we think we should but because we selfishly want to experience those stories. (Veronica Pardo, Arts Access Victoria)

The following elements were identified by consultees for this report as good practice in the development of programs and initiatives in this area:

- Data tracking
- Consultation across target groups/with individuals on needs, aspirations and barriers
- Bespoke program development relevant to talent needs and context
- Starting in community spaces – running workshops etc. in target areas
- Ensuring participants are ready and supported, not just funnelled through
- Ensure that pathways are developed with clear next steps for talent progression
- Taking risks on creative outputs and ideas – avoiding the 'soft prejudice of low expectations'
- Partnerships and connections across industry, with shared ownership

- Mentorships and support from both peers and high level professionals
- Using past participants as mentors to bring the next cohort through
- Longer term nurturing, placements and attachments, including requirement for credits
- Developing production outcomes
- Leveraging industry relationships to create new opportunities for strong talent
- Tying into market needs – consult with industry about gaps and skills needs
- Prioritising job outcomes
- Encouraging steps into own independent production
- Evaluation and feedback from partners and participants
- Awareness of, and connections between, initiatives and opportunities across the industry
- An overarching structure to oversee and monitor progress.

3.3   GAPS

Some of the gaps identified in discussions of the initiatives across the industry included:

- Resources to support and scale-up programs
- Connections between emerging 'community-based' practice and professional industries
- Understandings about good practice in collaborations from both sides, including around IP
- Sources of support for early career practitioners
- The "what's next?" after each initiative, including next opportunities after attachments
- Initiatives targeting LGBTQI practitioners and people living with a disability
- Evaluations about what has and hasn't worked

- Well placed decision-makers with relevant expertise and cultural knowledge
- Good cultural awareness training
- Accessibility standards and protocols
- Relationships to KPIs and business outcomes
- Baseline data from which to set targets
- Information sharing across the industry.

— *It doesn't necessarily work to give people just a short window unless you can build on it. Often there's this gap. You're almost starting again if the next step is 6–8 months later. Things have been too short-term.* (Caroline Waters, Open Channel)

SPOTLIGHT: INDIGENOUS CREATIVE TALENT DEVELOPMENT

The development of Indigenous creative practitioners, from an extremely low base (with no Indigenous people in key creative roles in features or drama in the 1970s) to the success of today, was cited by many as an exemplary model for building up new talent into the sector.

Many of today's high-profile and successful practitioners came through targeted intakes into formal training. As Kyas Sherriff, Head of Indigenous, AFTRS notes:

— *AFTRS has proactively supported Indigenous practitioners through courses over the last few decades, training everyone from Rachel Perkins in producing to Erica Glynn, Ivan Sen, Adrian Wills, Steven McGregor and Darlene Johnson in directing to Warwick Thornton, Murray Lui and Allan Collins in cinematography, Dena Curtis in editing, Romaine Moreton and Catriona McKenzie in screenwriting and Beck Cole, Penny Smallacombe and Kelrick Martin in documentary. When you have a significant number going through they are all here studying to get practical knowledge and deep craft. These filmmakers have gone on to make huge contributions to the industry.*

Sally Riley ABC Head of Scripted Content, formerly AFC, describes the process at the agencies in the following way:

— *The AFC Indigenous Unit ran a call out for people, even those with no experience, and asked them to write up an idea for a short film for the short film initiative. Sometimes we needed to guide people through putting in an application. They were short-listed based on the idea, then we met them, and ran workshops involving writers and directors. Mentors were offered for 1:1 relationships. We ran plenaries and gave notes throughout. We had to develop craft skills: script writing, script layout, tone, dialogue. It was an intensive commitment, especially as many didn't live in Sydney. We made 20 short films out of initial workshops. It involved filmmakers – we brought in cinematographers, actors and directors. You have to develop more projects than you have funding for as some inevitably fall through. You then fully fund the projects through to production. You need to have broadcast outcomes, or festival selection. Long Black Features development had international mentors. We had strong support within the industry and from the agencies.*

Darren Dale, of Blackfella Films, speaking at the recent AFTRS 'Diversity Building a Platform for Change' event, noted of the model:

— *It takes money, and it takes commitment over years. You have to have an aspiration for excellence at the highest level. It can't just be box ticking. It has to be bold, audacious and risk-taking. A key element of the success of the Indigenous program was that there was real autonomy in how the money was spent.*

