

HOW WE WORK NOW

Learning from the Impact of COVID-19 to Build an Industry that Works for Parents and Carers



Raising Films
www.raisingfilms.com



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Learning from the Impact of COVID-19 to Build an Industry that Works

How We Work Now is a survey-based report from Raising Films, supported by our five funding partners: the BFI using National Lottery funding, The National Lottery and the Scottish Government through Screen Scotland, The Screen Industries Growth Network, Bectu and the Writers' Guild of Great Britain.

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The survey and report were compiled by the How We Work Now Research Collective, which includes Dr. Jenny Chamarette, Louise Luxton, Dr. So Mayer and Dr. Ania Ostrowska, with input from the Raising Films team: founders Nicky Bentham, Hope Dickson Leach, Line Langebek, and Jessica Levick, project manager Katy Swarbrick and comms team Oli Gots and Sally Hodgson. The How We Work Now report and resources were designed by Rachel Lipsitz.

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Screen Industries Growth Network



THE WRITERS' GUILD

FOUNDERS PREFACE:

There's A Better Life

You spoke and we listened.

You told us how hard it's been and how you're ready to give up. How caring for others makes the challenges of freelance life untenable. When we founded Raising Films in 2015 we identified that the industry wanted workers, but it didn't want our caring responsibilities. You're telling us – and



The Raising Films team 'working remotely' during lockdown

we're seeing – that's one of many, often interlocking, parts of who we are and how we work that the industry doesn't want, and still struggles to accept: race, class, gender and ability are all made into barriers where they should be welcomed.

But we see you too. We see you finding ways to create. To nurture and celebrate the work being made. To contribute to our screen industries and cultures in a way that makes them richer, deeper and more urgent. We see you fighting to tell your stories whilst fighting to care for others.

And we see that the industry is not listening. It is failing you whilst at the same time demanding your voices, your vision, your talent and your dedication.

We are here to tell your stories and to forge a coalition of care alongside those organisations who are committed to changing our screen industries. As the cry for better working practices becomes louder, we understand that the fight must be taken beyond our industry to legislation that will force employers to enact these better practices.

We are here with you. We are not done. This is how we work now.

In solidarity,

Nicky Bentham, Hope Dickson Leach, Line Langebek, Jessica Levick, So Mayer
(the founders of Raising Films)

METHOD NOTE:

Use Your Mind

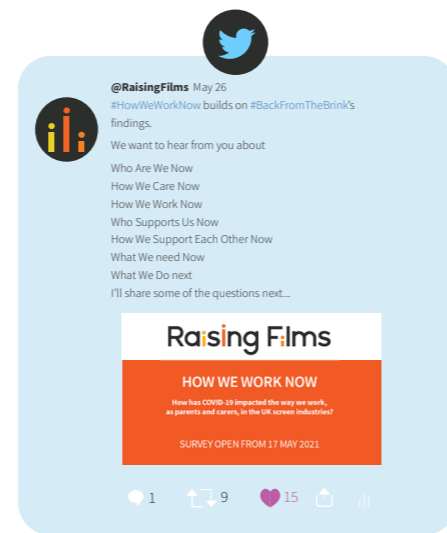
Survey structure and dissemination

The survey design was rooted in previous Raising Films participant-led research, bringing together the findings of our 2020 scoping study *Back from the Brink* with the community-led approaches of our prior surveys *Making It Possible* (2016) and *We Need to Talk About Caring* (2018), which was co-designed with Carers UK. Using a balance of quantitative and qualitative questions, *How We Work Now* aimed to solicit a narrative of change across time that acknowledged the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic while assessing whether the pre-pandemic situation had been working for parents and carers. The survey asked participants to reflect on 2019-20 and 2020-21 and to envisage 2022, in order to identify breakpoints and propose practical medium-term and long-term solutions for equality and inclusion. We consulted on the survey design with our funding partners BFI, Creative Scotland and SIGN.

The survey was launched via Raising Film's Twitter, Instagram and newsletter (904 subscribers) on 17 May 2021, paralleling the date that cinemas in England re-opened. All five of our funders disseminated the survey call via their newsletters, as did the Shiny Network (7k subscribers), Equal Access Network via Film London (2k+ members), British Film Designers Guild, TimesUP (UK edition) and Women in Film and Television UK, with those organisations and many more – including BIFA, Casarotto, Creative England, Directors UK, Dreyra Media, Film Access Scotland, Film Hub North, Film Hub Midlands, Film Hub Scotland, Independent Cinema Office, LOCO Film Festival, London Film School, London Short Film Festival, Look Beyond the List, Network FHM, Northern Ireland Screen, PiPA, Screen Scotland, ScreenSkills, Shakyra Dowling Casting, Sheffield Doc/Fest, Wigan and Leigh Short Film Festival and The WonderWorks – sharing the survey on social media throughout its five week duration, using the #HowWeWorkNow hashtag.¹

Raising Films followed the launch with a Twitter thread on 26 May 2021² explaining the survey process and resources.

Closing on 5 July 2021, the survey received 484 responses, a sizeable number. Looking at respondent demographics we see that our sample is primarily made up of white, heterosexual, female caregivers that live in London and the southeast. While no official demographic statistics exist to assess whether our sample is reflective of the sector, we find our sample to be of a similar makeup to other industry research. With a very low response rate from non-caregivers (~1%), there is no control group with which to compare our results.



Data Analysis

Certain limitations to the methodology and analysis should be noted, both to provide transparency in our reporting and to inform future research. The survey allowed respondents to skip questions without providing an answer, meaning that each question has a different number of responses. This limits our ability to make direct comparisons across questions. While this report presents only descriptive data using percentage figures to allow general trends to be observed, direct comparison across questions would require statistical measures for any firm conclusions to be drawn. Furthermore, after disaggregation into cohorts (and because respondents had the ability to skip questions), sample sizes become much smaller and thus less significant in denoting general experiences and perceptions among cohorts. We therefore only report on questions for which there is a reasonable sample size and we provide n numbers in all tables and figures.

The survey asked respondents a number of demographic questions as one of our key aims in this research was to gain insight into how different groups, particularly those with protected characteristics, are differentially impacted. Data from demographic

questions were recoded from many categories to generate typically binary variables, e.g. 'Carer' and 'Non-carer'. As such, a trade-off was made between the granularity of the raw data and the ability for us to report the demographic data in a clear and easily interpretable manner. Our survey also includes a number of write-in questions for respondents to relate their individual circumstances and opinions, allowing us to supplement the quantitative cohort data with rich anecdotal data. The qualitative write-in data was used both to shape the overall narrative and outcomes of the study, and to generate composite narratives relating to overall headlines and cohort data.

Social class is one demographic that was not included in our questions but which was commented on by a small but significant number of respondents in write-in answers. We did not ask respondents about social class within demographic data due to the methodological difficulties of measuring class that have been noted in Dr Susan Oman's research for Arts Council England.³ Instead, Question 41 asked respondents about their annual income 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. After initial review of the data revealed trends by income, responses to this question was recoded into three income brackets (£0-£19,999, £20,000-£49,999, £50,000+) and we include reporting on 'low income workers' in our case studies. Income cannot be used as a direct measure of social class, but the significance of our findings in this cohort indicate that future research should include income and/or class as key cohorts.

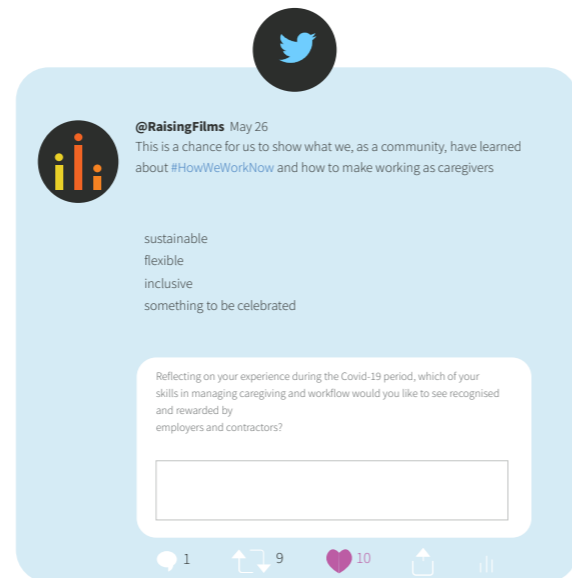
¹ https://twitter.com/search?q=%23HowWeWorkNow&src=typeahead_click&f=live

² <https://twitter.com/RaisingFilms/status/1397569171806986246>

³ Dr Susan Oman, 'Improving data practices to monitor inequality and introduce social mobility measures – a working paper for the cultural sector'. Report. The University of Sheffield, 2019. <https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/160417/>

CONCLUSION

Data analysis for *How We Work Now* provided particular evidence of the need to attend to multiple cohorts within the data, in this particular case to factors of socio-economic precarity. *How We Work Now* entered an urgent and busy field of COVID-19 related research and reporting: into the creative and cultural industries workers; and among parents and carers. Two other reports crossed both those axes: *Locked Down and Locked Out - TV Mums in Covid* by Share My Telly Job with the University of Nottingham (2021), and Parents in Performing Arts' COVID Report (2020). Our informal conversations with SMTJ, PiPA and grassroots labour organisations in the CCIs reveal a need for a regular forum in which researchers can share and compare both methodological approaches and key findings, towards establishing best practice and collectively pushing for change.



INTRODUCTION:

Barely Getting By

Let us state what should be the obvious: COVID-19 has had an enormous, substantially negative impact for all caregivers on their ability to work safely, healthily and securely. The Citizen's Advice report *An Unequal Crisis* identifies that carers are more than twice as likely to be facing redundancy compared to the general working population.⁴ An Office for National Statistics (ONS) survey of over 22 million people found that 17.9% of respondents cited childcare responsibilities as impacting their ability to work during the first lockdown.⁵ The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS)'s study of 3,500 families across multiple UK sectors in May 2020

⁴ Citizen's Advice, 'An unequal Crisis: Why workers need better enforcement of their rights', August 2020

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jan/10/labour-asks-for-more-help-for-working-parents-in-england-lockdown>

demonstrates that working women are being made redundant or losing contracts and opportunities at a higher rate than men.⁶

The burden of caring responsibilities remains gendered, with a concomitant gendered impact on employment. The Global Institute for Women's Leadership reported in Sept 2020 that "The career cost of the pandemic is likely to have a long-lasting impact, especially for women, who may be unable to take up promotions and more demanding roles while they are shouldering the responsibility of unpaid care work," with women more vulnerable to redundancies.⁷ Tracy Warren's research, in collaboration with the Women's Budget Group, shows that in the UK "Women were far more likely than men to reduce their hours or adapt work schedules because of the time being spent in childcare/home-schooling (by June 2020)."⁸ Warren's work importantly also shows a class distinction, with workers of all genders employed in managerial roles far more able to access flexible working arrangements.

Yet thus far these impacts of caregiving have gone largely unreported in screen industry COVID research and briefings. Raising Films is part of an emerging platform of research on COVID, caregiving and the screen sector, which includes recent reports by Share My Telly Job and the University of Nottingham on mothers working in television, *Locked Down and Locked Out - TV Mums in COVID*, the Film and Television Charity's (FTC) 2020 report on film and television workers at risk of hardship, and the work of Creative Access.⁹

Our April 2021 scoping study, *Back from the Brink* identified a 'cascade effect' experienced by parents and carers, where day to day uncertainty about work and caregiving resulted in severe psychological and economic stress.¹⁰ *How We Work*

⁶ <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/14861>

⁷ Global Institute for Women's Leadership, 'Future-focus: How can workplaces evolve for parents / carers in a post-Covid world?', Sept 2020, p.18. <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/giwl/assets/future-focus.pdf>

⁸ Warren, T. and Lyonette, C. (2020) 'Carrying the work burden of the Covid-19 pandemic: working class women in the UK, Briefing Note 2: Housework and childcare' (December). Working Paper No 2020/2 (14-12-20), Nottingham University Business School,

⁹ See Dr Natalie Wreyford, Professor Helen Kennedy, Dr Jack Newsinger and Dr Rowan Aust, *Locked Down and Locked Out: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mothers working in the UK television industry*. Institute for Screen Industries Research, University of Nottingham, 2021; Natalie Wreyford and Shelley Cobb, *No One Left Behind: Identifying Film and Television Workers Most at Risk of Hardship as a Result of Covid-19*, Film and Television Charity, 2020; and Creative Access, *On the Verge: The impact of coronavirus on underrepresented communities within the creative industries*, 2020

¹⁰ 'Back From the Brink: A Scoping Study. Addressing the impacts of COVID-19 reported by parents and carers working in the UK screen sector', March 2021.

Now presents the largest screen sector survey on the experiences of parents and carers to date. Its findings emphasise how urgently the screen sector needs to take action in order to make living and working in the post-COVID screen sector a viable career-long option for all.

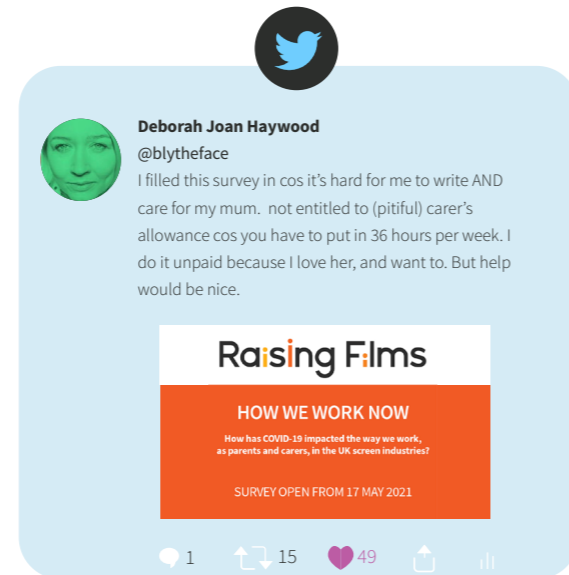
This much we know: how we work now isn't working. It isn't working for anyone.

But for parents and caregivers in the screen industries, it really isn't working – and for those on low incomes, single parents, and those living in non-urban regions, the situation gets exponentially worse.

But COVID-19 and its associated effects had a huge impact on caregivers, and not just because of government policy, and for population demographics that cross all industries. These negative impacts have been exacerbated by specific labour practices across the screen sector, including cultures of long working hours (in production and exhibition in particular); precarious contracts and unclear rates of pay; lack of flexibility in working hours and locations; unequal pay across all axes of exclusion; lack of transparency and accountability in hiring and HR; and a lack of emphasis on retention and sustainable careers across the sector.

We couldn't think of a better way to express our findings than by quoting lyrics from Dolly Parton's anthem '9 to 5' to title our report sections. The song's title, however, is additionally an ironic indictment of the long hours, weekends and evenings working conditions in the screen industries that act as a barrier to many parents and carers who may need a nine-to-five structure to ensure they can accomplish their caregiving responsibilities.

These sector-specific working conditions can only be addressed by substantive structural change to hiring, HR and employment practices, that recognise that narratives of "choice" and agency about freelancing (e.g. I can choose where to work/for whom/for how much) are in practice available only to the very few. These



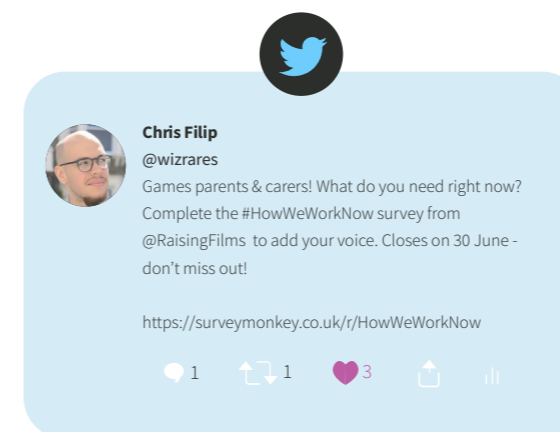
changes are needed to address the perpetuation of multiple axes of exclusion. By this we mean the experiences of parents who are also ethnic minority, non-cis-gendered, non-heterosexual, carers, single parents, disabled, or on low incomes. Our report specifically highlights the significantly worse experiences of parents and carers who have experienced multiple exclusions, whether through their lower household income, single parent households, status as a carer, or regional or rural location.

Working in the screen sector is not a privilege, and nor is being a parent or carer.

Neither role should be treated as such. If they are, then these choices only become available (individually, but especially in combination) to those with existing privilege.

This is palpable in the low percentage of Black, Asian and minority ethnic respondents to our survey, which mirrors the percentage reported in Parents in Performing Arts' 2020 survey. This speaks to the socio-economic double bind that excludes Black, Asian and minority ethnic parents from the film industry, and may also exclude some Black, Asian and minority ethnic film industry workers from considering parenthood while in the industry, not least because they do not see themselves represented and included within the community of parents and carers.

