



BFI

Response to

**Call for evidence to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee Inquiry
into the social impact of participation in culture and sport**

February 2018

British Film Institute (BFI) Response to call for evidence to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee Inquiry into the social impact of participation in culture and sport

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead organisation for film in the UK. For the BFI, film means anything that tells a story, expresses an idea or evokes an emotion through the art of the moving image. The BFI's ambition is to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of UK and world cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK - investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting UK film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI is a Government arm's-length body and distributor of National Lottery funds for film. It serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:

- As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
- By providing National Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK
- By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK

To these ends, the BFI helps ensure that public policy supports film and, in particular, UK film.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger.

Response

1. The BFI would like to take this opportunity to welcome the Committee's inquiry into the positive social impact culture and sport can have on health, community engagement, social mobility, crime reduction, education and diversity.
2. As the lead body for film in the UK, the BFI believes the positive impact of culture on society should be recognised and celebrated.
3. The BFI is a distributor of National Lottery funds for film. The National Lottery is designed to ensure that income for good causes is maximised and overall £37 billion has been invested in communities across the UK through over 525,000 individual funding awards - more than 185 grants to every community. The cumulative impact across diverse communities, interests and demographics via the range of different good causes is significant with almost every part of civic life invested in. Each distributor – including the BFI – ensures the widest range of people

and communities can participate, where appropriate, and across all lottery distributors more than 70% of grants have been for less than £10,000.

4. At the heart of the BFI's mission is looking to the future. We are bringing forward the next generation of British talent, creating opportunity where it might not exist, making career progression as easy as possible and making sure doors open where they might appear closed. We want to showcase, invest in and present the best talent we have in the UK and make it easy for everyone to engage in film - no matter what their gender, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, social background or geographic location. This commitment can be seen in the wide range of activities undertaken and supported by the BFI as part of our five year strategy, BFI 2022¹. It includes a number of programmes which demonstrate the power film and the wider screen sector have to promote education, diversity and inclusion, community engagement, health and social mobility.

A. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

5. BFI has led the way in looking to the future and embedding diversity and inclusion at the heart of the UK screen sector. Diversity and inclusion are central to all of the BFI's activities and decision making – both within our own organisation and also in those that we fund. The current lack of diversity in the screen sector is a burning issue. Talent is everywhere, but opportunity is not, and we are taking concrete steps to rectify this problem. Internationally, the UK is seen to be a leader in driving change in this area.

BFI Diversity Standards

6. The BFI's world-first Diversity Standards² have led global change in improving diversity and inclusion in the screen sector. As a National Lottery distributor and public funder, the BFI seeks to reflect the public in the films we fund, the programmes we support, the audiences who watch them and the filmmakers, actors and crews who make them. We insist that the projects we support must embrace these Standards and help those we fund identify how they can improve diversity and inclusion in their activity. The Standards focus on disability, gender, race, age and sexual orientation where there is significant under-representation. We also seek to ensure that people from lower socio-economic groups are better represented.
7. Applicants for funding are expected to meet the criteria of at least two of four Standards and actively encouraged to pursue at least three. These categories cover on-screen representation, themes and narratives; project leadership and creative practitioners; industry access and opportunities; and opportunities for diversity in audience development. The screen diversity mark of good practice is awarded to projects that achieve the Standards in at least three categories to use in the end roller credits on films billing blocks and paid advertising or other promotional or printed materials.
8. Under BFI leadership, Film4 and BBC Films have both signed up to the Diversity Standards and BAFTA has committed to add them to the eligibility criteria for the Outstanding British Film and Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer categories from 2019. This demonstrates BFI's collaborative leadership role with the wider screen sector.

¹ <http://www.bfi.org.uk/2022/>

² <http://www.bfi.org.uk/about-bfi/policy-strategy/diversity/diversity-standards>

Guidance and Principles on Bullying and Harassment

9. The BFI has led the charge – in consultation with leading sector organisations including unions, guilds, industry member bodies and key agencies as well as employees and freelancers across all roles – to adopt the world-leading set of principles and guidelines to tackle and prevent bullying and harassment for the screen sector³. Developed in partnership with BAFTA, the principles take a zero-tolerance policy on bullying and harassment, and include a recognition of the value of inclusivity, appreciating difference and considering people equal without prejudice or favour. The BFI will maximise the leverage we have as a funder to ensure anyone who secures BFI funding is contractually committed to adhere to these principles by incorporating them into the Diversity Standards.
10. Specific measures will be recommended including appointing two designated workers on and off set to be trained to handle issues and allegations, ensure workers understand their rights and know how to seek help and support. We will work with partners to offer training and advice for those with this designated responsibility.
11. From April, a new Film and TV Support Line will be set up by industry charity the Cinema and Television Benevolent Fund and supported by the BFI, offering a free of charge service for anyone working in the film and television industry. It will be operated 24/7 by professionally trained staff with expertise and experience in supporting people affected by a range of issues.