4 WHAT'S NEEDED

Consultations for this report, and research on international best practice, identified some elements for success that would be key to improving the diversity of the sector from a practitioner perspective. They included:

EDUCATION
Accessible entry
Practical training

NEW ENTRANTS
Wide call outs
Partnerships and collaborations
Calling cards

CAREER PROGRESSION
Credits and experience
Mentorships

MEASUREMENT
Diversity baseline
Information sharing

ORGANISATIONAL
Commitment
Targets
Awareness
Diversity plans

FUNDING
Eligibility reviews
Targeted funding
Resources

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT
New thinking around audiences

4.1 EDUCATION

Education Best Practice Research Recommendations – Olsberg·SPI:

– There has been a shift in focus from on-the-job training to formal education, which has created barriers for diversity groups entering the industry. This could be addressed in a number of ways including sponsored or assisted places, affirmative action in terms of applications to study at AFTRS or the like or shifting of entrance criteria to make formal education in the industry more accessible

– Adopting a model such as the AIME model designed for Indigenous students to progress, could also support a career pathway for under-represented groups in the industry

– The focus on academic rather than skills based education in this field has left graduates being perceived as over-qualified and under-skilled according to a recent Metro Screen survey completed by Australian producers. A focus on industry skills is obviously important for diversity schemes seeking to translate participants into the industry

– Support for a clearer, supported pathway through the industry that begins in the education system and fills the 'career wilderness' gap between entry to mid-level career pathways.

Best Practice in Approaches to Addressing Equity and Inclusion in the Screen and Broadcast Industries – Australian Findings

Accessibility

Educational organisations need to look at their own entry requirements, application processes, support mechanisms (including around practical barriers related to disability) and cost barriers when attempting to broaden student cohorts to include under-represented groups.

Practical training

It is important to create opportunities for on-the-job training, which is vital for relevant skills development and exposure to the workings of the industry. Many interviewees stressed the need for hot-house training and support through practical skills (including writing and producing) as these areas tend to initiate stories and could bring more diverse content to the fore.

— *Training. Formal training that is affordable. This training leads to networking and developing friends in the industry.* (Fadia Abboud, Arab Film Festival Australia and independent Filmmaker)

— *Many people may want to tell stories but they may have no craft skills. It's not just about what you want to say. The most valuable thing in this industry is to be a good or better writer, or, if you're a director, to work with better writers. If you can't develop that craft, you'll never get there – especially with longer form. No matter where you are in your career.* (Tony Ayres, Matchbox)

4.2   NEW ENTRANTS

New Entrants Best Practice Recommendations – Olsberg·SPI:

– Focussing funds on good industry based schemes in the form of placements, mentorships and work experience build on strong and ongoing industry partnerships

– Building a critical mass within an organisation to attract and retain participants, and build cultural safety to develop a feeling that participants belong there

– Continue to build good relationships within diverse community networks for finding new talent

– A number of new entrant schemes tend to focus on quality industry partnerships rather than in-house delivery of schemes; developing a new model of collaboration enabling career development around quality content creation giving participants industry/ production experience

– Developing schemes with deep industry links; industry-led schemes with pre-planned progression routes that will support new entrants to build networks

– Non-segregation of diversity groups within a grass roots community settings

– Bespoke, soft skill focussed and flexible schemes that can develop according to the needs of the end user, the community in which it is serving and the industry which it is about to serve

– Schemes that include a business element as well as a cultural element.

Best Practice in Approaches to Addressing Equity and Inclusion in the Screen and Broadcast Industries – Australian Findings

A wider net

Go beyond normal channels in seeking talent, promoting opportunities and recruiting – proactively build and use relationships into communities. This could include drawing new talent in from other areas, including online, theatre and other forms of creative practice. It is important to start early, including in schools – to spark interest and build ambitions via outreach and media training in schools.

— *You have to go out to the world and say "we want to hear from you" and then facilitate it. You must support it. You can't just say "tell us a story." You have to train people and give them help.* (Debbie Lee, Matchbox)

— *Online is easier because the barriers to entry are really low. That's where you started to see diverse creators start to kick off, like Natalie Tran and My Chonny about 5 or 6 years ago, because there weren't any gatekeepers that stopped you putting a video up on YouTube.* (Jordan Raskopoulos, digital content creator)

Partnerships + collaborations

Good practice in this area includes partnerships between organisations and groups with different capacities and networks to incubate new talent and support new forms of creative practice.