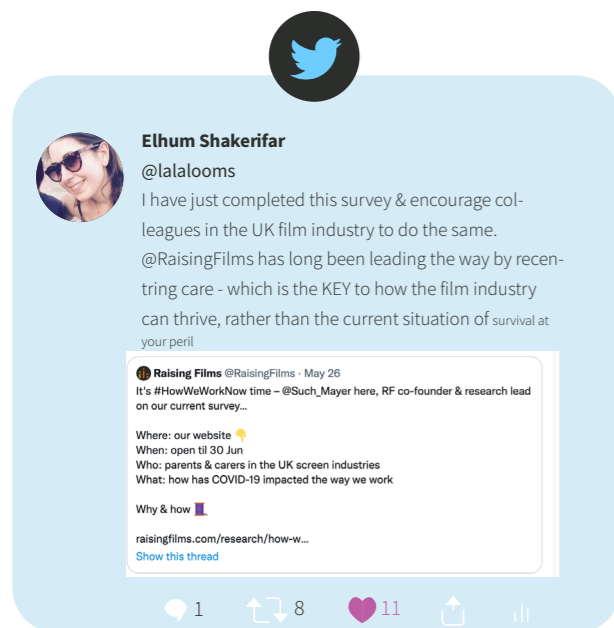
The screen sector in the UK continues, both on-screen and in media coverage, to represent parenthood as motherhood, and to characterise motherhood as white, heteronormative, middle class and able-bodied. This contributes to the exclusion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic parents and carers who do work in the screen sector



from participating in a discussion marked by the concerns of those with more social and economic privilege. Our aim is inclusion for all: hence our framing that the industry is not working for anyone with caregiving responsibilities, while recognising that this has an intersectional, exponential effect.

Even those workers who fit the dominant characterisation of parenthood in UK screen media, including those in higher income brackets with salaried jobs and housing security, are facing increased mental health impacts from changes to childcare,

schooling, and care arrangements, exacerbated by inflexible working practices in the industry that do not attend sufficiently to industry, organisation and business obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The findings from the Film and TV Charity's



Looking Glass research in 2019 reported 87% of the screen industries workforce have experienced a mental health problem and this is borne out by our findings, with 63% of respondents saying that their primary reason for exiting the screen industries in 2021-22 would be because working in film and television “is too stressful.”

In short, working as a parent or carer under COVID is not working for anyone. In order to make meaningful, impactful

change that helps everyone, it is vitally important that we address the needs of those who are most vulnerable. As Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (co-founders of The Equality Trust) identify, more equal societies bring with them the associated benefits of better physical and psychological health, including social cohesion and trust, for all.¹¹ By addressing those most excluded, we bring every body with us, creating the greatest positive impacts for all.

Context

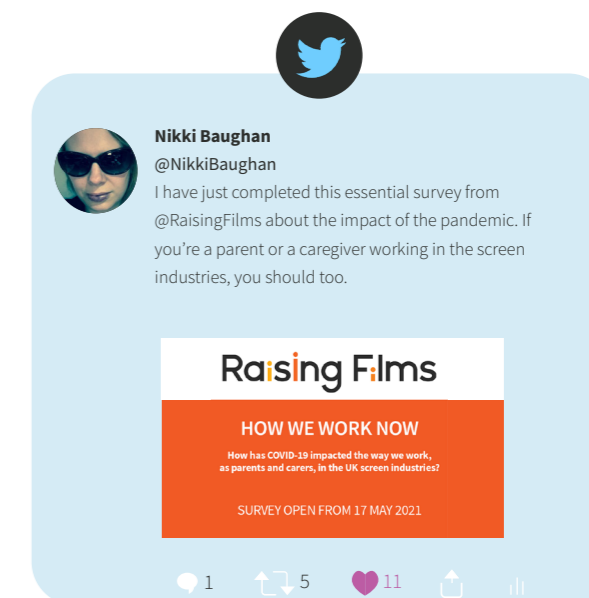
Our digital communications campaign, #HowWeWorkNow, launched on 17 May to publicise the opening of the *How We Work Now* survey, via Raising Films Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and newsletter, and with supportive messaging from our funders, partner organisations and allies to ensure dissemination across nations and regions, as well as all roles and sub-sectors of the screen industries. Even before we accessed the anonymised data when the survey closed on Monday 5 July, we saw personal and passionate reactions online drawing attention to the significance of our research – for example, from writer-director Deborah Joan Haywood, producer Elhum

¹¹ Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Inner Level: How More Equal Societies Reduce Stress, Restore Sanity and Improve Everyone's Well-being*. London: Penguin, 2018.

Shakerifar, Game Anglia co-founder Chris Filip, and film critic Nikki Baughan.

Until May 2021 no sector-specific research had been conducted into the experiences of parents and caregivers during COVID, bar our scoping study *Back from the Brink*. However, the launch of *How We Work Now* also co-incided with research at the University of Nottingham in collaboration with Share My Telly Job on the experiences of mothers working in television (*Locked Down and Locked Out - TV Mums in COVID*), and at the University of Bournemouth, who released their annual *State of Play* report on employment in television.¹² The Film and Television Charity launched a research survey related to COVID, which included questions concerning the experiences of parents in the sector, and Creative Access reported on working situations for under-represented and excluded workers in the screen industries in 2020, with evidence that contrasted with ScreenSkills' overall positive outlook.¹³

Amid this sudden influx of research, and on top of the demands they were already experiencing, it is no surprise that parents and carers have had limited energies to participate. This has in some cases been exacerbated by the risk that bringing up the recent past can be traumatic and painful, particularly when times have been so difficult. *How We Work Now* was designed with these issues in mind: that parents and carers have limited time to offer, may need support in responding, especially when sharing painful stories. Rather than continually rehearsing traumatic stories, our respondents indicated that they want to see solutions and actions undertaken by industry designed to resolve the difficulties they have been experiencing – and in many cases, addressing without support.



¹² Christa van Raalte, Richard Wallis, and David Pekalski, *State of Play 2021: Management Practices in UK Unscripted Television*, University of Bournemouth, 2021.

¹³ Film and TV Charity, *Looking Glass Survey 2021*, Creative Access, *On the Verge*, 2020; Screenskills Assessment 2021. <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/why-we-exist/better-mental-health/looking-glass-survey-2021/>;

Across the creative and cultural industries and the arts, COVID reporting has begun to emerge from campaigning and grassroots organisations. Our sister organisation PiPA (Parents and Carers in Performing Arts) published their COVID report in October 2020, and identified that 72% of its survey respondents were considering abandoning their career in the Performing Arts.¹⁴ PiPA particularly identified parents and carers from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, d/Deaf, disabled or those living with long term chronic illness, solo parents and carers, and Black, Asian and ethnically diverse respondents as being more likely to leave the sector. We Shall Not Be



Removed, the disability arts alliance formed in 2020, reports in its 2021 survey that only 7% of its survey participants were employed on full time salaried work, while over half did not or were unable to access government or Arts Council funded financial support during the pandemic, and a further third had experienced homelessness during the pandemic.¹⁵

Across all industries, Pregnant Then Screwed's childcare survey in July 2020 uncovered that 74% of self-employed female parents have had their earning potential reduced because of a lack of access to childcare.¹⁶

Stating the obvious?

Reporting from the Office for National Statistics and the Institute for Fiscal Studies have made very clear the impact of caregiving responsibilities on employment, health and wellbeing. The Centre for Labour and Social Studies has identified the highlighting, exacerbating and intensifying effects of COVID on the existing failings, features and trends of our working lives, economy and society.¹⁷ The problems of the gulf in support for parents and caregivers in the screen sector were not created by COVID: they existed long before. There is a mounting pile of evidence-based research that demonstrates this, and anecdotal data is widespread – so why do we have to

¹⁴ PARENTS AND CARERS IN PERFORMING ARTS (PIPA) COVID REPORT, October 2020.

¹⁵ UK Disability Arts Alliance 2021 Survey Report: The Impact of the Pandemic on Disabled People and organisations in Arts & Culture, Compiled by Alistair Gentry, Edited by Andrew Miller, May 2021

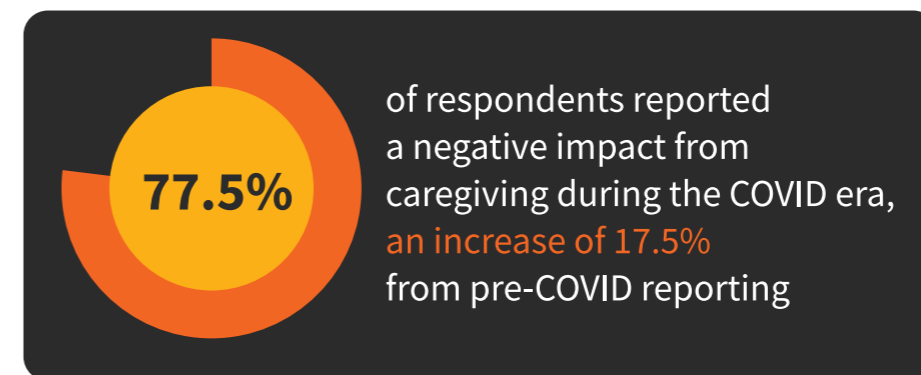
¹⁶ Pregnant Then Screwed Childcare Survey 2020, <https://pregnantthenscrewed.com/the-covid-crisis-effect-on-working-mums/>

¹⁷ Paddy Bettington, Work in 2021: A Tale of Two Economies, Centre for Labour and Social Studies, May 2021

state the obvious?

COVID has made the crisis of care more obvious and more visible. Some of the impacts of this crisis – particularly those on white-collar working mothers – have been widely discussed, although few strategic solutions have been offered. Stopgap solutions such as furlough, SEISS, and flexible and remote working have been demonstrated to replicate existing inequalities, for example with Pregnant Then Screwed pursuing a legal case against the Chancellor for indirect sex discrimination in the calculation method of SEISS, which did not factor in maternity pay.¹⁸ These inequalities are now exacerbated by additional, asymmetrically-distributed pressures to return to face-to-face working, which are particularly acute in front-facing roles in production and exhibition. Even when hybrid and/or remote working is possible and retained, there are still risks and challenges, for example 'virtual presenteeism' and employer surveillance through digital communications technologies while working from home, highlighted by Prospect's campaign for 'the right to disconnect' for a fairer work/life balance.¹⁹

COVID has also shown that viable, long term solutions for all are needed, designed with careful forethought and planning, with inclusion factored in from the ground up. The stopgap solutions provided during the first lockdown were precisely



that: depending on kneejerk responses from organisations and industries at a time of crisis is unlikely to yield beneficial long-term results. Since COVID continues to disrupt

daily life, and presages further global disruptions wrought by climate crisis, it is vital that we plan ahead: this makes financial and social sense.

The impact of COVID-19 on UK working parents and carers has highlighted socio-economic and legal barriers to equality that transcend any one industry. At policy

¹⁸ <https://pregnantthenscrewed.com/were-threatening-legal-action-against-the-chancellor-for-indirect-sex-discrimination/>

¹⁹ <https://prospect.org.uk/news/right-to-disconnect/>

level, the Labour Party's 'new deal for working people' has placed shared parental leave for all and an end to 'false' freelance status firmly in the mainstream,²⁰ and aligns with the TUC's campaign with Mother Pukka for flexible working for all, which also introduces the idea of paid carers' leave. As well as backing the TUC campaign



and shared parental leave,²¹ Pregnant then Screwed have called for legislation that recognises freelance and self-employed parents, properly subsidised childcare from when a child is six months old, and childcare that works for parents in receipt of Universal Credit.²² The IFS reported severe COVID-related challenges facing the paid childcare sector in the U.K.²³

While these overarching issues cannot be addressed by the screen industries alone, we believe that it is in the industry's collective power – and also collective interest – to create structural and systemic change. Through changing how we work now as an industry, we can come together to tell stories that represent – and even change – how we work now across the UK. The ongoing "crisis of care" – in which both paid and unpaid caring work is undervalued and feminised, classed and raced – harms everyone, as COVID has demonstrated. When care work is outsourced to a precariously employed care sector (as it has been in order to support parents in the workplace), this is already a fragile social and economic ecosystem on which to depend. COVID comprehensively broke what was already unsustainable.

It should also be stating the obvious that there are no magic bullets or mystery solutions that will address or fit the needs of every parent and carer in the sector, nor will one solution solve every aspect of the crisis of care. *How We Work Now* amply demonstrates the cascading crisis that participants experienced when they had more than one marginalised or protected characteristic, particularly those from lower incomes, single parents, carers, and those living in non-urban locations, making it less

²⁰ <https://labour.org.uk/issues/campaigns/a-new-deal-for-working-people/>

²¹ <https://www.megaphone.org.uk/petitions/stronger-legal-rights-to-flexible-working>

²² <https://pregnantthenscrewed.com/campaigns/>

²³ <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/14990>

likely that they would have infrastructural support such as partner incomes and/or savings. And while the harm to all is rooted in the same structural and systemic issues (including most notably the perpetuation of gendered employment practices, including unequal access and unequal pay, across the sector, which can highlight or reinforce domestic inequality in heterosexual couples) everyone's experience of that harm is different depending on their social location and privilege.

The direction of conversation must change. *How We Work Now* makes it abundantly clear that inclusion in the screen industries is not a matter of success and seniority. There is in-work poverty in our community that requires urgent redress, and it cannot be resolved by a 'lean in' emphasis on individuals. The abiding elitism of the screen industries is being perpetuated by endemic socio-economic exclusionary tactics such as unpaid internships, deferred payments, and freelancerisation, including zero-hours and short-term contracts. Looking at the experiences of parents and carers highlights the fact that the exclusion affecting all workers with protected characteristics is rooted in structural and systemic inequality in HR and hiring, from how jobs and contracts are advertised to how they are paid and supported. Inclusion has to begin and be rooted in organic, structural change to hiring and working practices, with mechanisms for accountability to ensure that access is not a lottery.

We need a 'lean out' organisational and industry-wide responsibility for its community, which includes caregivers: this requires managerial training that goes beyond 'unconscious bias' to include accountability for the legal and financial responsibilities of all employers and contractors. Both individuals and grassroots organisations have been stating clearly what is needed for a long time. We need long-term change, systemic interventions, and changes of culture and practice. And we need them now.



Structural and Systemic Change

How We Work Now amplifies what we already know: what's needed is for the industry to **listen to what has already been said and draw on grassroots solutions and practices to undertake structural and systemic change to support the most vulnerable for the long-term.**

As evidenced from decades of research by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett and organisations like The Equality Trust, inequality damages everyone. Failures to support the most vulnerable workers in the sector affects all levels of employment throughout the screen industries' "talent pipeline", creating skills shortages at all levels: entry-level candidates are dissuaded and excluded, while skilled workers are lost due to the lack of support and recognition for caregivers and caregiving leave. Failures to support caregivers on low-incomes, those from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds, disabled workers and those living with chronic illness will only widen existing skills shortages. Just as the structural and systemic problem of exclusion applies in education and training, so too does it continue when accessing entry-level employment in the sector. This has a substantial effect on sustained participation in the workforce and sector retention, meaning that entry-level diversity schemes are stopgaps rather than long-term solutions. Without hearing the voices of the most vulnerable at the highest level, they are consequently most likely to be ignored, thus causing continued disparities in decision-making and gatekeeping roles, contributing to the reinforcement of a vicious circle of exclusion.

This is demonstrable in the unequal and pervasive effects of COVID as reported in *How We Work Now*. Illness, lockdown, homeschooling and loss of care support have shown up just how precarious the caregiving patchwork is in non-pandemic times. This is an unpredictable, informal and often individuated, informal practice of finding caring support necessary to supplement limited state care and expensive privatised care that is out of most people's reach. While the screen industries cannot reform the paid care sector, anyone hiring, contracting or employing screen workers needs to understand the realities of the precarious patchwork, and to consider how

26%
of respondents
did not know about
creative and
cultural industries'
COVID-specific
financial aid and
grants

to bridge the gaps that fall between state and informal care networks, in order to ensure parents and carers have equal access to opportunities within the screen industries. Survey respondents identified employment practices and support as generally positive where they assisted and supported the precarious patchwork of caregiving (without imposing on it), and as negative where they interfered, blocked or disregarded it.

The most widely-available policies and offerings, such as working from home, produced a spectrum of experiences showing strong polarisation, with income as main determinant. While all caregivers who responded to the survey experienced negative financial and psychological cascades due to additional caregiving responsibilities, these were reported as offset, mitigated or defrayed by having higher incomes, generational wealth and assets, or additional income support from partners, parents or savings. Without such mitigation, the cascading crises are exponential, becoming harder to mitigate or arrest as the care patchwork is more precarious, and caregivers have fewer alternate options, solutions or fallbacks.

The complexity of the patchwork means that there was no blanket solution that supported all parents and carers across all roles at all times. As reported in *Locked Down and Locked Out - TV Mums in COVID* as well as *How We Work Now*, access to carer-specific working practices is a lottery, dependent both on organisations and individuals within them, and often the onus is placed on individuals to advocate for themselves.²⁴ The Global Institute for Women's Leadership reports that while 64% of the white-collar organisations it surveyed have policies to support parents and carers who are balancing work with caring, across only 41% of organisations were all line managers aware of these policies. This matters because having carer-specific workplace policies in place and known makes a 21% difference (79% to 58%) in workers' willingness to raise caring-related concerns.²⁵

Uptake of free school meals by single parents doubled between 2019-20 and 2020-21



The burden is far more onerous for freelancers, and for those for whom a range of state benefits and other means-tested income such as grants form part of the precarious patchwork. This results in a sense of individuation wherein lived experience is made to feel too specific to an individual to be addressed by carer-specific policies, and thus too specific for collective organising and solidarity. Individuation is a powerful cause of social isolation and situational depression, even more so when the burden of change-making is placed on the most precarious workers, without long-term, core funding support and recognition from industry bodies. The screen industries are currently voicing a determination to make change: that change needs to emerge from hiring and employment practices that address the individuating effects of freelancerisation and the support lottery, to ensure that collective organising can continue – and can be heard. This will enable the most precarious workers, who are more likely to be freelance, to feel less alone. Caregiving responsibilities are themselves a major cause of isolation, and they are compounded by additional, often interlinked, causes of isolation²⁶ such as disability, poverty, and/or dislocation from the screen industries' urban hubs.

Without **structural and systemic change** to the sector, these structural challenges will continue to exclude many more people. These changes range in form and scale, from HR employment to implementing and sustaining good working practices, to better models of training and care and equalities-led decision-making. They include shifts towards more inclusive hiring and employment practices, and ultimately aim for comprehensive cultural change that is care-focussed, led by collective responsibility toward care for all, and which places vulnerable caregivers in leadership positions. Without systemic change, the sector is at risk of creating exponentially increasing cycles of exclusion, which not only damages the people who work in it, but also ultimately places the entire ecosystem of the sector at risk.

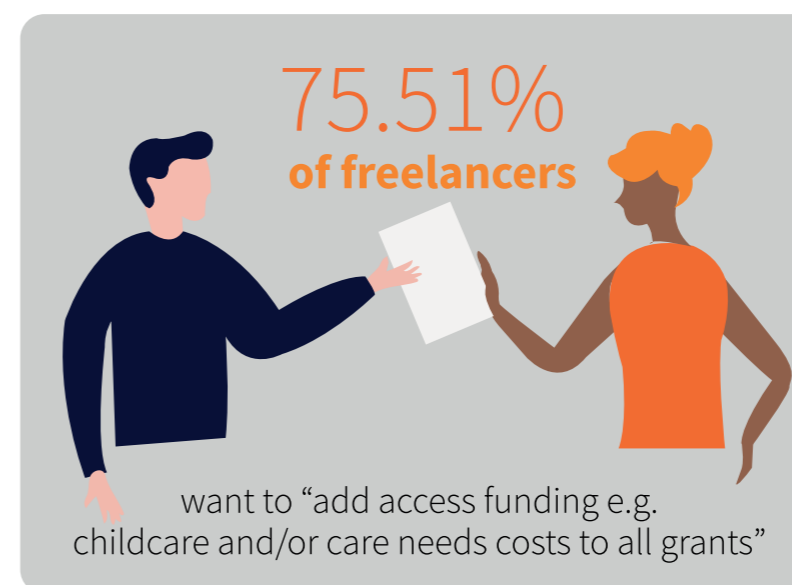
Exponential Exclusions to

24 See Dr Natalie Wreyford, Professor Helen Kennedy, Dr Jack Newsinger and Dr Rowan Aust, *Locked Down and Locked Out: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mothers working in the UK television industry*. Institute for Screen Industries Research, University of Nottingham, 2021

25 Karian and Box in partnership with Global Institute for Women's Leadership, *Future-focus: How can workplaces evolve for parents / carers in a post-Covid world?*, King's College London, 2020, p8; 10.

26 Belinda Luscombe, '“You Feel Trapped and Overwhelmed”: Mothers Understood Isolation Before the Coronavirus Pandemic', *Time*, May 8 2020, <https://time.com/5832733/motherhood-isolation-photos/>

As our sister organisation PiPA highlighted in its submission of evidence to the UK



government's Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Select Committee, 'Parents and carers facing other kinds of social exclusions and/or without social capital are most vulnerable and at risk of leaving the industry.'²⁷ Our findings chime with this: COVID has acted as an exponential multiplier of the hardships experienced by the most vulnerable workers in

the sector. This in turn contributes to a downward spiral of precarity and exclusion which significantly increases the likelihood that the most vulnerable workers in the sector will leave to seek more secure employment elsewhere.

Not all exclusions are alike, and our findings highlight some of these complex lived experiences. When we are talking about exclusion in the sector, we consider first and foremost, but not exclusively, the exclusion of women, who remain most likely to be primary caregivers, single parents, and to be excluded from higher-income and higher-prestige roles. This is in spite of years of the industry's corporate gender-related initiatives that rarely take into account the structural and socially-produced inequalities surrounding caregiving. As Clive James Nwonka has shown, using gender alone as a data metric for the success of diversity initiatives in the screen sector may sustain a culture of whiteness and racial exclusion.²⁸ As Dawn Foster notes in *Lean Out*, 'lean in'-style 'corporate feminism doesn't extend to calling for collective rights for women such as state maternity pay, or a stronger welfare safety net, or even encouraging women to unionise' (p. 11).

Corporate feminism mimics dominant culture's persistent identification of caregiving with white, cisgendered, heteronormative middle class, and abled

27 Parents and Carers in Performing Arts (PiPA), *The impact of COVID-19 on the DCMS sectors: A submission to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee inquiry*

mothers, soliciting cosmetic solutions that offer minimal assistance beyond those who are already privileged. Over 70% of our survey respondents earning under £20,000 per year reported that caregiving status or financial situation had most negatively or obstructively impacted their ability to work in the sector, both prior to and during the COVID-19 period. While 59% of (419) respondents overall indicated that their caregiving situation had the most negative or obstructive impact on their ability to work in the screen sector, disabled participants were 14% more likely than non-disabled participants to indicate that caregiving had the most negative or obstructive impact on their working lives in the sector.

In his widely-reported 2021 MacTaggart lecture, Jack Thorne amplified 'Creative Diversity Network's calculation that, with current targets set by broadcasters, it will take until 2041 for disability in off-screen roles to reflect the make-up of the UK, and stressed the need for quotas to be introduced and enforced both behind and in front of the camera, all the way from drama schools through to production'.²⁹ Our report shows that, for quotas to be met, so too do access needs, taking fully into account the complex and exponential effects of exclusion. HR and hiring practices need to be practically and effectively care-led in their rethinking if change is to be more than cosmetic; that includes making 'cluster' hires rather than tokenistic gestures, and not requiring that workers with protected characteristics undertake advocacy, education and change-making for the entire organisation or institution.

Creating critical mass, offering access support to workers, and sharing the work of change-making is particularly significant because, as the exponential effects of COVID have shown, workers at the intersection of multiple exclusions face a potential 'double bind', as our cohort studies show. If they fight to remain in the sector, they are more likely than other groups to experience poor working practices and employer inflexibility, placing additional pressures on already precarious caregiving situations that COVID and the crisis in care have significantly exacerbated. This means that, all too often, when diversity drives are not supported by cultural change across the

²⁸ Clive James Nwonka, 'White Women, White Men, and Intra-Racial Diversity: A Data-Led Analysis of Gender Representation in the UK Film Industry', *Cultural Sociology* 2020: 1-25.

²⁹ Caroline Frost, '“TV has failed disabled people – utterly and totally”, says Jack Thorne in impassioned MacTaggart Lecture – Edinburgh', *Deadline*, 23 August 2021, <https://deadline.com/2021/08/tv-has-failed-disabled-people-utterly-and-totally-says-jack-thorne-in-impassioned-mactaggart-lecture-edinburgh-1234819889/>

organisation, workers from previously excluded communities are more likely to face burnout and attrition.

When the industry does not facilitate representation, decision-making and leadership by under-represented parents and carers, it insidiously affects how decisions are made across the sector to address structural inequality. If actions and strategies for including caregivers in the sector are primarily focussed on higher earners and above-the-line talent, this strategy is unlikely to repair the screen sector's damaged employment ecosystem in the longer term; in the immediate term it is also unlikely to have a significant effect on the loss of skilled workers in the sector.

To date, there is no peer-reviewed evidence that the last half-decade's emphasis on training in the screen industries focused on leadership soft skills, such as unconscious bias and confidence, has created any systemic change. As reported for the APPG for Creative Diversity in 2021's 'Creative Majority', 'Even where interventions have been successful, there is often no systematic record of the outcome or impact. The APPG round tables and public consultation illustrated that despite multiple examples of individual interventions, there is an absence of any systemic, industry-wide, approach to inclusion.'³⁰

In *Lean Out*, Dawn Foster cautions against the assumption of any trickle-down effect from neoliberal strategies such as cosmetic changes to leadership when they are not undergirded by comprehensive structural and systemic understanding of how work is failing the most precarious, noting:

The problem with corporate feminism's obsession with individual stories of success, and 'having it all', is that many women don't have much at all. Women have been disproportionately affected by austerity, with single mothers and pensioners particularly affected... Asking women to 'lean in' is far easier than demanding that we fundamentally change the way businesses operate, who they operate for, and how we reward and approach work (pp. 20-21).

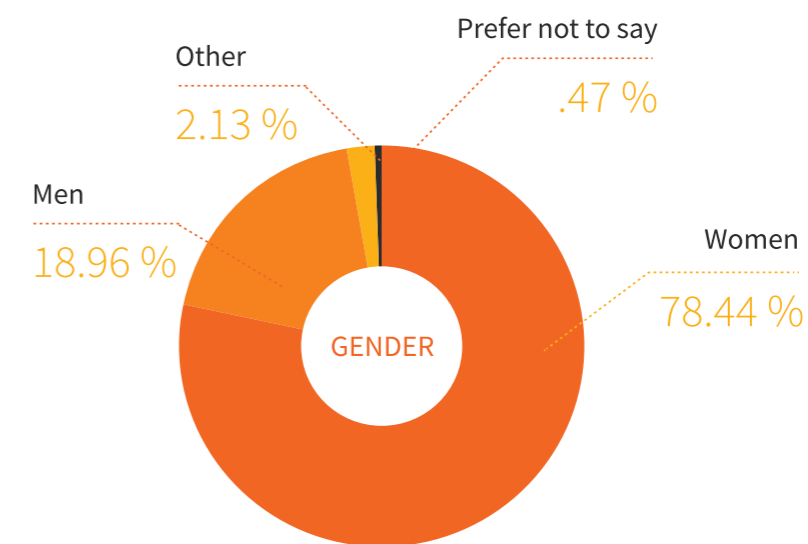
³⁰ Natalie Wreyford, Dave O'Brien, Tamsyn Dent, 'Creative Majority: An APPG for Creative Diversity report on 'What Works' to support, encourage and improve equality, diversity and inclusion in the creative sector', p.30.

Corporate feminism, along with other neoliberal models for gradualist change, pays little or no attention to the ways that social class, ethnicity and disability intersect with gender to create exponential exclusions from the intergenerational, family and partner wealth/support, and from forms of social mobility such as tertiary education, that together continue to undergird opportunity in the UK’s creative and cultural industries, as Orian Brook, Dave O’Brien and Mark Taylor detail in their aptly-titled book *Culture is Bad for You: Inequality in the Cultural and Creative Industries*.

Exponential exclusion is clearly evidenced by quantifiable socio-economic data as well as clearly-narrated personal, psychological and creative impacts in *How We Work Now*, and it is this understanding that needs to underlie all future work on equality, diversity and inclusion. Our findings and analysis proceed from this basis: that solutions need to proceed from recognition of the needs of the most vulnerable workers, who are also often those under-reported within the industry – lower income workers, freelancers, single parents, disabled parents/carers, carers. This is an act of radical inclusion: by working from the most vulnerable upwards, we leave no person behind, and we can begin to repair the whole precarious ecology of the screen sector.

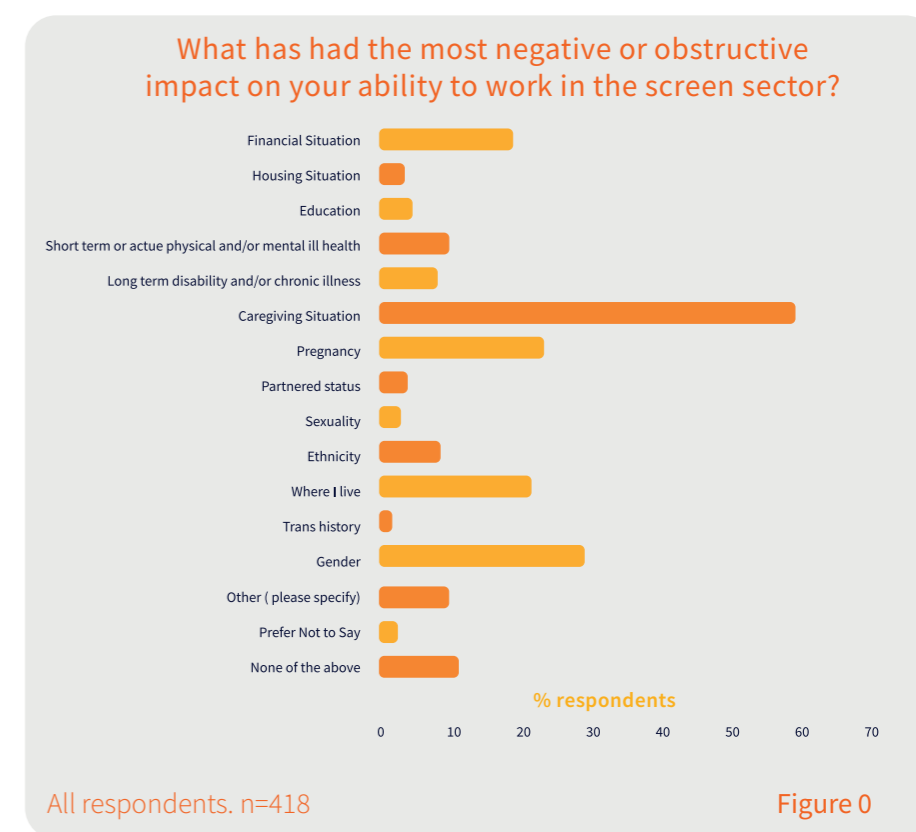
HEADLINES:

It’s Enough to Drive You Crazy / If You Let it



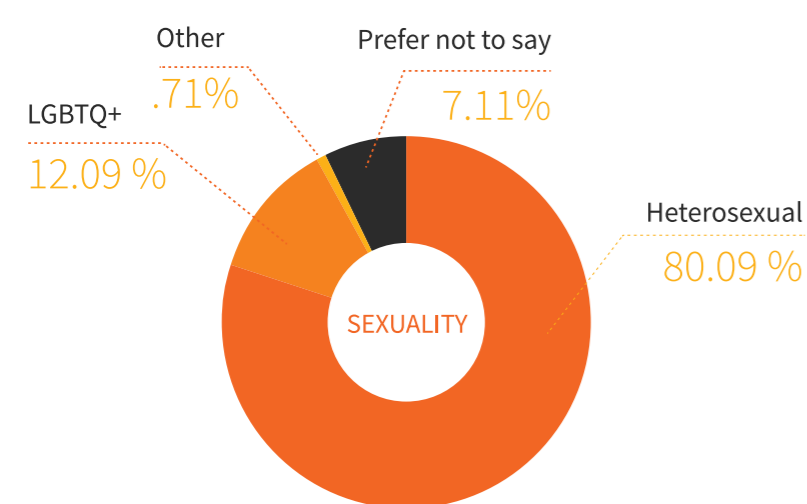
Gender breakdown of all respondents. n=418.

Almost two thirds of our sample (58.61%) report caregiving as having a negative impact on their ability to work in the screen sector. This is twice the proportion of responses for the next most popular categories including gender (28.47%), pregnancy (24.16%), and location (21.05%). Within the COVID-19 context, this number rises to 77.46%, with all other response options dropping to below 20%, demonstrating the specific and disproportionate effect of the pandemic on caregiving.



59.94% of respondents report that throughout the pandemic they have gained additional caring responsibilities for children, such as home-schooling, with 54.46% of respondents stating that the changes to their caregiving status had a negative impact on their ability to work in the screen industries in the COVID period. The detrimental impact of the pandemic and subsequent government measures on working parents is undeniable.

Our data also shows evidence of a robust glass ceiling within the screen industries, with 63% of women reporting caregiving as the greatest challenge to their ability to work, compared to 41.77% of men. Additionally, 34.25% of responses highlight gender as an obstruction to their ability to work and 30.28% report pregnancy. In comparison, after caregiving situation, male respondents report location (26.58%)



Sexuality breakdown of all respondents. n=422

and financial situation (21.52%) as obstructions, though a quarter of men (25.32%) also report 'none of the above'. The gendered barriers within the screen industry and the sociocultural expectations of women to act as primary caregivers are given voice in our results.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic however, the impact of caregiving increases greatly across gender with over 70% of responses from both women and men identifying this as the greatest challenge to their ability to work. The dramatic reduction in the gap between women and men here may be accounted for by the demographics of survey respondents. All of the men that responded to our survey are either parents and/or carers. Thus while we cannot comment on the extent to which men in the screen industries are caregivers, we can demonstrate that those men who are caregivers are experiencing significant inequalities in the sector.