— *Our big strength is in community engagement, in working on projects with community partners.* (Barry Gamba, ICE)

— *We are keen to develop new forms of artistic collaboration, with concrete outcomes. This might be a web series, like the one we are looking at developing with the support of AFTRS. You need a vehicle to train people up and a platform to profile them to industry bodies.* (S. Shakthidharan, Curiousworks)

Calling cards

Emerging practitioners need to have the opportunity to make something to demonstrate their creative vision. In developing their own practice, they can begin to demonstrate talent and potential.

— *You have to have a calling card to demonstrate your voice. Until you've made something, you can't stand out. If you haven't made anything, how can you be judged? It could be a short film, a webisode, even a radio documentary. Some crack through, some don't.*(Debbie Lee, Matchbox)

4.3   CAREER PROGRESSION

Career Progression Best Practice Recommendations – Olsberg·SPI:

– Formalising career pathways through the industry led by one national agency and including a regional remit

– Defining key stakeholders, institutions and federal agencies taking the lead on building a career pathway infrastructure

– Furthering support in areas such as distribution, exhibition and technical roles

– Continuing the best practice already being done within the area of gender and step-up leadership schemes with Gender Matters funding

– Continuing the best practice around Indigenous representation in the workplace and developing this into unchartered roles within the industry. This has begun to happen with the recent Screen Australia attachment scheme with Indigenous placements in more technical roles.

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Credits and Experience

Internships and attachments can provide fantastic opportunities for career progression for practitioners that have already shown good potential. A key to success is to ensure internships and attachments are credited and meaningful.

— *There's some great stuff in the sector for emerging and established practitioners but there's a middle group people tend to fall into. For example, you do an ICE program, then an attachment, then what? You're never going to get funding if you don't have sufficient credits.* (Gary Paramanathan, Colourfest)

Professional Collaborators and Mentors

Significant professional development can be gleaned from collaborations with more experienced producers or practitioners. This can happen on a group basis, or one on one. There is also greater opportunity to build and profile existing diversity in creative organisations to inspire the next generation of entrants to the industry.

— *Mentors are really important. In setting up any model, you have to ensure there are mentors on hand, either on staff within the production company, or as contractors. They have to know it is part of their role to mentor and teach. Building training components into the budget is key.* (Nick Lee, CAAMA)

— *Role models are vitally important – I asked one of our new Chinese Australian playwrights why she had never tried writing for theatre before and she said "I never considered it. I don't know why: I already write, I go to the theatre. I just didn't think it was something I could do."* (Annette Shun Wah, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance)

Access to the industry and peer support

Networking opportunities can be vital to people feeling part of the sector and developing co-supportive relationships.

— *Networking. That has been hugely inspiring and significant for people on an individual level. It's important to find others trying to do similar things and to have access to the industry.* (Annette Shun Wah, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance)

— *Filmmakers need a network of people they can be openly supported by. They come in passionate but often they're the only one from their community, or feel like they are. We can help provide that network so people don't feel they're out on their own.* (Caroline Waters, Open Channel)

4.4   MEASUREMENT

Measurement Best Practice Recommendations – Olsberg·SPI:

– Constantly mapping the landscape and reworking strategy to ensure that the diversity of the Australian population is represented, especially at top level; using data such as the Scanlon Foundation's report as baseline data with which to compare

– Developing longitudinal measurement of workplace diversity in the industry such as the Creative Industries Employment Census in the UK

– Developing a scheme, such as Project Diamond in the UK, to measure off-screen diversity in TV across all major broadcasters

– Continuing to measure and monitor diversity at all levels within an organisation and ensuring that this is written into a rigorous organisational policy that has accountability and transparency

– Measuring funding applications and successful applications for funding

– Ensuring that sufficient resources are given to data collection, processing and analysis.

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Development of an industry diversity baseline

In order to understand how the industry is tracking on a range of measures of diversity, we need to develop baseline data on active practitioners. These could track, in particular, cultural backgrounds and disability status along similar models to gender and Indigenous practitioner statistics. Some data exists in a piecemeal way across the sector, but there is need for a major data set to be held and managed by a key agency.

Information-sharing

There was significant call across the industry for better information sharing between funding agencies, broadcasters, government and other parts of the sector on existing initiatives, their impact and key measures around diversity.