It is worth noting that the statistically significant representation of respondents of diverse genders and sexualities is a reminder that parenting and caring are neither solely a female responsibility, nor taking place only in heteronormative partnered

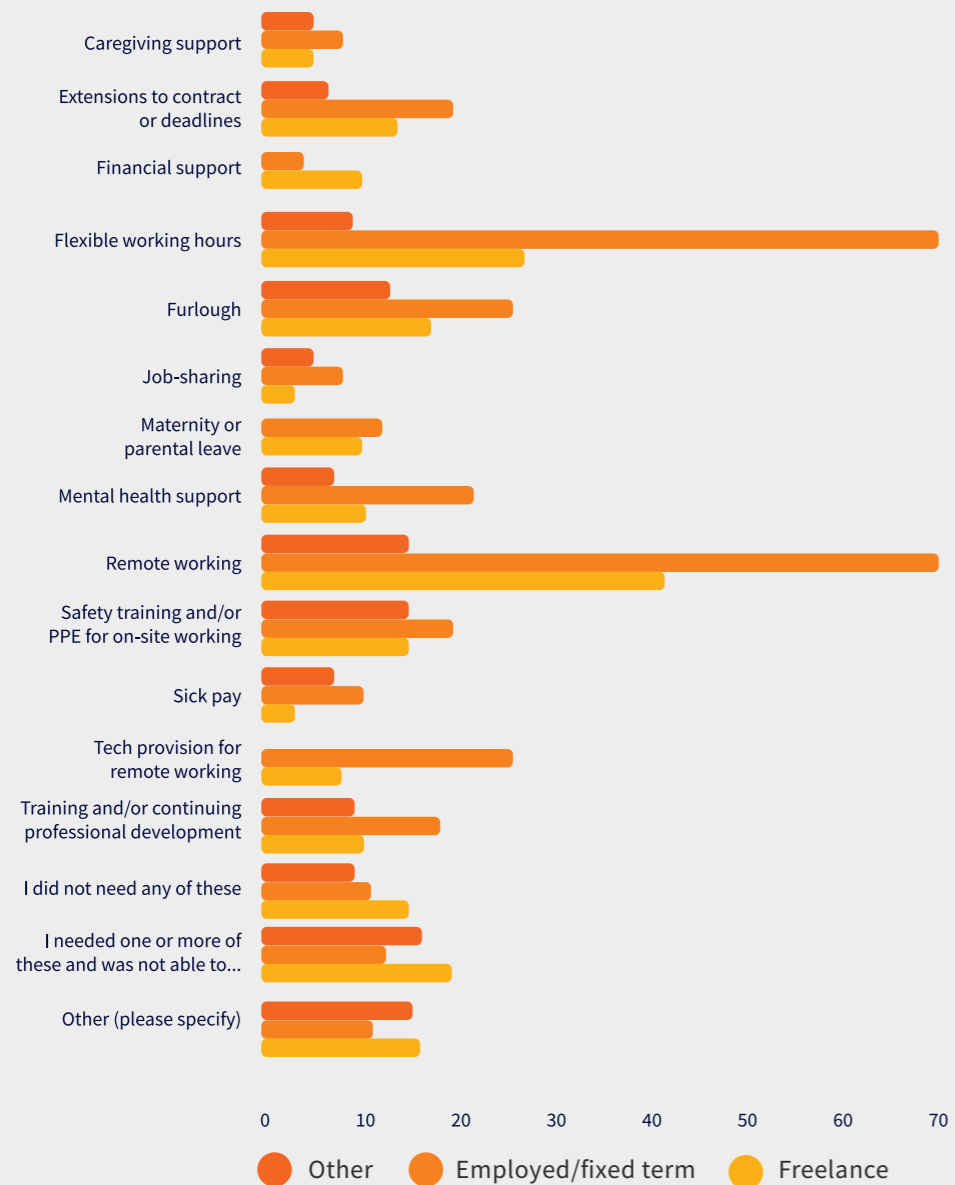


households. While redressing caregiver exclusion is a lever for gender equality, it must not solely be addressed as a gendered issue. Caregivers experience inequality regardless of gender, sexuality or relationship status, with parents and carers across the board highlighting that the conditions of the pandemic have had a severe impact on their ability to work. Insufficient and unaffordable childcare (52.27%), lack of flexible working and/or job shares (44.09%), and decreases in rates of pay and expenses for freelancers (37.73%) are highlighted in particular.

Our data shows that the employer support that screen sector workers were best able to access during the pandemic period were flexible and remote working practices. 45.77% of our sample reported that they were able to access remote working and 35% accessed flexible working hours. However, access to these provisions is uneven and in many cases is not applicable to the challenges that caregivers face. According to previous research parents are twice as likely to freelance than non-parents and within our sample, 62.79% of parents are freelance workers. As figure 1 shows, 67.11% employed/fixed term workers were able to access remote working and flexible working hours compared to 40% and 23.1% of freelance workers respectively.

Freelancers, who are more accustomed to remote and flexible working practices, are less able to access support applicable to their needs. The blanket provisions from employers, which have been heralded as positive changes within the industry, are far more likely to benefit non-freelance workers and by association, non-parents and carers.

What support directly from employers or contractors have you been able to access from March 2020 to May 2021, during the COVID-19 period?



Distribution by employment type. Other, n= 50; Employed/fixed term, n= 76; Freelance, n= 160
All respondents. n=418

Figure 1

Respondents want large scale practices to reduce the precarity of working within the screen sector and create a more stable environment for working caregivers. We see parents and carers asking for a range of long-term changes in light of the challenges that COVID-19 has highlighted. 68.22% support childcare as a tax-deductible expense and 43.46% wish for an increase in state subsidies for the childcare. We also see consistent support for a range of financial changes including advocacy of a universal basic income (34.58%), a living wage for all roles (33.64%) and wages paid for

Previous research has shed light on the serious mental health situation in the screen industries, with 87% of people working in TV, film or cinema reporting having experienced a mental health problem in their lifetime (compared to a national average of 65%).³¹ Our data supports this picture; when asked about the caregiving-related barriers to work that have been highlighted in the COVID-19 period, 63.18% of respondents replied that ‘it feels too stressful’. This was the most popular response category both in the full sample of respondents and within each cohort we analysed. However, while existing research has outlined the industry-related factors that contribute to poor mental health, our data provides fresh insight on how structural inequalities and the uneven impacts of the pandemic contribute to the ‘cascade effect’, where those already most vulnerable are hit harder and thus face increased mental health difficulties.

The following case studies demonstrate the exponential exclusions impacting respondents of a number of demographics including low-income workers, single parents, carers, disabled parents and carers, and those living outside major urban areas. While the pandemic has had an undeniable negative impact on all parents and carers within the screen industry, we show that not only are vulnerable groups faced with tougher conditions and less support in comparison to others, but that the COVID-19 pandemic has acted as an exponential multiplier of these hardships.

“ I already dance the difficult dance of working part time in our industry due to my caring responsibilities and society and household’s assumptions of the woman as the care provider. COVID led to our child having to shield and all support withdrawn for safety reasons for the first six to nine months of lockdown. ”

Female in broadcast/factual, 35-44yo, Yorkshire, employed/ fixed term

“ Pregnant in summer 2020 so unable to work as shielding due to lack of information about covid risks at that time. Plus our eldest’s nursery was closed from March 2020–Jan 2021 so we had her at home full time during this period - meaning it was impossible for both myself and my husband to work at the same time. ”

Female director, 25-34yo, London, freelance

“ Furlough really helped keep us above board. But having a baby and expecting another during COVID made me feel very isolated and had a detrimental impact on my situation. ”

Female director, 25-34yo, London, employed/ fixed

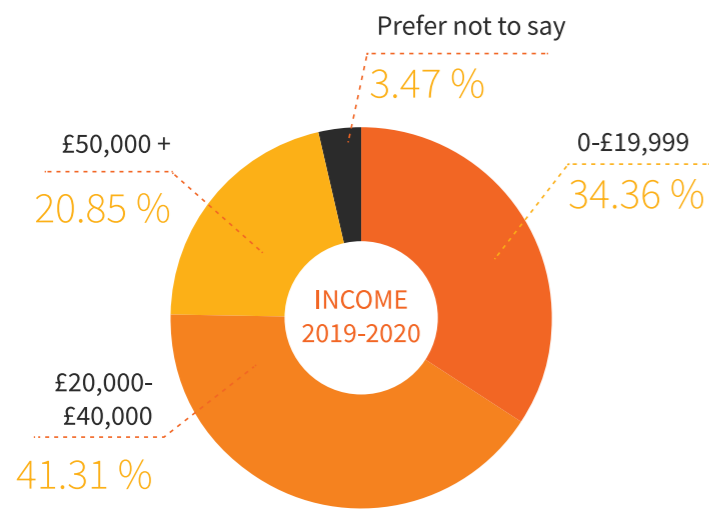
“ I’m probably divorcing my husband: confinement in the house over lockdown hammered home the inequality in the mental load/child care/housekeeping and it became unbearable. ”

Female in exhibition, 45-54yo, South West, freelance

³¹ Melanie Wilkes, Heather Carey and Rebecca Florisson, ‘The Looking Glass: Mental health in the UK film, TV and cinema industry’, Film and Television Charity, 2020, p.13.

CASE STUDIES: You're In The Same Boat As A Lot Of Your Friends

The Low Income Worker



income breakdown for all respondents. n=255.

It is perhaps obvious to state that lower income is an instigator and a multiplier of challenges to those employed in the screen sector. Lower income impacts on one's ability as a worker to access certain opportunities and resources, to travel, to live in cosmopolitan areas. This is witnessable in our data, with equal numbers of lower income

respondents stating that 'financial difficulties' and 'where I live' are of the most challenging barriers to their ability to work in the screen sector (25.96%). Those in the lowest income bracket were also the least able to access support from employers and contractors throughout the height of the pandemic period (March 2020- May 2021). Provisions such as remote working and flexible working, which have been heralded as positive steps for workers, are least accessible to those already in precarious positions (see Figure 2).

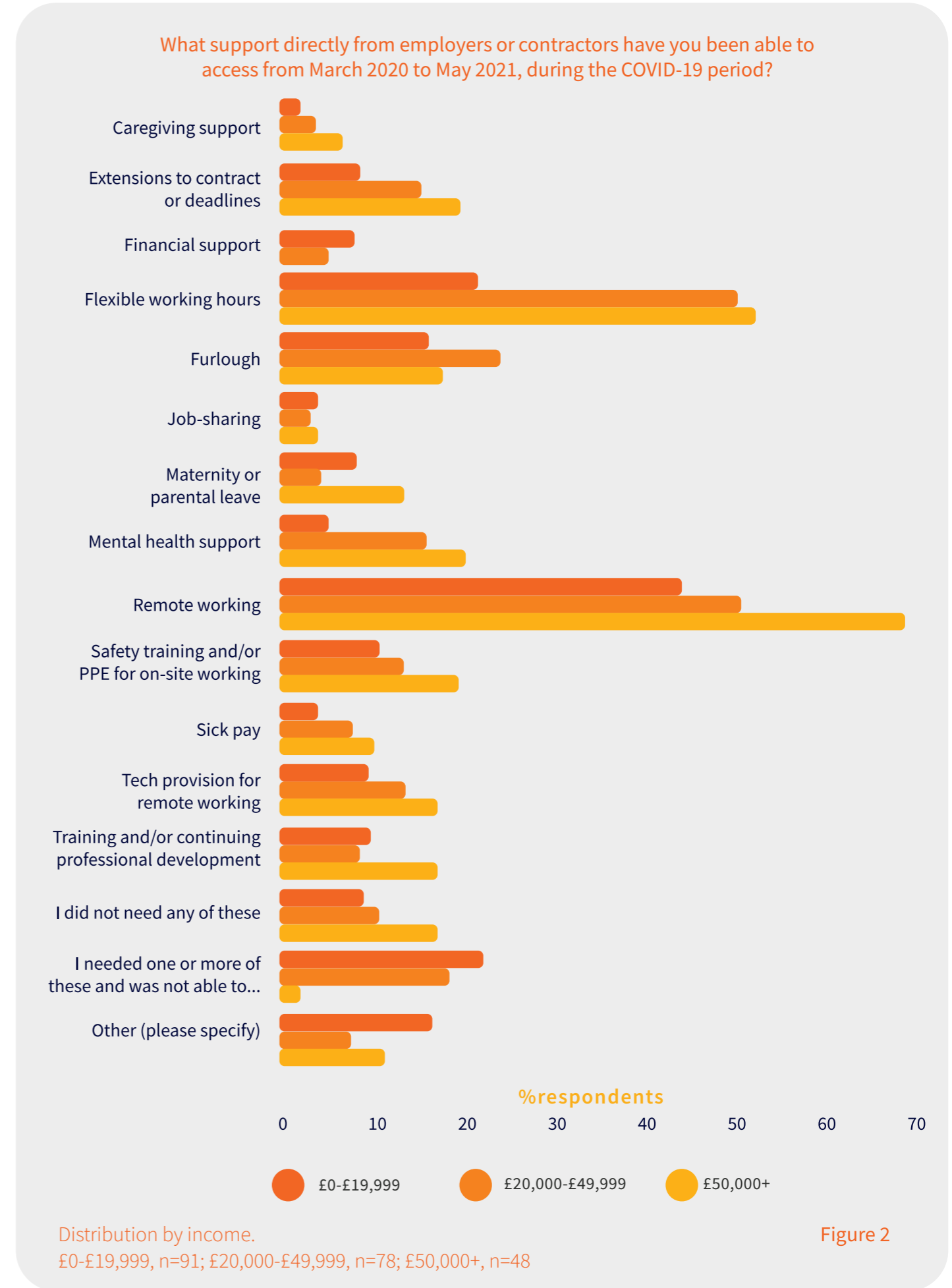


Figure 2

Specifically, as a parent or carer, low income inhibits access to necessary resources such as childcare or secure housing. This multiplication of caring responsibilities and financial precarity in turn supplies even more barriers to gaining and maintaining work in an industry where long hours and lack of flexible working are normalised. Almost twice as many respondents from the two lower income brackets (70.19% of those earning less than £19,999 and 71.25% of those earning between £20,000-£49,999) reported caregiving as the most challenging barrier to their ability to work in the screen industry, compared to those earning over £50,000 (38.78%). During the COVID-19 period we see this gap shrink to just 16.02% as caregiving is identified as the most severe barrier by all income groups, however that gap remains substantial and evidences the exponential exclusions that those with lower incomes face.

“ The issue of losing our mortgage benefit support if I work just one hour is crazy – I can only work part time. I would also expose us to having to wait 9 months for the SMI [support for mortgage interest] loan to recommence. ”

Female in Broadcast (factual) and carer, 55-64yo South East

“ When those I cared for fell ill, and then I fell ill, I was unable to work and I’m the only person making money as a single carer to an adult disabled child. It’s been very challenging to say the least and if a production company and theatre company I was working with had not bailed me out I’d have lost my home. ”

Female writer/screenwriter, 35-44yo, North West, freelance

“ Work vanished and my income fell off a cliff. It was a depressing and frightening time [...] I found it hard to deal with the uncertainty of the situation and have no job or income security. ”

45-54yo, male, freelance, Stirling



COVID-19 affected all workers in the screen industry, but our data highlights how those who already faced increased challenges, experienced worsening precarity and had to turn to support networks or their own savings to stay afloat (Figure X). Of those earning over £50,000, 39.02% reported that they did not need to access any form of additional financial support between March 2020 and May 2021. In comparison, 41.76% of those earning less than £19,999 utilised savings and 30.77% accessed financial support from their partner. With single parents, carers and disabled workers forming 58.65% of the sample of low income workers, it is plain to see how already vulnerable groups are hit hardest and are least supported.

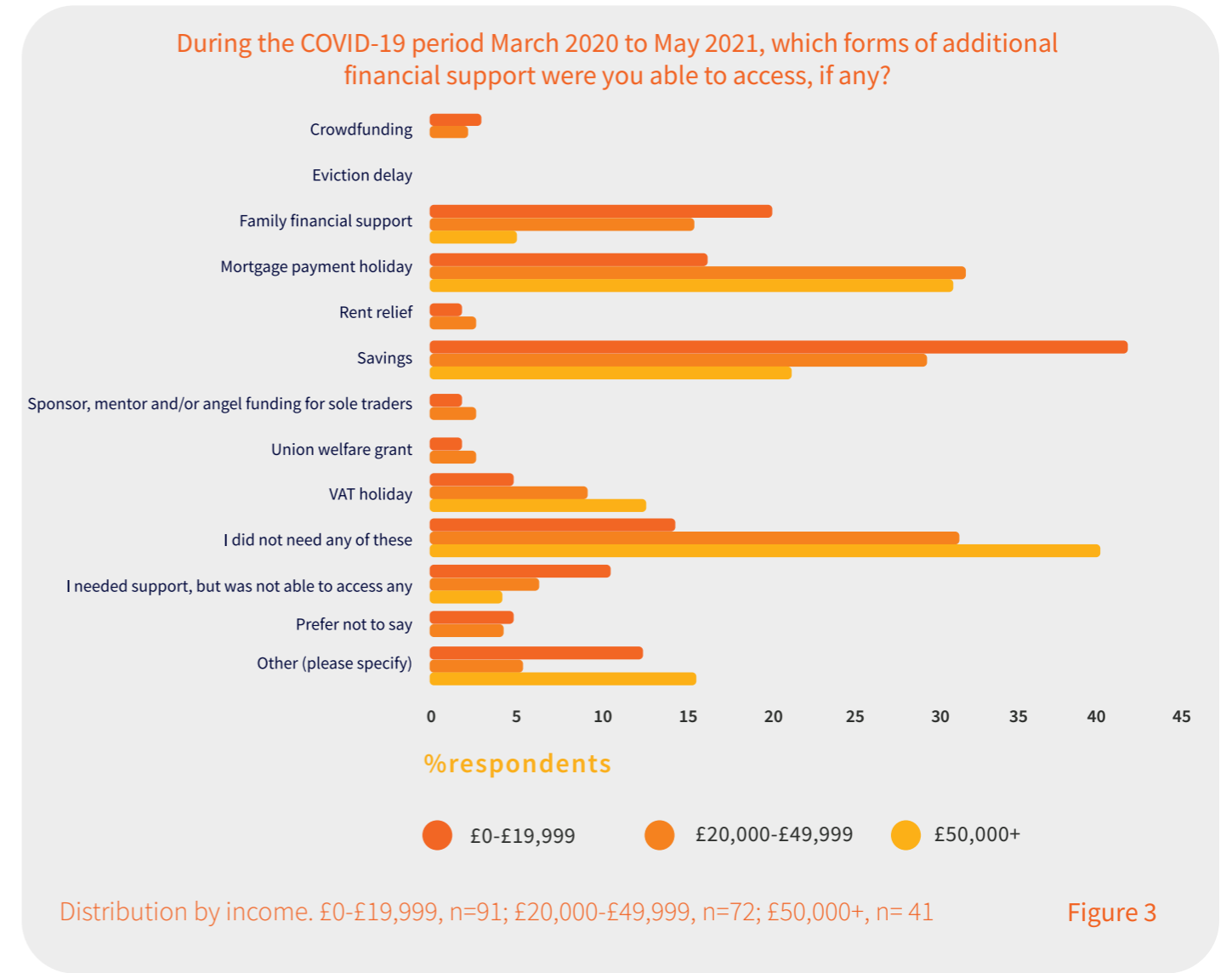
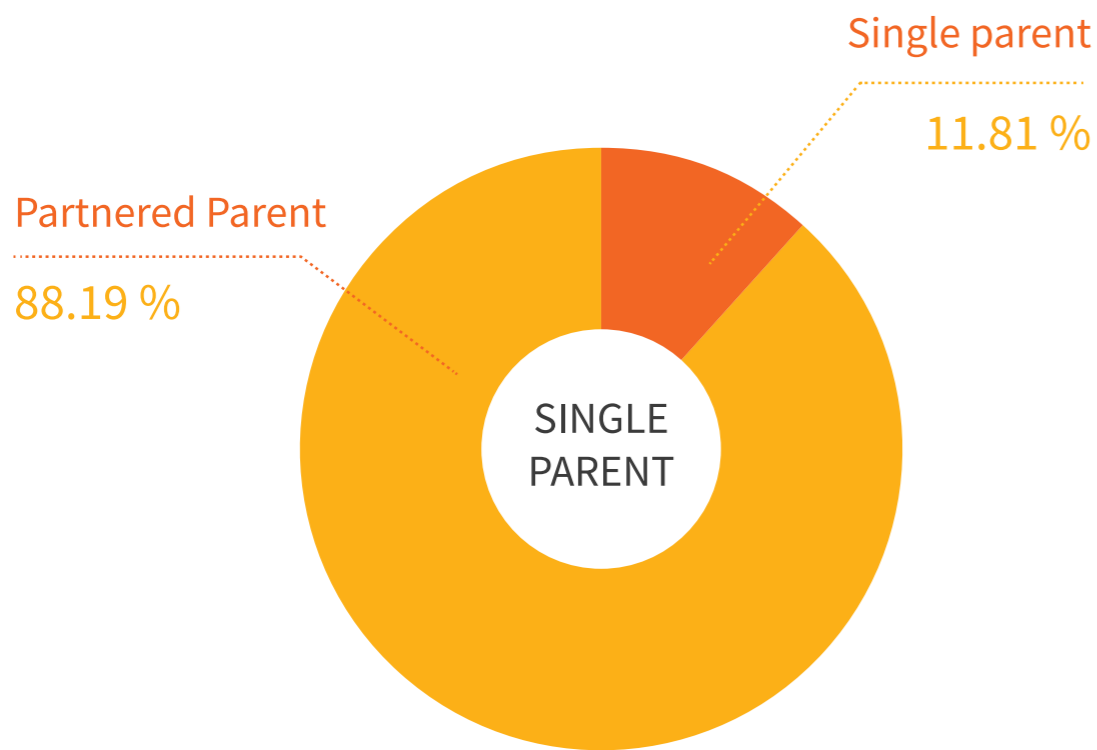


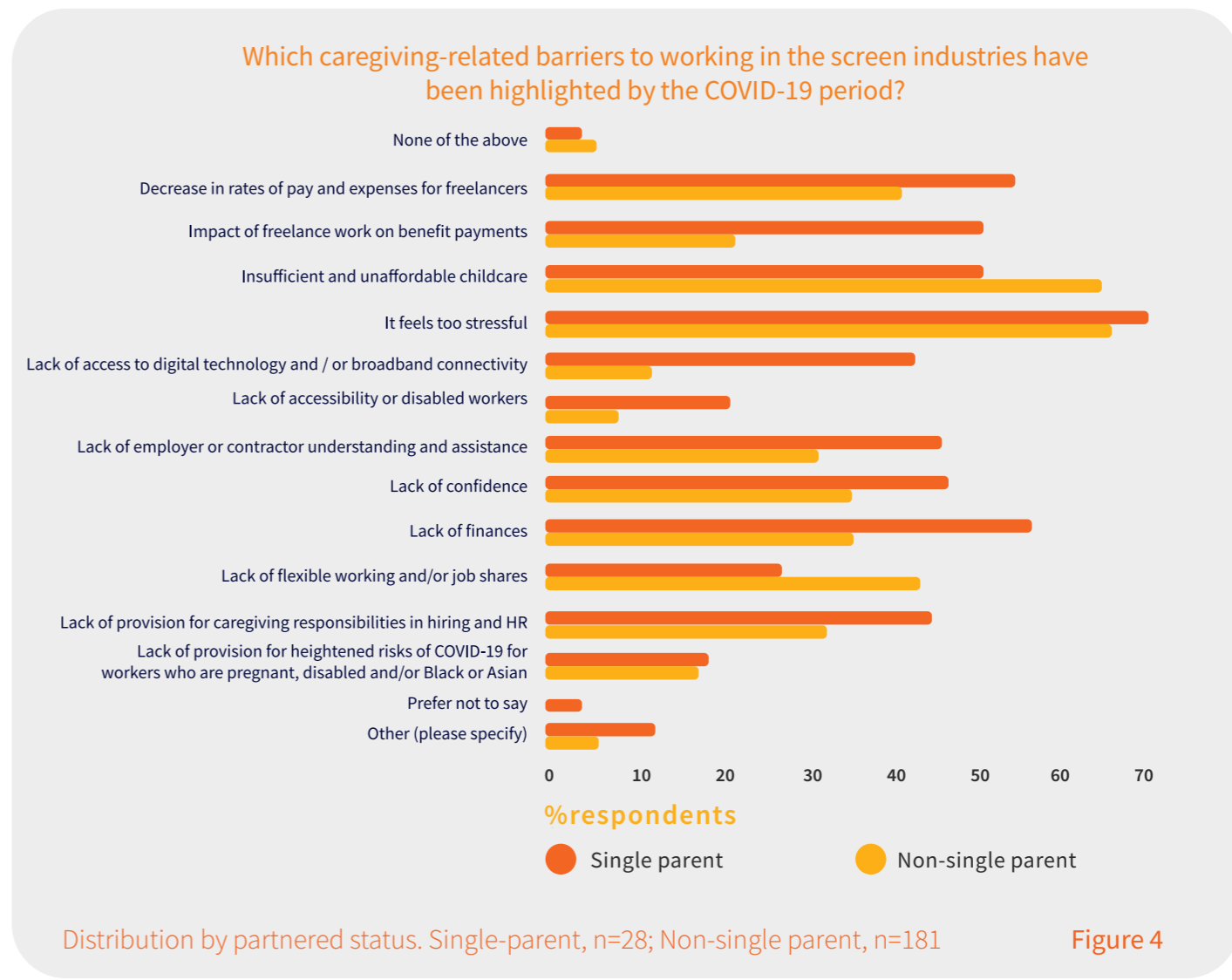
Figure 3

The Single Parent



Parent partnered status breakdown of all respondents. n=398.

When asked what caregiving-related barriers to working in the screen industries have been highlighted by COVID-19, respondents from the full sample reported insufficient childcare and stress as the most prevalent. While also reporting these to a large extent, we find a distinct split between single-parents and partnered parents in the ability or opportunity to access to tangible resources (Figure 4). Lack of finances, lack of access to digital technology, lack of employer understanding and assistance are all reported by ~15-25% more single parents than partnered parents. These findings speak to the way that COVID-19 has multiplied the hardships experienced by those already facing substantial challenges within the industry and to the interaction of vulnerabilities such as single parenthood and low income. Single parents report an increased negative impact throughout the pandemic period; between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 the proportion of single parents that required free school meals almost doubles from 8% to 15%.



Distribution by partnered status. Single-parent, n=28; Non-single parent, n=181 **Figure 4**

Of course, all parents, whether single or partnered, substantial challenges as caregivers working in the screen industry. In fact, slightly more partnered parents state caregiving responsibilities to be an obstruction to their ability to work both generally (59.94% compared to 53.19% of single parents) and within the COVID-19 context (79.3% compared to 74.36% of single parents). Single parents, however, are much more likely to identify additional challenges to their ability to work, such as financial situation (31.91% compared to 15.56% for non-single parents) and short-term physical and/or mental illness (14.89% to 6.92%). In both cases this increases during the COVID-19 period. It is possible that caregiving responsibilities have an equal impact on single and partnered parents, or perhaps single parents take their increased caregiving challenges as assumed and instead wish to highlight the additional challenges they face.

“ I am a single parent of a school age child and during lockdown I was homeschooling alone, with no options for paid support, which effectively meant I was unable to work as I had lost all of my previous support network. My child eventually was taken in [to school] on the key worker provision in January 2021 but, for personal reasons relating to her other parent, this was a very stressful process over 2020-21 and this has had a very negative impact on my mental health. ”

Female writer/screenwriter, 35-44yo, London, freelance



Of these additional barriers, income and finance are consistently highlighted across questions, showing evidence of the exponential exclusions faced by the most vulnerable. Over half (51.72%) of single parents sit within the lowest income threshold. They identify income-related challenges generally, for example between 2019-2020, 20% of single parents stated that they needed one or more forms of state benefit but were not able to access it (compared to 5% of partnered parents).

Thinking about the period after May 2021, which large-scale changes would most help you as a caregiver working in the screen sector?



Distribution by partnered status. Single parent, n=27; Non-single parent, n=177

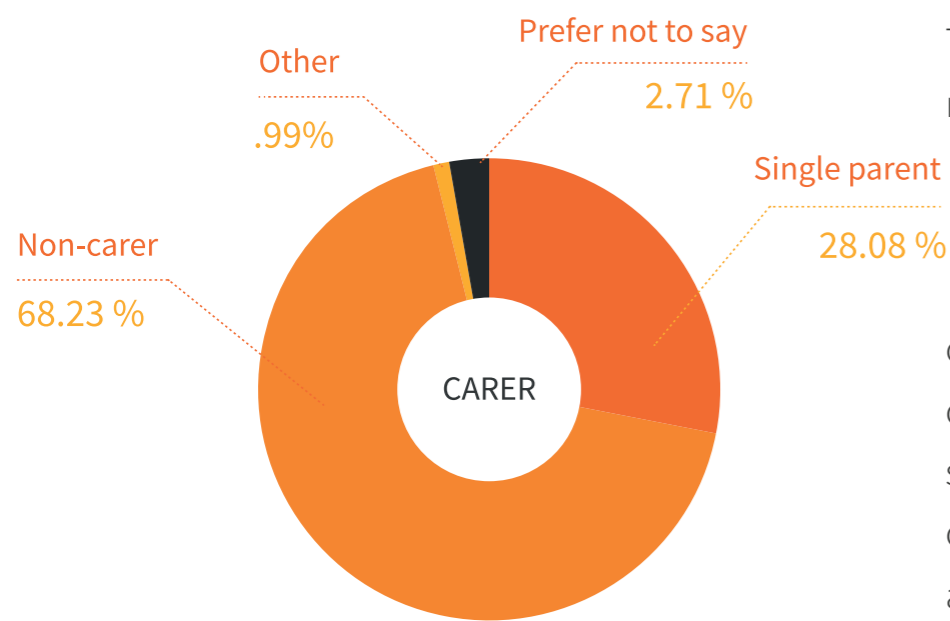
Figure 5

Of course, all parents, whether single or partnered face, substantial challenges as caregivers working in the screen industry. In fact, slightly more partnered parents state caregiving responsibilities to be an obstruction to their ability to work both generally (59.94% compared to 53.19% of single parents) and within the COVID-19 context (79.3% compared to 74.36% of single parents). Single parents, however, are much more likely to identify additional challenges to their ability to work, such as financial situation (31.91% compared to 15.56% for non-single parents) and short-term physical and/or mental illness (14.89% to 6.92%). In both cases this increases during the COVID-19 period. It is possible that caregiving responsibilities have an equal impact on single and partnered parents, or perhaps single parents take their increased caregiving challenges as assumed and instead wish to highlight the additional challenges they face.

The exponential impact of barriers such as single parenthood and financial precarity are reflected in the large-scale industry changes that single parents call for (Figure 5). Over 40% of single parent respondents request wages paid for caregiving, a Living Wage for all roles, and government grants for training and technology. Almost three times as many single as partnered parents want to see an increase in Universal Credit (18.52% compared to 6.78%). These responses speak to the ‘cascade effect’ where those in the most precarious positions are worst impacted by crises such as COVID-19 and for whom blanket provisions are least beneficial.

The Carer

Carers report specific and substantial changes to their caregiving responsibilities during the pandemic. Although a greater proportion of non-carers report additional caregiving responsibilities for children, including home-schooling (62.56% compared to 50%), carers who are parents have not only seen this rise in caregiving responsibilities for children, but also report an increase in their caregiving responsibilities for adults who live with them (18.18%) and adults that live separately (39.77%). Carers also report that pandemic regulations have restricted their ability to care for someone living apart from them (17.05%)



These increased caring responsibilities, though perhaps not a surprising finding, are nevertheless significant. With 65.48% of carers responding that changes to their caregiving status have had a negative/obstructive impact on their ability to work during the COVID-19 period, we see clear evidence of how the existing

challenges that carers face are being worsened by the conditions of the pandemic.

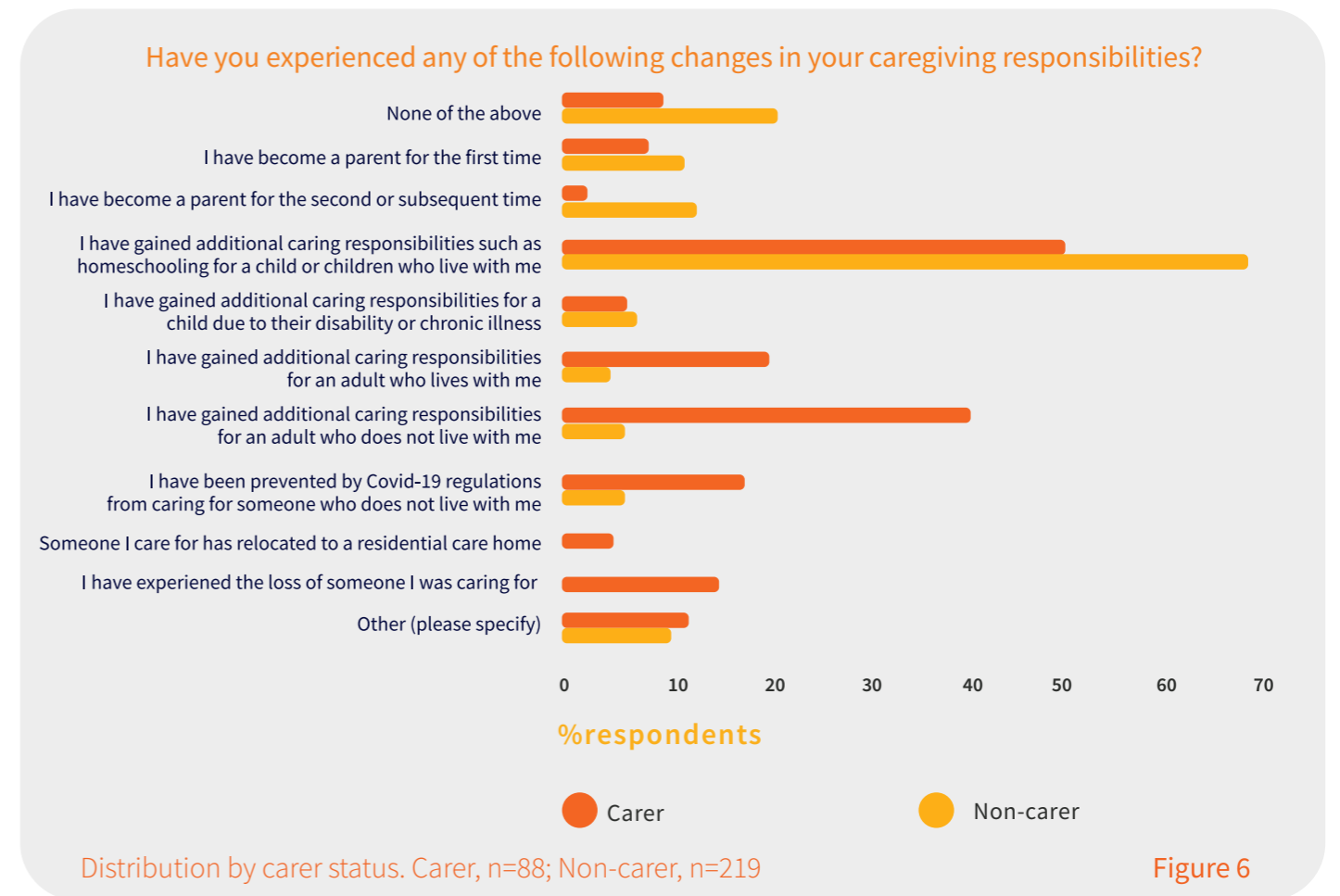


Figure 6

Not only do carers face specific challenges in their caregiving responsibilities but those in our sample also report additional barriers that feed into these exponential exclusions. Approximately half (52.96%) of the carers in our sample sit within the lowest income bracket (£0-19,999) and across questions carers repeatedly highlight financial situation as a barrier to their ability to work both generally (25.66%) and within the COVID-19 period (22.58%). 51.47% of carers report ‘lack of finances’ as one of the caregiving-related barriers to working in the screen industry that has been highlighted by the COVID-19 period.