Responsive Evaluation

Measurement in this area should incorporate a range of forms of feedback to address unintended consequences and the actual impact on target communities over time. This information can feed into iterative program design

PROJECT DIAMOND – THE UK MODEL

Through the Cultural Diversity Network, the BBC, Channel 4, Channel 5, ITV and Sky, in conjunction with PACT and Creative Skillset, have worked together to develop Project Diamond, a new diversity monitoring system that will help broadcasters and producers increase the diversity of those working on and off screen in the British television industry.

Every individual working on or off screen on all UK-originated factual and scripted productions for the participating broadcasters are asked to add information on their gender, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity to a confidential, encrypted system. Production companies also enter information about the perceived diversity characteristics of on-screen characters and contributors – allowing the industry to monitor how people from different backgrounds and with different personal characteristics are portrayed on screen.

This aggregated, anonymized data is then used to monitor the diversity of the industry's workforce. An initial set of data will be released publicly by CDN in 2017, which will provide the first benchmark statistics on diversity. Subsequent, regular reports will have increasingly detailed levels of data as Diamond generates more complete and better quality information and as the volume of productions and individuals using the system and submitting information builds up. This will provide an increasing richness of diversity data, allowing broadcasters to track progress, and better focus their efforts to improve representation.

creativediversitynetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Diamond-launch-release-19-August-FINAL.pdf

4.5   ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Organisational Best Practice Recommendations – Olsberg·SPI:

- Implementing a rigorous organisational policy that measures and monitors, is transparent and accountable

- Adding inclusion to an existing diversity strategy. Inclusion is the deliberate act of welcoming diversity and creating an environment where all different kinds of people can thrive and succeed. There is a trend towards inclusion becoming a central part of any progressive diversity action plan

- Having a diversity role and self-elected committee within the organisation

- Linking an organisational diversity strategy to business goals and financial outcomes

- Implementing a rigorous organisational policy that takes on aspects of best practice.

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Clear commitment

The research for this report makes clear that organisations need to bring long-term thinking to objectives around industry change, with strong executive-level support. To be effective, organisations and their leaders need to commit to and be accountable for plans, initiatives and measures.

— *These issues tend to be embedded at too low a level in organisations. It gets brought in at a fairly low operational level. That person moves on. Then the program gets cut. We need to see commitment for this work. We can't have expectations that all outcomes will be delivered in the short term. CEOs need to talk publicly about this stuff – otherwise it can drop away.* (Veronica Pardo, Arts Access Victoria)

Targets

Targets and clearly stated ambitions around different forms of diversity are seen by many as essential to focusing energies and evaluating progress. Given the current lack of a baseline measure of practitioners across different forms of diversity, targets may be set around, for example, percentages of projects funded with creatives from under-represented groups attached. It is important to be aware of the practitioners' skills levels and tailor support and training accordingly to ensure they are not set up to fail.

— *Personally, I like targets. Targets can be a good thing, where they're based on a point system. If you're committed to stories that engage with diversity you have to shift how people think about their projects. You need to consider how you can strengthen a project proposal by highlighting its diversity assets.* (Barry Gamba, ICE)

— *Quotas and targets can be blunt instruments. They can lead to tokenistic outcomes can put people at risk by bringing them into programs when they aren't ready. But we need to be held to account. Otherwise we never really know how we're going. Targets can be good for a time, run in conjunction with other activities.* (Veronica Pardo Arts Access Victoria)

Diversity awareness among decision-makers

In order to address issues of conscious and unconscious bias, many suggested it is important to support decision makers critically evaluating their own practices in relation to diversity. Other pointed out that it is key to ensure greater diversity amongst people holding those roles inside organisations and to train talent up for management as well as creative practice.