Carers also report limited support from employers and contractors over the last year and there is evidence that the forms of support that were offered are not applicable to carer’s individual situations. 43.84% of carers report that they were able to access remote working and 31.51% were able to access flexible working hours, but fewer than 10% of reported that they were supplied with technology or training to support this transition. 43.66% of carers state that they faced worse personal flexibility around caregiving when comparing the COVID-19 period to previous working experiences

(compared to 33.92% of non-carers). Blanket provisions from employers do not provide blanket solutions to those who already face increased challenges.

“ My father is near 80. He is also an amputee with a persistent cough, if he had caught COVID he would be dead. This meant that I was unable to work and as I was a freelancer I was ineligible for any sort of furlough. luckily I was saving to buy a house in 2020. However now I am burning though the deposit with no job prospects and a worsening mental and physical condition while also caring for a father who is getting worse but will likely need years of care ”

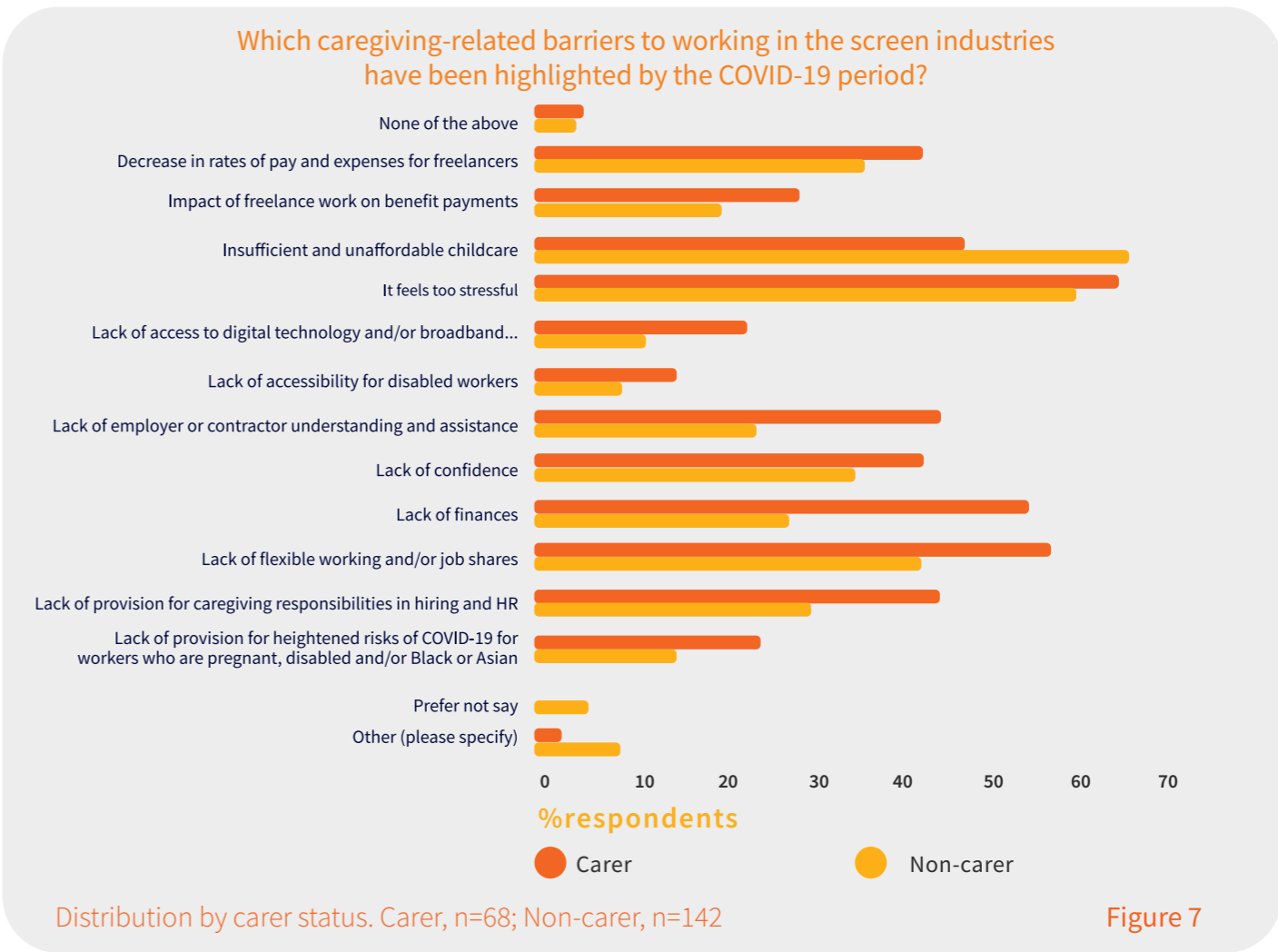
Male respondent, 25-34yo, urban centre in County Down



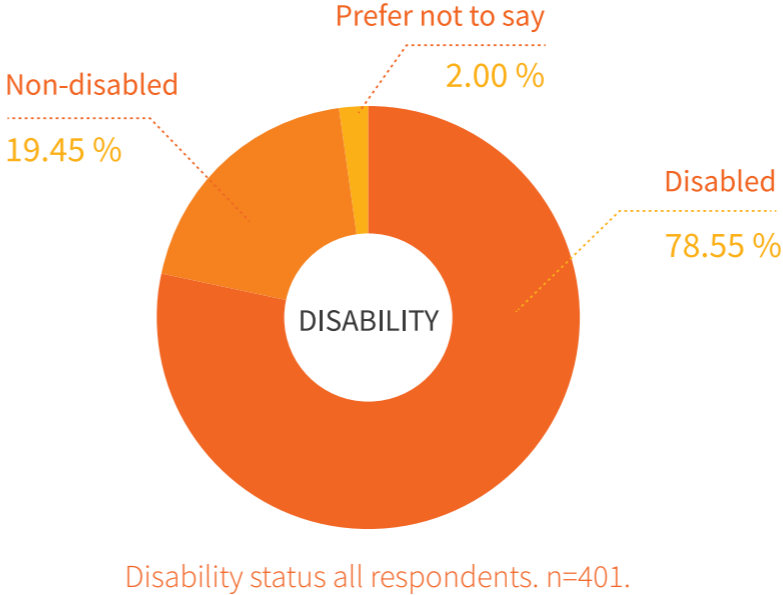
“ Not only have I been caring for an elderly relative of mine for 4 months full time, and 6 months (ongoing) part-time, I have been living with two vulnerable people who would be seriously affected if they caught COVID, meaning I haven't been able to get back to work until recently since they have been vaccinated. This obviously means I now have a huge gap in my CV and it has been really slow to get jobs. ”

Female respondent, 16-24yo, East of England

Emphasised among the large-scale changes that carers would like to see in the screen sector are a living wage for all roles (42.19%) and wages paid for caregiving and domestic labour (34.38%). Not only do carers want to see better provision for caregiving but they are also advocating for better income and finance-related measures all round which would address some of the underlying issues they face as both carers and low-income workers.

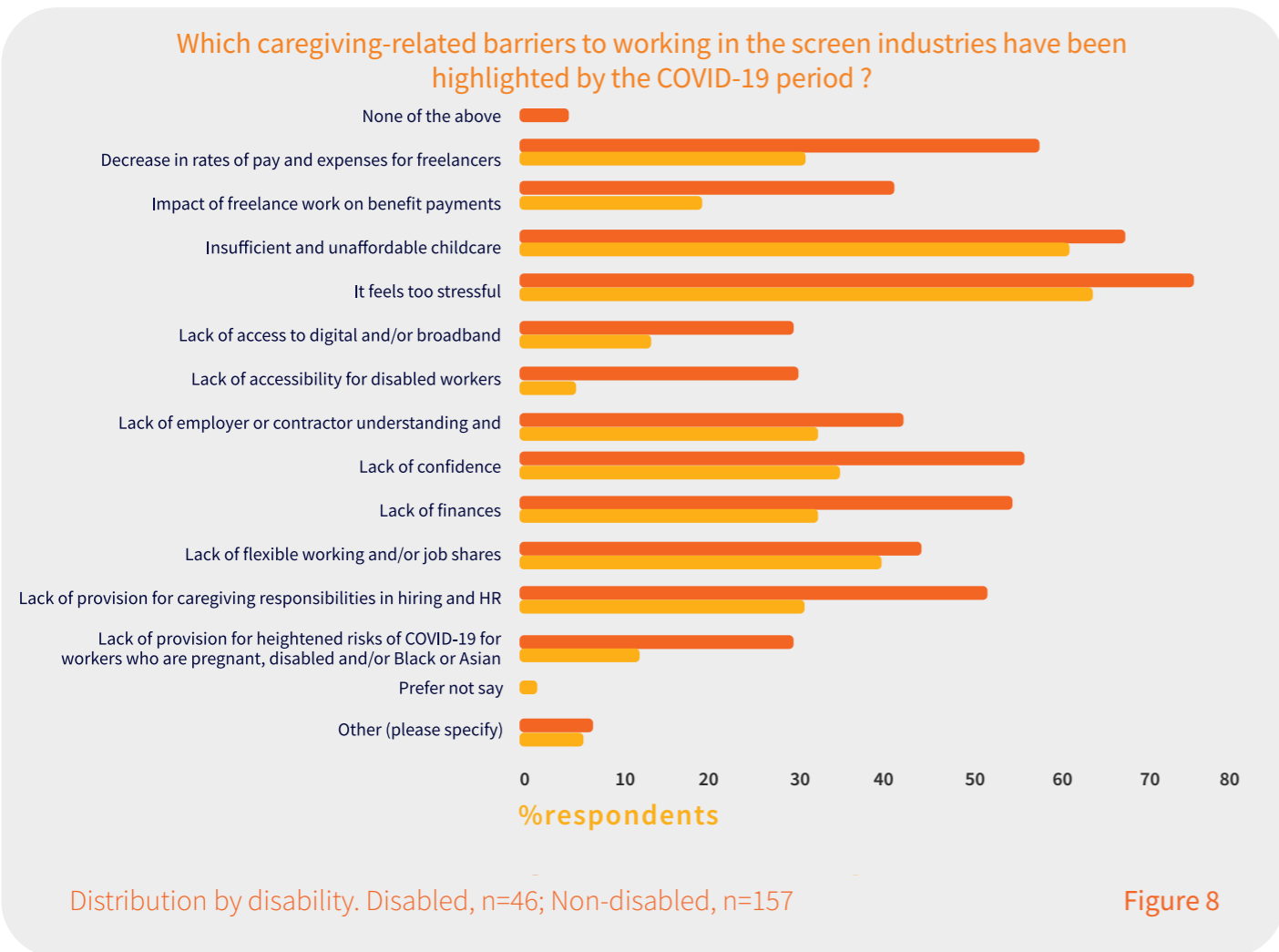


The Disabled Worker



When asked what caregiving-related barriers to work had been highlighted by the pandemic, disabled respondents report a higher response rate in every category in comparison to non-disabled respondents, with almost double stating that 'lack of provision for caregiving' is a barrier to work (50% to 27.39%). Disabled screen sector workers already faced increased caregiving challenges before the pandemic, reporting their caregiving situation as a serious barrier to their ability

to work to a greater degree than non-disabled respondents (70.51% compared to 55.95%). While during the COVID-19 period this difference shrinks (with responses from the non-disabled cohort now overtaking at 77.27% compared to 73.53% of disabled respondents) we can see that disabled workers already faced more difficult caregiving and working situations which often combine with other barriers to instigate the cascade effect.



One of the additional challenges disabled caregivers face is financial precarity; not only are disabled caregivers excluded from the screen sector due to lack of accessibility and working conditions, including long hours and inflexibility, but many also face a dual exclusion as low-income workers. 52% of disabled respondents sit within the lowest income bracket (£0-£19,999) with only 8% earning above £50,000. In response to questions about the challenges of working in the screen industry and the extra pressure applied in the pandemic period, we see clear demonstration of the interacting exclusions of disability and financial inequality.

A third of disabled respondents highlighted ‘financial situation’ as a general obstruction to their ability to work in the screen sector (33.33%), double the response from non-disabled respondents (14.47%). 55.4% of disabled respondents reported a change in financial situation during the COVID-19 period, with 39.39% of respondents reporting this to have had a negative impact on their ability to work. Finally, over half (56.52%) of disabled respondents selected ‘lack of finances’ among the caregiving barriers to work that have been exacerbated by COVID-19 (compared to 30.57% of non-disabled respondents)

These structural exclusions are exacerbated by the lack of support for disabled workers in the screen industry. While approximately one third of disabled respondents were able to access remote working (34%) and flexible working hours (38%) in the pandemic period, at a fairly similar level to non-disabled respondents (35.29% and 45.45% respectively), almost a quarter (24%) of disabled parents and carers report that they

“ Having a disability while pregnant and freelance meant I had to keep working and doing face to face jobs that put my health at risk. In order to qualify for my maternity allowance I had to take jobs that I felt were unsafe. ”

Anonymous respondent

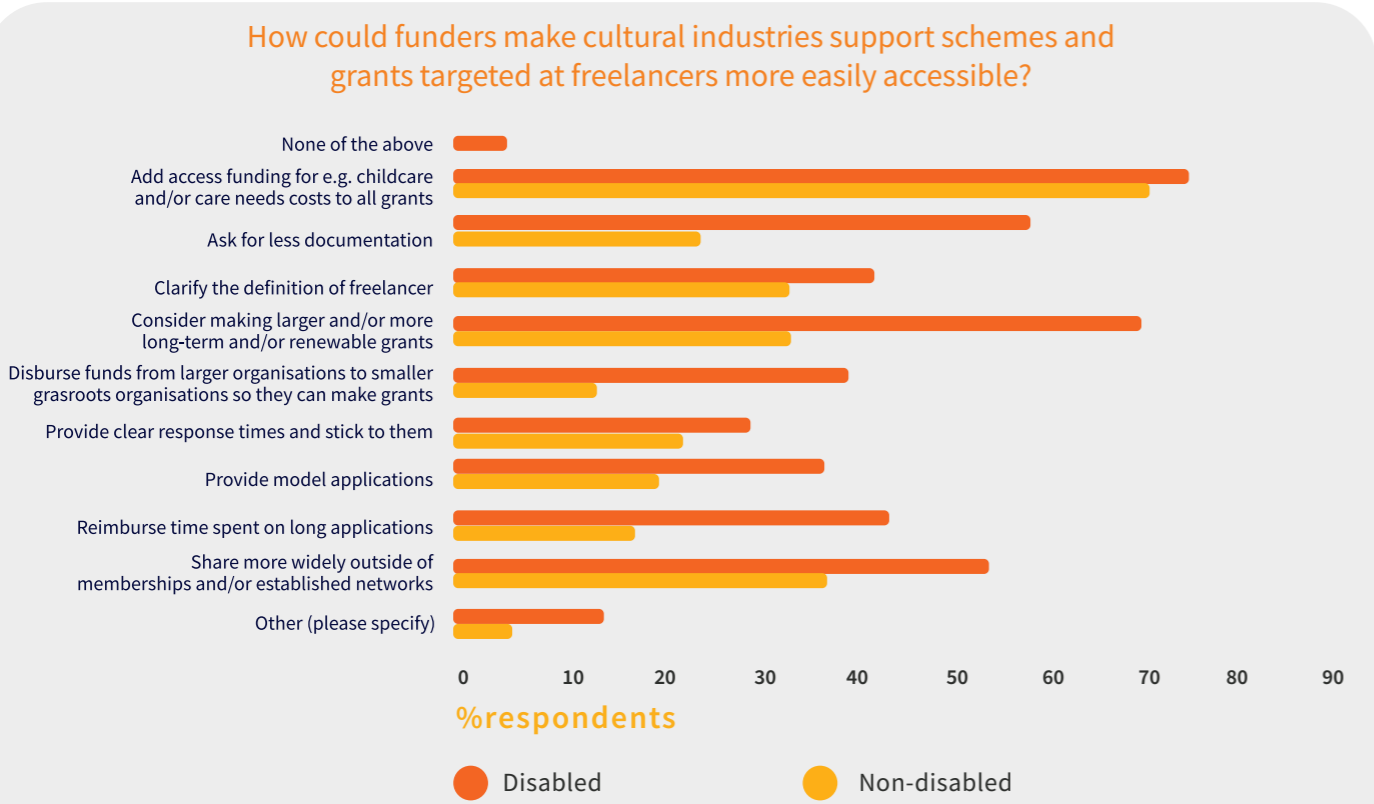


“ My dream work situation would be support for disability without constant comments about paperwork and a bullying environment in projects as under pressure to stay and do more hours to get through huge workloads. This pressure ultimately lies with productions insisting on shorter prep time to save money. ”

Female set decorator, 55-64yo, London

needed provisions but were unable to access them (compared to 12.83% non-disabled respondents). 28.26% of disabled respondents report lack of accessibility for disabled persons as a caregiving related barrier to working that has been exacerbated by COVID-19.

Two thirds (62.5%) of disabled workers are also freelance workers and therefore the changes to working practices during the pandemic that largely benefit employed/ fixed term workers can be seen to disproportionately impact disabled workers. This is reflected in the responses to Question 53 (see Figure 9), which asked how funders could make cultural industries support schemes and grants more easily accessible. Disabled workers want to see less documentation (59.09%), larger long-term renewable grants (68.18%), and reimbursement for time spent on long applications (43.18%). These responses speak not only to the difficulties freelance workers face, but also to the exacerbated accessibility issues for disabled workers and to the multiple exclusions that many disabled workers face as parents, carers, low income workers who lack the time and resources that these processes require.

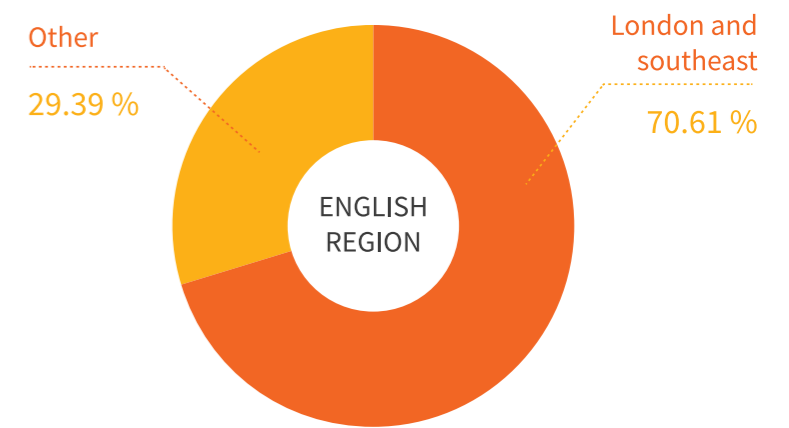


Disabled, n=44; Non-disabled, n= 158

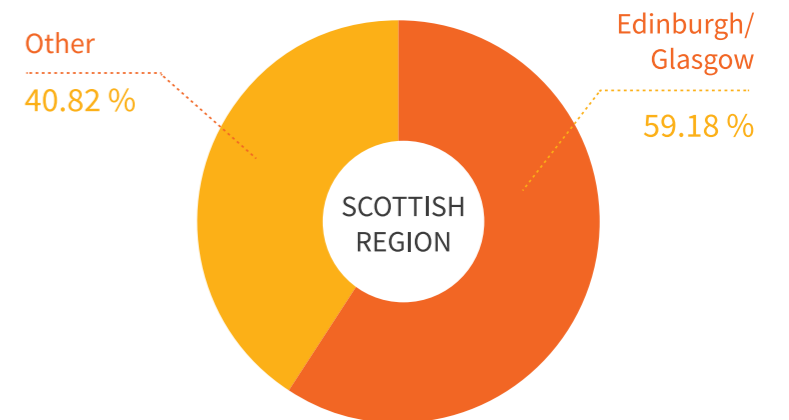
Figure 9

The Worker Outside Major Urban Areas

Our data supports the existing narrative that screen sector workers that live in major urban areas such as London, Edinburgh and Glasgow are privileged in their ability to access employment, better rates of pay and better working conditions compared to those who live outside of these major urban areas. For example, when asked about access to industry grants, over a third of those outside London and the southeast reported that they were unaware of the grants available (36.36% compared to 19.35% of those living in London and the southeast). In comparison, 66.13% of London and southeast-based workers reported that they did not need access to grants (47.27% of other respondents).



English region all respondents. n=347.



Scottish region all respondents. n=49.

51% of respondents living outside London and the southeast reported 'where I live' as having a negative impact on their ability to work in the screen sector. This is compared to just 6.51% of responses from London and southeast respondents. Those residing or working in London and the southeast in turn highlight their location as one of the most positive factors in their ability to work (43.8%). We see similar reporting from Scottish respondents, with 45% of those living outside of Edinburgh and Glasgow reporting 'where I live' as an obstruction, compared to 14.29% of responses from residents of major Scottish cities.

During the COVID-19 period, when remote and flexible working practices increased, we see the obstructive impact of location lessen, with 20.96% of those living outside London and the southeast reporting 'where I live' as an obstruction (London and southeast, 5.1%).

“ More positively, as someone who lives in Scotland, my location mattered less as I was able to conduct meetings via Zoom etc. ”
Anonymous respondent

“ Living outside of London was suddenly no longer the issue it was before. Able to make more of job, networking and training opportunities that would usually be quite literally physically out of reach (or require expensive travel to achieve) ”
Female director, 35-44yo, South West England, employed/ fixed term

“ Remote working has opened up jobs as I can work from home for companies in London and Manchester. ”
Anonymous respondent

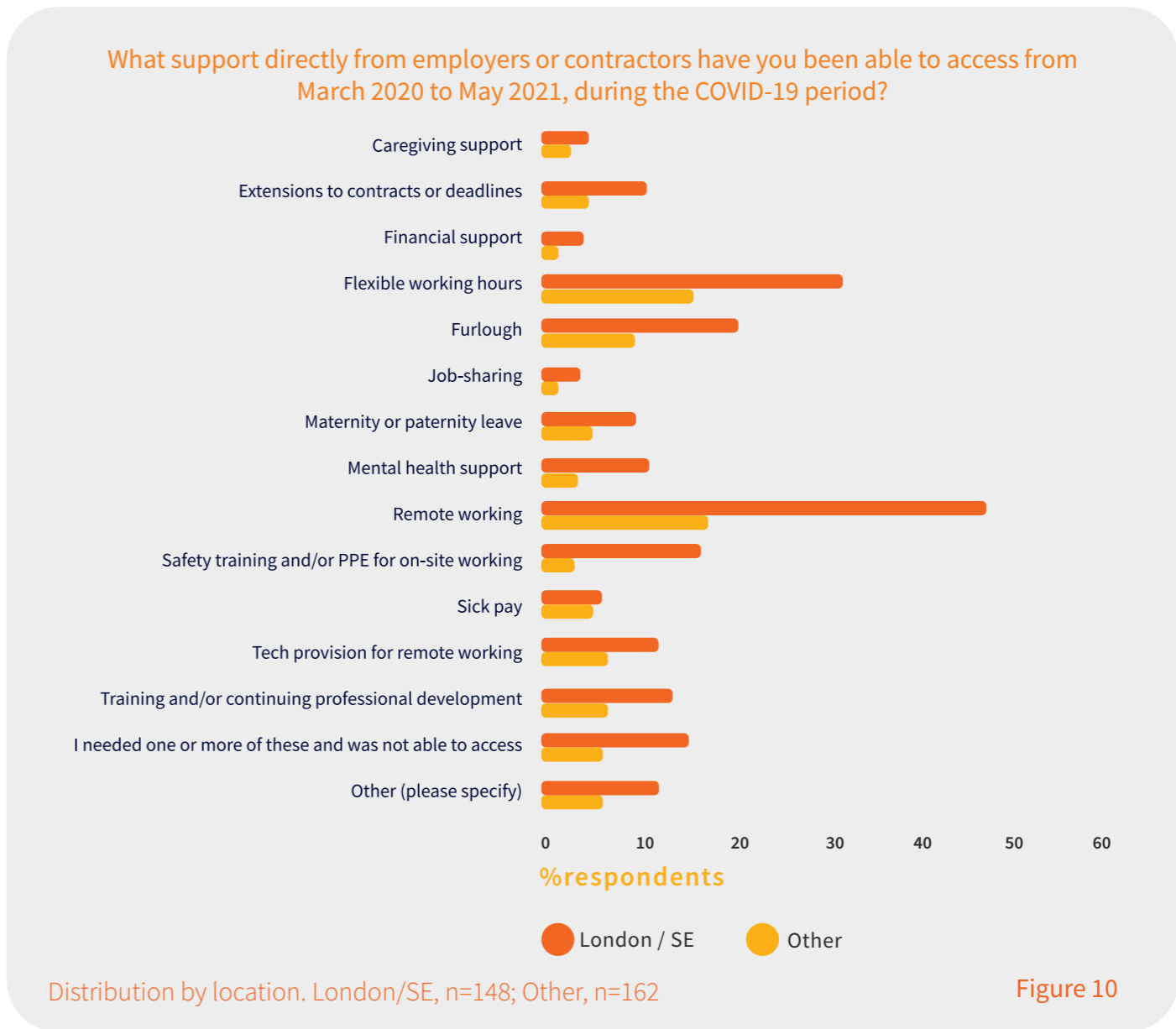
“ COVID and other health problems meant I couldn't work much. But, I like the way COVID has normalised working from home and that, for a while at least, London wasn't the centre of the universe. ”
Female 45-54yo, East of England, unspecified type of employment and role



We find no substantial differences between major urban area residents and others in reporting of the challenges of caregiving responsibilities, both generally and in the pandemic period. In both groups, caregiving situation was the most emphasised obstruction to working in the screen sector (58.85% London and southeast compared to 57% of other responses). And for both groups this increased during the COVID-19 period (77.55% London and southeast compared to 80.46% other responses). Similar numbers of respondents reported that they had gained additional caring responsibilities throughout the pandemic (57.92% London and South East and 63.95% other) and report that these changes to caregiving have impacted on the ability to work (56.32% London and South East and 58.02% other respondents).

Where the real differentials emerge for respondents living outside of major urban areas is in the extent and type of support received from employers. We find that those living outside urban centres had comparably less access to employer support in the

pandemic period than those living in major cities (see figure 10). ~30% more London and South East residents were able to access remote working and ~20% more were able to access flexible working hours compared to other respondents. In every category residents of London and the South East reported better access to support than non-residents. This lack of support may be partially accounted for by the overlap between location and employment type. 60% of the non-London and southeast residents in our sample were also freelance workers, who face increased precarity in their employment compared to employed/fixed term contracted workers. We witness again screen sector workers facing multiple and interwoven exclusions. While the pandemic has worsened working conditions for all caregiving screen sector workers, it is those that already faced increased challenges that are least able to access support.



Key Conclusions

With 81.35% of our respondents reporting that they had gained some kind of additional caring responsibilities throughout 2020-2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted, with some extremity, the impact of caregiving on people's personal lives and on their working lives.

However, caregiving has always been a part of working life. It is 'how we work now' but it is also 'how we worked before'. While 77.46% of respondents reported caregiving situation as an obstruction during the COVID period, even outside of the pandemic context that figure stood at 58.61% and was by far the most popular response.

Changes to working practices during the pandemic, including increased access to remote and flexible working have been beneficial for many workers and approximately 50% of our respondents would like to see Raising Films advocate for continued flexibility in working practices in the post-pandemic period. However, these changes in working conditions were by-and-large emergency responses to an emergency situation and going forward it is imperative to remember that blanket provisions do not have blanket effects. In developing robust and sustainable working practices for caregivers in the post-pandemic period, the needs of those facing exponential exclusions must be foregrounded.

ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES: Pour Yourself A Cup Of Ambition

The screen industries have shown themselves to be ambitious, determined and solutions-oriented. The rapid and effective implementation of on-set and in-cinema COVID safety protocols shows the success of centring health and safety practices across the board in UK production and exhibition. The industry has also made great strides in recognising the need to value and maintain mental and physical wellbeing at work through the introduction of mental health training and facilitators, intimacy co-ordinators, and anti-bullying and harassment measures and protocols. The next step is for the industry to recognise caregiving as intrinsic to the industry. In fact, as the last eighteen months have shown: **Caregiving is how we work now.**

The screen industries are not alone in facing the impact of COVID-19 – yet our survey shows that parent and carers working in the sector also face **unique, complex challenges** that pre-existed COVID, and have been both highlighted and exacerbated, particularly the lack of financial sustainability. Over the last five years, Raising Films has demonstrated that caregiving creates precarity, not least through pushing caregivers into freelancing and other underpaid and under-resourced work situations such as zero-hours contracts that fray the precarious patchwork of care. All freelancers share a degree of precarity: this is exponentially expanded by both financial and time-management aspects of caregiving responsibilities. While the deleterious financial and health impacts on caregivers are slowly being recognised, it's important to note this also has a negative impact on the stories that the industry will be able to tell, both in terms of the **exodus of skilled workers and the loss of creative input** from lived experience.

As Dawn Foster writes in Lean Out, “Ensuring your employees are kept in a state of precarity deskills your workforce. Productivity predictably slumps” (p.40).

Aspects of the screen industries that continue to exclude and precaritise caregivers include:

- exclusionary hiring based on informal and reputational networks
- hiring and employment practices that perpetuate gender inequality
- long hours and long weeks across production, exhibition and distribution
- increasing numbers of freelance, short-term and zero-hours roles
- little to no structural or systemic recognition of caregiving and its impact on workers
- a lack of truly flexible working and job shares in both salaried and freelance roles
- a lack of in-work financial and practical support and access for caregivers and caregiving
- a lack of recognition for caregiving as skilled labour
- few financial and practical solutions offered for childcare, carers' leave and respite care
- lack of resources or spaces for organising for better conditions

This is why our respondents, mirroring those in SMTJ/University of Nottingham's Locked Down and Locked Out study, call for:

- **flexible working that works for all**
- **sustainable, affordable, nationally available childcare for all**

Together, flexible working – as defined by the needs of the worker or employee – and affordable, available childcare **change the narrative**, enabling parents and carers to work. For work to be viable, however, it needs to offer **fair and equal pay** for **fair and equal employment opportunities** to address the economic roots of both exclusion and the mental health crisis.

Poverty excludes people from the industry

We represent a community that experiences in-work poverty in the screen industries. This is in part the impact of austerity politics, with respondents recognising the need for change at policy level to improve the situation for all: retaining the £20 uplift in Universal Credit, adopting Universal Basic Income and saving the paid childcare sector are among the recommendations that are beyond the scope of the screen industries, and show the scale of thinking in our community. Single parents, in particular, emphasised wages paid for caregiving, a Living Wage for all roles, and government grants for training and technology, showing a determination to remain in work, and a thought-through plan for how to make work work for them.

In order to retain talent, the sector has to contribute to addressing both **in-work poverty** due to low pay and poor hiring practices, and their **exclusionary impact** that leads parents and carers to leave the industry all together. **Parenting and caring act as systemic exclusion** because of their complex socio-economic impacts. Where caregiving additionally intersects with other axes of exclusion, that impact is multiplied exponentially, as shown in our cohort studies of single parents, carers, disabled parents and carers, and parents and carers located outside London and the south-east. One particular factor is the increasing likelihood of being a freelancer, which, as our cohort study shows, means lower income and far less recourse to any in-work support or employer accountability.

We need to put freelancers first

Some key solutions that focus on salaried staff are transferable – for example, transparency and fairness in hiring and HR apply to both salaried and contract work – but additional recognition must be paid to the more precarious financial position faced by freelancers, including those who are additionally caregivers, especially when work is speculative, cancelled, curtailed or unpaid, or where documentation, administration and/or expenses are deferred onto freelancers without additional remuneration. The screen industries must also acknowledge that it is not only the shortage of salaried roles, but also the lack of flexibility within them, that pushes parents and carers into freelancing in search of flexibility. We need to see the creation of more salaried positions that offer job shares, flexible working, and hybrid working, with a concomitant uplift in wages.

Accredited, accountable HR is needed to ensure fair, equal and transparent hiring

As work on bullying and harassment in the sector has shown, the screen industries lack **mechanisms for transparency and accountability in hiring and employment**, with knock-on effects on the talent pipeline, both at entry-level and in retention. The lack of equal, fair and accountable hiring has a particular impact on inclusion, acting both to We advocate for all roles involved in hiring and employment – managers, producers, and line managers, for example – to receive accredited industry-relevant training in the Equality Act and all employment and contract legislation with an intersectionally-inclusive remit and emphasis.

Employers and funders leading on equality, diversity and inclusion need to embed this perspective and practice organically in every decision and aspect of their organisation. This would mean that employers would not have to scramble for emergency solutions in a crisis: they should already be implemented, assessed and available to all – and it would also mean that workers would not have to beg for what we need. The amount of **reporting and advocacy on inclusion in employment** done by **grassroots, worker-led organisations** has soared during the pandemic: this is a tribute to the ambition, creativity and tenacity of the most precarious workers in our sector, and also a sign that work isn't working for those who are most in need.