— There aren't enough CALD people making decisions in key industry roles. You have to ask yourself the second question: Not just – "who can do this job?" But also – "can a person of a different background do it as well?" (Sally Riley, ABC)

— A mapping could be undertaken to understand critical decision-making points in an organisation or project where the choice to avoid the well-worn path is possible. An action plan (like the Disability Action Plan), identifying practical and attitudinal barriers and how they will be overcome, could be created, with funding contingent on adhering to it. (Esther Anatolitis, Regional Arts Victoria)

— We need to think about arming film agencies with skills to engage with people with disabilities – help with developing protocols and tips. It takes a lot more time and also a certain type of personality. You have to include their individual needs. You can't just say, "for disability we're going to do A, B and C" because everyone's needs are so different. (Monica Penders, Screen ACT)

Diversity Plans

In order to ensure that they are accessible, inclusive and relevant to under-represented groups, organisations need to look to themselves. This work requires significant leadership and an exploration of processes, culture and thinking through a new lens. There are many ways to do this. For example, many have advocated for the development of Cultural Diversity Action Plans and Disability Action Plans to formalise these processes. There may need to be, for example, innovations in ways people can apply for courses, attachments or funding to account for different levels of literacy or other barriers to entry into creative work.

— The sector needs help. Most of the people involved in the screen industry would be horrified to think they were discriminating or shutting people out. But many just don't know how to do it. The industry may not have that knowledge because it is such a white industry compared to so many other industries in Australia. (Lena Nahlous, Kultour/Diversity Arts Australia)

— We need both creative leadership and organisational leadership: together, they work. Attention to diversity within creative leadership will improve diverse art production, and in organisational leadership it will improve programming diversity and attention to both of these will improve professional dissemination of works by NESB artists. (Cecelia Cmielewski, WSU)

— We need to create a more inclusive culture across the media and find ways to bring more people from different backgrounds into our industry. This will bring different perspectives, forcing us to think and work differently. It won't always be easy, but without it we can't expect tangible change. (Helen Kellie, SBS)

Organisation-wide diversity

Many interviewed for this report also made the point that diversity throughout workforces and outside creative positions was really important to change perceptions of the industry.

— The seemingly monocultural nature of the industry can really disincentivise people from other backgrounds from becoming involved. It's really not welcoming – especially when you don't have the contacts. You need to have people in those spaces who are from culturally diverse backgrounds as well – even if they are in support positions. You can't just say "we can't find people". You have to find out why they're not participating. You have to train them up. (Lena Nahlous, Kultour)

— To change the levels of diversity in organisations, you have to recruit beyond the 'knowns' of pale, male and stale. (Bali Padda, MEAA Equity Diversity Committee)

— It doesn't only matter who you have on stage. The whole organisation needs to be reflective of diversity. You need to diversify bureaucracies. Marketing is really important. You have to have a mix in there of skill bases and language experts, people with some cultural understanding. They don't have to be of a particular background but they do have to get it. (Fotis Kapetopoulos, Kape Communications)

Recent international studies have looked at the data around organisational diversity initiatives and identified areas that are effective and some that may be counter-productive (see "Why Diversity Programs Fail: And What Works Better". *Harvard Business Review* July-August 2016).

DON'T WORK	DO WORK
✗ Compulsory training (negative impact)	✓ Collective ownership
✗ Controlling manager behaviour (resistance)	✓ Evaluation and monitoring
✗ Outlawing bias (doesn't work)	✓ Voluntary programs
✗ Hiring tests (too subjectively applied)	✓ Voluntary training
✗ Shared Performance ratings	✓ Mentoring
✗ Grievance procedures	✓ Task forces
✗ Shared self-assessments	✓ Diversity managers
	✓ Targeted recruitment

See section 5.2 of this report, Organisational Change Recommendations.

4.6   FUNDING

Funding Best Practice Recommendations – Olsberg·SPI:

– Devising creative ways to galvanise the leverage of public funds to affect diversity in the commercial sector

– Adopting a peer assessment strategy for funding applications

– Reworking assessment criteria to make them more accessible to under-represented groups.

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Funding that is accessible and tied to inclusion

Many suggested it would be important to free up eligibility requirements for targeted programs in order to recognise alternative forms of experience and practice outside traditional pathways.

— *Pathways into industry may not be formal pathways. They could be experiential learning outside the formal structures of the industry.* (John Kirkman)

Others suggested that public funding could be leveraged effectively to embed obligations around diversity – having a wider impact across the industry.

— *It's up to the funding agencies to lead this. State and federal subsidy determines whether projects get made or not. That gives us enormous power and leverage as government. We can realise significant and much-needed change.* (Courtney Gibson, Screen NSW)

In relation to practitioners living with disabilities, many advocates noted that it is important to allocate funds to support participation. This may include adjusting existing budget templates to include line items for specific needs such as disability access requirements.
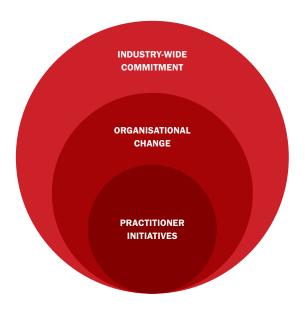
— *You need to start with the premise that you are going to develop a system that is inclusive. Access services can be expensive. Training institutions should budget for a student cohort with disabilities so the first conversation doesn't always have to be how to minimise costs. Access costs should be included as a line item in all budget templates.* (Veronica Pardo, Arts Access Victoria)

Resources

These initiatives take financial commitment and long term support to be effective. Within the context of constrained funding, this can be a major challenge.

— *Change would be welcome. But there are things you actually need to make it happen in meaningful way. It needs political and business will and the allocation of money. Money makes a lot of things happen. It's very hard to make significant impact in a reasonable amount of time when you don't have the right mechanisms in place to push something through with gravitas. Targets or quotas can be important, however unless there are mechanisms in place to make change happen, with defined paths and actions to drive the desired outcomes, it risks being a lot of talk rather than real progress.* (Jenni Tosi, Film Victoria)

5   SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has identified that change needs to happen on several levels in order to have an impact on career pathways. To develop the next cohort of skilled practitioners, there need to be a range of targeted initiatives, that are flexible and responsive enough to cater to different needs of practitioners from under-represented groups. For these practitioners to access crucial opportunities, funding and support at key stages of their careers, there needs to be a level of organisational change within key bodies and agencies across our industry. And for these to have an industry-wide impact, we need to build commitments, networks and resources across and between organisations in the sector that create a pathway for great new talent to flourish.

Effective responses to this issue will have to be industry-wide, long-term and adequately resourced. They will need to address opportunities, skills, organisational culture and career pathways. There are six key recommendations below for each of the levels of change required: practitioner initiatives, organisational change and industry-wide commitment.

5.1   PRACTITIONER INITIATIVES – RECOMMENDATIONS

**1 Consult on needs
[RESPONSIVE DESIGN]**

· Consult target groups and their representatives on their needs, aspirations and obstacles

· Ensure that individuals entering into initiatives and programs are adequately supported rather than set up to fail

**2 Build relevant skills
[TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES]**

· Ensure that entry into training and formal education is accessible to a diverse cohort of students, for example, via scholarships, open application processes and practical support

· Focus on practical training in key skill areas and concrete outcomes to equip graduates for industry needs

**3 Find new sources of talent
[CULTIVATING TALENT]**

· Go beyond normal pathways in seeking talent – advertise around initiatives and call outs in target media and via broad community networks

· Develop partnerships and collaborations with training and community-based organisations to create pathways for talent already practicing craft in some form

· Ensure that new entrants to industry get to develop their own creative practice early – making content in supported environments helps to identify talent and will give them a calling card to use as they seek their next step into the industry

**4 Proactively progress careers
[PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT]**

· Ensure attachment and internship opportunities build credits and experience – these can be hugely valuable in terms of real world experience and relationships but it is key that participants do more than fetch the coffee

· Encourage a culture of mentorships for two-way benefit

· Train talented people up for a range of roles, including as decision-makers

**5 Target funding
[PROJECT-LEVEL OPPORTUNITIES]**

· Target funding towards new initiatives that focus on a greater diversity of stories, talent and audiences

· Leverage public funding to influence the broader industry

**6 Create networking opportunities
[FORGING NEW RELATIONSHIPS]**

· Support peer-to-peer networking and opportunities for mutual support

· Offer regular, facilitated opportunities for connections between emerging and established practitioners.

5.2   ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS

**1   Commit (and mean it)
[LEADERSHIP]**

- Senior level involvement
- Personal and organisational commitment
- Ongoing engagement (asking
  the right questions)
- Build into expectations of performance
- Communicate the benefits of inclusion

**2   Own it together
[CULTURE]**

- Develop a task force of champions internally
- Offer and incentivise voluntary training
- Develop personal relationships
  through mentorship schemes
- Encourage exposure to different ideas
- Build diversity into work culture
  (actively seek out differing views)

**3   Make it possible
[PROCESSES]**

- Remove practical barriers (e.g. access,
  cost, location where possible)
- Allocate resources to initiatives
- Look at processes (recruitment,
  eligibility, decision making)
- Actively seek out diversity (where
  opportunities are promoted, use networks)
- Upskill existing workforce (with contacts,
  advice and structural support)