Training, coaching and professional development can make an impact – when they are solutions-oriented and equally available to all when they are solutions-oriented and equally available to all.

Our survey demonstrates the collective organisational power of the sector when solutions emerge from within. It has the capacity to effect real, positive change to people's working lives. Online meetings and training very often increase accessibility for a wider cohort of people, which makes **hybrid engagement and events** in which in-person and online offerings are equal one of the keys to an equitable industry.

For training and professional development to continue its positive impact, access needs to continue. Across all income brackets, our respondents highlighted training, coaching and professional development as effective sources of sector-wide support. Among the organisations mentioned were: Raising Films, the Film and Television Charity, BECTU, Screenskills, Screenskills Ireland, Women in Film and Television, the BFI, including its Locked Box scheme, whereby a share of income from productions supported by the BFI Film Fund can be put aside and used for future projects or staff training, Raindance, and Directors UK. With a growing range of training available, we advocate for peer-reviewed assessment of screen industries' training and mentoring programmes to observe longitudinal career effects, towards improving both training and outcomes for all.

The screen industries tell stories: let's start to tell the stories of how we work best

Our survey respondents clearly state they want to see a **cultural change** in the screen industries. This has two interlinked dimensions: firstly, a widespread improvement in employment practices, with leadership from national organisations; and secondly, more transparency and collaboration about those practices, creating a set of shared protocols and priorities.

We know from our Raising Films Ribbon as well as our survey that this is a feedback cycle: while there are employers and productions **getting it right**, they are not always supported by the wider industry. This creates a lottery for screen industries workers who are placed in the position of having to ask for support rather than knowing what is

available. Therefore, we call for widely-recognised and respected, industry-supported forums and mechanisms for both **sharing and implementing best practice** in order to create a culture change towards a set of **shared protocols and priorities** that put workers – starting with the most precarious – first. That includes paid carers who make it possible for parents and carers to work in the screen industries.

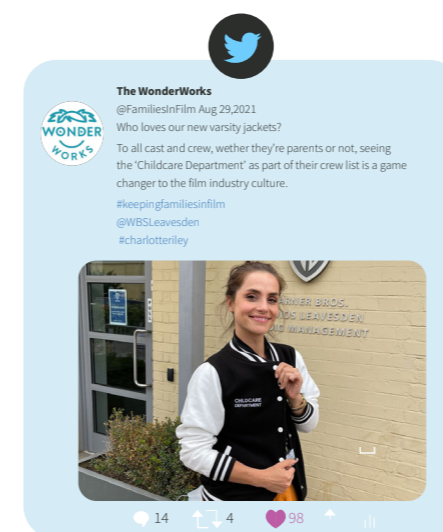
Recognise paid and unpaid carers as workers across the screen industries

Raising Films supports The WonderWorks³² and Nipperbout, who provide, respectively, studio-based (at Warner Bros. Leavesden Park) and mobile childcare solutions for the screen industries. More details on both services are available via our Creative Inclusive Productions resource.³³ While industry-supported pre-school childcare is not applicable to all parents and carers, it does go some way to address specific issues with the early years sector, including both the impact of

austerity and COVID-19, and the awkward fit between early years provision and working hours and schedules in production. The introduction of both studio-based and mobile childcare for production and festivals is indicative of the screen industries' ability to include caregivers' needs within its practices and its budgets.

As production returned in 2021, Raising Films Ambassador and WonderWorks founder Charlotte Riley literally modelled the inclusion of paid careworkers – and the unpaid caregivers they support – within the screen industries, wearing WonderWorks Childcare Department varsity jacket at Warner Bros. Leavesden.

As Riley notes, this is a 'game changer', and her reporting via social media also models our approach. WonderWorks are one of the recipients of the **Raising Films Ribbon**, which advocates for good practice across the sector, as collected in our **Creating Inclusive Productions** resource. We advocate for sharing stories of good practice as a



³² <https://www.thewonderworks.co.uk>

³³ <https://www.raisingfilms.com/creating-inclusive-productions-resource/>

key method for creating cultural change. We encourage all organisations, employers and individuals who work supportively with caregivers in the screen industries to apply for the ribbon, and more broadly we advocate for all organisations who employ and contract to be transparent about their inclusive hiring and employment practices and processes.

Fair work is possible – it’s already here. We should be proud to offer it and to experience it

Gaining and featuring the Raising Films Ribbon is one way to communicate to current and potential workers that your organisation transparently offers practical support and understanding. We also advocate including a **fair hiring and employment policy page** on your website, and including a statement of **inclusive policy, access and reasonable adjustment** for both employment and interview in all job advertisements, tenders and contracts.

Many organisations support and advise on available practices that can create equality, transparency and accountability in employment and contracting. We provide a non-exhaustive list of recommendations that we share with, and from, allies below, along with their reports and resources that can inform your next steps as employers and contractors. While these changes focus on hiring and retaining parent and carer employees and workers, they are rooted in and related to **practical changes that address multiple and intersecting systemic exclusions** from the screen industries workforce.

Next Steps

Raising Films commits to developing, consulting on, and working with an accountable body that advises on and monitors equality, inclusion and diversity in hiring, contracting, training and employment practices across the sector to ensure an end to exclusion and inequality. We advocate for the practices included in the next chapter (also available as a separate document titled **“How to Hire, Employ and Retain Parent and Carer Employees and Workers”**) as an initial guideline expanding on and supporting our calls to action.

To **make screen work work**, we call on the UK screen industries to undertake the

following six practical actions to make structural and systemic change:

- recognise and value unpaid parents and carers and paid care workers as workers already present across the screen industries
- recognise that caregiving is an inequality that exacerbates in-work poverty and systemic exclusion, especially and exponentially where it intersects with additional socio-economic inequalities.
- take structural and practical steps to address this through providing fair, equal and transparent hiring, employment, contracting and retention practices.
- design, provide and accredit comprehensive training in employment and equality law and best practices for all screen industries workers who hire and contract, with public funding contingent on undergoing and implementing such training.
- address the specific inequalities between employees and freelancers, given that screen workers are twice as likely to be freelance as workers across UK industry as a whole; and parents and carers in the screen industry are twice as likely to be freelancers as non-parents.
- via inclusive hiring, expand the industry’s vision and representation towards employing and supporting more voices and narratives that represent the full breadth and complexity of lived experience, including parenting and caring beyond white able-bodied heterosexual middle-class mothers.

In order to implement and sustain these changes across the industry evenly, transparently, effectively and in a timely fashion, we see it as essential that the screen industries:

- provide core and sustainable funding for grassroots worker organising across the sector, as best practices and solutions are emerging from community reporting and engagement.
- mandate and fund an accountability body with sanction power to

adjudicate fair and inclusive hiring, contracting, employment and retention across the screen industries, recognising all protected characteristics and axes of exclusion.

RAISING FILMS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIRING AND RETENTION: A Fair Promotion

We offer these recommendations of practical actions toward positive outcomes that could, collectively, address systemic exclusion across the screen industries by providing fair and equal access, addressing socio-economic inequalities that underlie the industry's persistent entry-level inequities, and the ongoing mental health crisis and related attrition of skilled workers that perpetuate inequality and exclusion at all levels of experience and seniority.

Our recommendations draw on, and are allied with, recent reports that highlight unequal and unethical employment practices in the screen industries and offer wide-ranging practical recommendations for redress. Alignments between these reports indicate a critical consensus on the need for, and direction of, change. Our sources, which we have collected in a freely-accessible Dropbox folder <https://bit.ly/3zqMqdS>, include:

- Coalition for Change, 'The Freelance Charter' (2021)³⁴
- Creative Access, 'On the Verge: The Impact of Coronavirus on Underrepresented Communities Within the Creative Industries' (2020)
- Dr Natalie Wreyford, Professor Helen Kennedy, Dr Jack Newsinger and Dr Rowan Aust, "Locked Down and Locked Out: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mothers working in the UK television industry." Institute for Screen Industries Research, University of Nottingham (2021)
- Producers' Roundtable, 'Campaigning for Better Accessibility and Sustainability for UK Film Producers' (2020)
- Christa van Raalte, Richard Wallis and Dawid Pekalski, 'State of Play 2021:

³⁴ <https://www.employersforcarers.org>

Management practices in UK Unscripted Television', Bournemouth University, supported by Bectu (2020)

- Natalie Wreyford, Dave O' Brien and Tamsyn Dent, Creative Majority: An APPG for Creative Diversity report on 'What Works' to support, encourage and improve equality, diversity and inclusion in the creative sector. A report for the All Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity (2021)

There are practical resources already available for you to consult, including Raising Films' own **Creating Inclusive Productions** site and our **Raising Our Game** checklists on legal issues in employment. The BFI Diversity Standards, now in their third edition in 2021, provide shared production-specific guidelines on hiring and employment with an inclusion remit. The Independent Cinema Office have introduced requirements for their jobs board, and broader guidelines for recruitment in exhibition that take equality and inclusion into account.³⁵

Beyond the screen industries, we have also drawn on reporting and recommendations from across the creative and cultural industries, including:

- Parents and Carers in Performing Arts (PiPA), **Key Working Practices for the Post-Covid Age**
- South West Museum Development Guide to Working with Freelancers³⁶
- The Uncultured, **Freelancer Supporters' Menu**³⁷
- We Shall Not Be Removed, **Seven Principles to an Inclusive Recovery for the Arts & Creative Sector**³⁸
- Heather Parry and Maria Stoian, **The Illustrated Freelancers' Guide 2021**

We also recommend Employers for Carers, Carers UK's membership service that works to design carer policies for individual workplaces, counting organisations such as the civil service and BT among its members. No creative and cultural industries employer has yet joined Employers for Carers – an opportunity to innovate and set the standard.³⁹

³⁵ <https://www.independentcinemaoffice.org.uk/blog-our-work-to-make-cinema-jobs-fairer/>

³⁶ https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/resources-search-results/?_sf_s=freelance

³⁷ <https://www.the-uncultured.com/blog/resource-a-freelance-supporters-menu-version-2>

³⁸ <https://www.weshallnotberemoved.com/2020/09/15/seven-principles-to-an-inclusive-recovery-for-the-arts-creative-sector/>

³⁹ <https://www.employersforcarers.org>

To develop any or all of these recommendations toward positive outcomes for your company or organisation, or within your training or education programme, we now offer Raising Your Game: a specialist training in the legal, practical and affective aspects of parent and carer inclusion across the screen industries, shaped to meet your workplace and working practices.⁴⁰

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Present your company visibly and positively, with evidence and accountability, as an inclusive employer and contractor, in order to attract and retain a wider range of staff and freelancers at all levels of seniority.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Highlight your practical inclusion policies on your company website, both public-facing and intranet: this could include securing a Raising Films Ribbon; and/or participating in Carers UK's Employer for Carers.

Include clear and transparent information on salary, flexible work policy, access and inclusion policy, caregiver support, and reasonable accommodations (e.g. remote access) in all job ads and tenders.

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Embed a care-led access-first culture in your workplace, ending the lottery and removing the onus from individuals to ask or agitate for inclusion.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Ensure that anyone with a responsibility for hiring, contracting, HR or employment knows, understands and is empowered to implement practical inclusion policies, and has clear lines of reporting to ask for further access support and accommodations.

End long hours/weeks and unpaid overtime expectations, and recognise the right to disconnect outside work hours, to help workers achieve work/life balance.

Offer childcare (and care respite, where applicable and practical) costs for all interviews and meetings, especially where they are short notice, and including where parents are working from home.

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Redress direct and indirect exclusion in hiring and employment that impacts caregivers, which perpetuates gendered as well as socio-economic inequalities.

⁴⁰ <https://www.raisingfilms.com/training/>

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Act from the understanding that pregnancy and parenting are protected characteristics under the Equality Act, with implications for all hiring and employment decisions; furthermore, we support Carers' UK's call for caring for adults to be recognised as a tenth protected characteristic.

Undertake and implement accredited training in fair and equal HR and hiring practices, which must include a full understanding of the interactions of part-time salaried and short-term contract work with receipt of state benefits.

Review all roles for the possibility of job shares, flexible hours, hybrid working or working from home, and ensure that both flexible working and any additional support required – e.g. crossover hours for a job share, tech support for working from home – are provided equally to all workers at all levels and in all areas of the organisation.

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Rebalance the ratio of employed and freelance roles in your organisation, and the distribution across them of workers with protected characteristics.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Consider whether conditions for salaried positions are excluding workers who need flexibility, and how salaried roles might be redistributed more fairly through flexible working.

Offer flexible employment; shared parental leave; maternity and sick pay from day one for all employees.

Address working practices that may exacerbate the burden on and/or exclude caregivers, such as long hours, evening and weekend working, uncertain or changeable schedules, inflexible job descriptions, and travel requirements.

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Address hiring and retention, including mental health issues, by practically and financially assisting employees and freelancers with caregiving responsibilities, with a focus on those who are most economically precarious.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Consult Raising Films' Ribbon stories, our Raising Our Game report, and our Creating Inclusive Productions resource for interventions across different scales and sub-sectors.

Follow and/or contact WonderWorks.

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Reach a wider talent pool by widening your hiring remit in terms of who is seen as employable/contractable, professional, a “good fit,” and/or “set-ready”.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Advertise all jobs, contracts, tenders and funding opportunities transparently and widely, looking beyond familiar networks and across nations and regions.

Offer working from home/remote working or hybrid working, job shares and flexible working models as standard in job ads and contracts, and consider how to state and negotiate best flexible working practices at interview without placing the expectation on applicants to ask for accommodations.

Recognise that caregiving is work: in job application forms and interviews, avoid referring to caring “breaks”, and instead design questions to draw out skills and experience related to caregiving.

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Address the structural inequalities facing contract workers and freelancers.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Set rates of pay with reference to Bectu rate cards and/or Artists’ Union (England/Scotland) suggested rates, advertise pay clearly in tenders and job ads, and pay promptly (including cancellation fees).

Produce and distribute a freelancers’ guide to your responsibilities as a contractor and/or subcontractor, with clear advice on freelancers’ lines of reporting, including complaints, to be provided in addition to a robust and fair contract, with contracting and guidelines in line with the Coalition for Change: Freelance Charter.

Limit the expectation of unpaid work from freelancers by decreasing the burden of documentation in applications, contract management and HR reporting.

Ensure freelancers have access to the same benefits as all staff, including: paid sick days, access support, training and continuing professional development, flexible working/job shares, reporting/whistleblowing.

Offer longer-term contracts and/or more extended grants that lessen the unpaid work of application and reporting, and allow freelancers to develop longer-term projects, and allow your organisation to develop longer-term relationships, including professional development, with freelancers.

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Address skills shortages and the cracks in the screen industries talent pipeline from entry-level to senior management.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Factor into training, recruitment, employment, and assessment that pregnancy, parenting and caring are experienced by workers of all genders, all ages and all employment experience, including young carers and parents and later-life carers, and that they present a socio-economic barrier with exponential effects when intersecting with gender, ethnicity, class, disability and location.

Include comprehensive practical and legal information on being a parent and carer, as well as on employing parents and carers, in all screen industries training and education for all roles, using our Raising Our Game checklists as a basis.

Offer paid returnships continuous and consonant with prior experience, that also recognise the skills and experience developed by caregivers during time not working directly in the sector.

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Aid retention of diverse workers towards long-term organisational growth and cultural change.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Make ‘cluster’ hires to prevent tokenisation.

Ensure that cultural change is already occurring and embedded, rather than asking new hires with protected characteristics to lead on or implement it unsupported.

Support and engage transparently with an industry-wide body that oversees hiring and employment practice.

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS: Give You Credit

“ The How We Work Now survey highlights just how challenging working in the screen industries is for those with caring responsibilities. The twin pressures of increased caring responsibilities coupled with ever longer days is causing burnout and mental health pressures. The industry must address work-life balance and support fulfilling careers, or the skills shortage will become worse. ”

BECTU
Philippa Childs,
Head of Bectu

“ While the UK’s screen sector is world-class in many respects, the pandemic has revealed the headlines hide stark realities which need to be addressed. This report illustrates the extent of these issues, but also highlights they are longstanding and deeply rooted in the way the industry operates. Urgent change is needed or the sector will continue to exclude people, pay poorly and have a lasting impact on workers’ health. ”

It’s great for the Screen Industries Growth Network to be working with organisations like Raising Film who have such great insights about the industry. ”

SIGN
Jon Swords

“ It is imperative we listen to the experiences of our workforce, so we are pleased to support this timely research by Raising Films which recognises the incredibly important role of carers in our society, and the difficulties they face in balancing those duties with work. With our industry relying on a largely freelance workforce, the pandemic had a significant and negative impact, and these findings give us unique insight into how those with caring responsibilities have struggled to rejoin the workforce as the industry has reopened. ”

BFI
Melanie Hoyes Industry Inclusion Executive
Inclusion / Film Fund

“ We agree with this new report that how we work now is not working and that the financial and mental health impact on those with caregiving responsibilities in the screen industries needs to be urgently addressed. A cultural change is indeed needed to address the disproportionate effects felt by under-represented groups highlighted in the research, including women, disabled employees, low-income and freelance workers. Flexible working, accessible childcare and training for hirers and employers are important first steps on the way out of this crisis. ”

WGGB
Ellie Peers General Secretary



Raising Films
www.raisingfilms.com



@RaisingFilms #HowWeWorkNow