**4   Find and back talent
[PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT]**

- Recruit widely (e.g. look for aligned
  skills outside industry)
- Identify development opportunities
  within your organisation
- Ensure experiences are credited
- Build bespoke initiatives around
  skills gaps (e.g. developing writing)
- Get behind and 'hot-house' your talent

**5   Go beyond
[NEW THINKING]**

- Ask yourself the "second question" in
  decision-making ("Could someone from
  a different background do this as well?")
- Connect with communities and develop
  new partnerships – get their feedback
- Question assumptions about audiences and
  understand the diversity of your audience
- Back good people into decision-
  making roles within organisations

**6   Track change
[ACCOUNTABILITY]**

- Develop an industry and
  organisational baseline
- Set organisational targets
- Work measurement and
  evaluation into initiatives
- Be prepared to adapt approaches
- Continue to engage externally on barriers.

5.3 INDUSTRY-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Commit at senior-levels

- Clear signal of commitment from executives and leaders of organisations

- Commitment to initiatives, goals, targets and/or resources via e.g. Diversity Action Plans

2. Build data sets for industry tracking

- Develop project-by-project tracking of key creatives

- Whole of workforce surveys, as well as organisation-based recruitment and employment stats

3 Create an effective industry diversity network

- Convene an industry-wide network of influencers to meet regularly and share information on diversity issues

- Ensure the network has a clear role and agenda – i.e. to develop strategies and partnerships, share information and track impacts

- Incentivise linked up programs and industry collaborations

- Address barriers and industry gaps in an ongoing way

4 Forge new partnerships

- Develop new collaborations between organisations with different capacities and networks

- Focus on concrete outcomes, skills development and relationship building

- Build sector pipelines for strong talent out of initiatives, e.g. attachments or company placements emerging from training opportunities

5 Support an industry diversity advisory body

- Co-fund an industry advisory body of industry-savvy appointees with strong networks into under-represented communities. Their role would be to:

  – develop resources for the sector (e.g. accessibility guides for disability, guidelines on effective community engagement, contact directories for target practitioners)

  – provide policy advice and input into strategy (e.g. on Diversity Action Plans)

  – act in advisory capacity project-to-project as required

  – draw on existing models such as The Agency Circle (a new national regulatory body driving action in gender and diversity in the Australian communications industry), or Mindframe's national media and mental health initiative

6 Support sector-wide training

- Encourage and, where required, support the development of training on cultural engagement, disability needs and unconscious bias.

6   CONCLUSION

There is a lot of goodwill in the screen industry around making changes to improve diversity in the sector. The levels of engagement, passion and new approaches evident in the consultations for this report give great cause for optimism. There is wide-reaching recognition that existing pathways have not supported the full spectrum of Australian talent, and we are all poorer for it.

This is a competitive and challenging industry, and successful screen careers will always require a great deal of talent, strong craft skills and perseverance. The challenges practitioners from under-represented groups face in creating work tend to be familiar ones – they need access to resources, training and networks, as well as opportunities to prove themselves that are embedded in the industry and recognised by it.

However, unique barriers require bespoke approaches. In developing opportunities, we have to make sure they really make sense for the people they would seek to benefit – this often requires a level of tailoring and responsiveness. We have to think creatively about how to find new voices – including through lateral networks of creative practice (e.g. online creators, playwriting, technical roles) – and to consider what the next steps and opportunities could be for practitioners emerging from any initiative or program. We need to support people to be involved in production, via attachments, traineeships and internships, and to make their own work, with support from good mentors. We also need to ensure that there are platforms to profile that work to audiences, decision makers and talent spotters.

These ambitions are best achieved in partnership. No single part of the sector can solve this in isolation, and there are huge benefits in working collaboratively with others who have networks, skills and perspectives different to your own. Relationships go both ways, and the enrichment of engagement with unique perspectives, fresh ideas and new approaches to storytelling can offer personal, creative and commercial benefits to the whole industry.

Industry organisations need to look carefully at their own practices, processes and assumptions to ensure that real change occurs – from hiring practices and application forms to executive appointments and top level strategy. The more we engage with diversity, the more we hear different perspectives, the more we learn and the better we get at it.

We need to shift traditional perceptions of the make-up of Australian screen audiences and their appetites for diversity. We live in one of the most diverse nations on earth, and our failure to have faith in the appeal of stories outside the traditional mainstream is holding us back.

Real change will take time, risk, resources and ongoing learning and flexibility. It will require a lot of partnership, collaboration and shared knowledge across the sector. It is hoped that the recommendations in this report enable us to take the first steps on the path to a more inclusive, relevant and vibrant industry. We will all be richer for it.

7   ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report continues the conversation on diversity in Australia's screen industries from a range of recent commentary and publications. It draws on a range of published and unpublished research, including:

- Screen Australia 2016 *Seeing Ourselves: reflections on diversity in TV drama* 2016

- Australian Human Rights Commission 2016 *Leading for Change: A blueprint for cultural diversity and inclusive leadership*

- UNESCO/Australia Council 2015 *Promoting Diversity of Cultural Expression in Arts in Australia*

- Metroscreen 2015 *Emerging Visions: Career Pathways in the Australian Screen Production Industry*

- "Why Diversity Programs Fail: And What Works Better". *Harvard Business Review* July-August 2016

- Olsberg·SPI *Best Practice in Approaches to Addressing Equity and Inclusion in the Screen and Broadcast Industries.* October 2016.

This report does not present a comprehensive canvas of all perspectives on these issues, but engages with a range of views from different parts of the sector. Thanks are due to the following interviewees and contributors:

- Neil Peplow (AFTRS)
- Liz Hughes (AFTRS)
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- Caitlin Newton-Broad (Curiousworks)
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- Veronica Pardo (Arts Access Victoria)
- Sofya Gollan (Accessible Arts)
- Caroline Waters (Open Channel)
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- Annette Shun Wah (Contemporary Asian Australian Performance)
- Jordan Raskopoulos (digital content creator)
- Annie Murtagh-Monks (FTI)
- Nick Lee (CAAMA)
- Bali Padda (Equity Diversity Committee, MEAA)
- Pearl Tan (Equity Diversity Committee, MEAA)

Additional consultations were conducted by the Olsberg·SPI team in developing their research: *Best Practice in Approaches to Addressing Equity and Inclusion in the Screen and Broadcast Industries. A research report for the Australian Film, Radio and Television School.* October 2016. They included:

- Christina Alvarez, Engagement Manager, AFTRS
- Kingston Anderson, CEO, Australian Directors Guild
- Mireille Astore, Librarian, AFTRS
- Donald Iain Brown, Head of Talent and Change, BBC Scotland
- Isabel Castro, Deputy Executive Director, Eurimages' Gender Study Group
- Pauline Clague, Producer
- Ken Crouch, General Manager, Screenworks
- Darren Dale, Managing Director/Producer, Blackfella Films
- Madeline Di Nonno, CEO, Geena Davis Institute
- Kate Dundas, AFTRS Council, AFTRS
- Ramy El-Bergamy, On Screen Diversity Manager, Channel 4
- Barry Gamba, Producer, ICE
- Courtney Gibson, CEO, Screen NSW
- John Gill, CEO, National Screen Institute Canada
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- Anna Mansi, Head of Certification, BFI
- Kelrick Martin, Indigenous Manager, ScreenWest
- Sue Maslin, Producer/Founding Member, Natalie Miller Fellowship
- Phillipa McDermott, Head of Indigenous Employment and Diversity, ABC
- Rebecca Mostyn, Research Manager, Screen Australia
- Tanya Mukherjee, Acting CEO, Project Diamond
- Lena Nahlous, CEO, Kultour
- Hatice Ozdemirciler, Head of Training and Professional Development, Independent Cinema Office (UK)
- Bali Padda, Equity Diversity Committee, MEAA
- Kyas Sheriff, Head of Indigenous, AFTRS
- Julianne Schultz, Chair, AFTRS
- Alessia Sonaglioni, Network Director, European Women's Audiovisual Network
- Anna Serner, CEO, Swedish Film Institute
- S. Shakthidharan, Executive Artistic Director, Curious Works
- Dan Simmons, Head of Partnerships, Creative Skillset
- Penny Smallacombe, Head of Indigenous, Screen Australia
- Caitlin Vaughan, Cultural Engagement Framework Facilitator, Australia Council for the Arts
- Nigel Warner, Co-Founder, Creative Access