Targets

12. We have set targets⁴ across our talent development work (through BFI NETWORK), our development funding and our production funding. We are aiming for a 50-50 gender balance in our supported filmmakers; for 20% of our supported filmmakers to come from Black, Asian and Minority (BAME) groups; 9% of our supported filmmakers to be LGBTQ-identifying filmmakers; and 7% of our supported filmmakers to be filmmakers with a disability. We will monitor and report our decisions annually across the writers, directors and producers of supported projects. We have long been guided by these principles, but we will put these in place formally from April 2018, in tandem with our new funding year. We believe these targets can help to drive real diversity and inclusion in the films we support, which is vital to ensuring more cultural vibrancy, relevance and commercial growth in our sector.

13. We recognise that there is still a great deal of work to do, and strive for representativeness in our own workforce and that of the wider screen sector. We believe that stronger and better representation of the whole of the UK both on and off screen will lead to a much greater diversity of stories being told through the moving image. This in turn will increase participation and engagement of all audiences, to the benefit of the cultural the film sector. Film has the power to engage all sections of society, and we must harness that power.
14. The BFI is leading the way in making a diverse and inclusive screen sector a reality and we look forward to continued support and recognition from the UK Government for taking the lead and delivering on this important agenda.

³ <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/announcements/new-anti-bullying-harassment-principles>

⁴ <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/bfi-film-fund-changes>

B. EDUCATION

15. As set out in the BFI 2022 strategy, it is our ambition to create clear progression paths for talented young people who will be the future of the growing screen sector. Young people are the most intensive users of the moving image, and the explosion of creation and self-distribution we have seen in content in recent years is a clear indication of the fertile area for the moving image in the future of education. When it comes to ensuring the UK has the workforce needed for the future, there is significant pressure on the market for skills, particularly in craft and technical skills. There is a need to harness the enthusiasm young people have for the moving image, and grow the skills of potential future filmmakers to ensure our sector's future success.

BFI Future Film Skills Action Plan

16. We have announced a £20m Future Film Skills Action Plan⁵ - which will be delivered by Creative Skillset - to invest in the world class skills needed to ensure future success for the UK screen sector. The plan stresses the need for a young and diverse workforce that is representative of the society in which we live. It recognises that at present, the single biggest challenge facing the sector is the need to improve inclusion, with a lack of representation affecting all minority groups. It also identified that there was a lack of visible role models and understanding of the opportunities on offer in the sector among minority groups, and that aspirational barriers existed as a consequence.
17. As part of the BFI's commitment to addressing the skills gap, in 2017 it piloted the Future Skills traineeship programme. In partnership with a major production studio, 28 trainees – primarily alumni of the BFI Film Academy - were successful in securing a traineeship in various craft and technical roles across a major studio film being made at Pinewood Studios. This programme is an exemplar of industry-led youth training with a specific focus on inclusion and designed to provide opportunities to address under-representation in the workforce. On this programme 75% of the trainees are women, 45% come from BAME backgrounds, 68% were recruited outside Greater London and 36% received free school meals. The programme is now going into its second pilot phase and will be placing a further 30 fully paid trainees from under-represented backgrounds on to a major studio production in 2018.

Into Film

18. Supported by the BFI with National Lottery funding, Into Film⁶ is a key initiative putting film at the heart of the educational and personal development of children and young people. It delivers one of the UK's widest reaching cultural education initiatives. Significant numbers of schools in the four nations engage in a film education programme that embraces both formal learning (with resources for teachers and teacher training in 2016/17) and non-formal learning, through a network of over 10,000 extra-curricular film clubs.

⁵ <http://www.bfi.org.uk/sites/bfi.org.uk/files/downloads/future-film-skills-an-action-plan-2017.pdf>

⁶ www.intofilm.org

19. A number of independent evaluation studies have found evidence of the educational value of incorporating film in formal education. Into Film's programme and film education support the raising of educational attainment; increase pupil's enjoyment of and engagement with learning; nurture personal and skills development; and build awareness of and aspiration to pursue careers in film and the wider screen sector. This helps to create the foundations for the development of a skilled, diverse workforce upon which continued economic success will depend.
20. However, it is also important to remember that extracurricular film clubs play an equally valuable role in children and young people's academic, social and cultural development. In a 2016/17 independent survey of film club leaders, 80% said that film clubs benefit literacy development; 92% agreed that film clubs enhance access to culture; 88% agreed that film clubs developed participant's social skills; and 86% agreed that film clubs develop participant's confidence.

BFI Film Academy

21. The Department for Education-backed BFI Film Academy⁷ provides the next step in the clear progression path for talented young people. This is a national programme aiming to provide opportunities for young people between the ages of 16-19, no matter where they live or what their background. Participants are given hands-on experience to develop specialist film-making skills so they can build a career in the screen sector. The BFI Film Academy addresses three key barriers to entry: diversity, geography and knowledge barriers and networks and aspirations.
 22. To address these barriers, the Academy:
 - recruits participants from a range of backgrounds and communities
 - works with sector professionals to further participants knowledge of the entry routes, employer expectations, and variety of roles available
 - operates UK wide
 - gives participants a better idea of what they want to do in the future
 - enables participants to make contacts and meet collaborators with whom to continue making films.
 23. The BFI Film Academy has consistently performed above the Department for Education target of 19% of participants from BAME groups.. The Academy operates in 36 locations across England, making special efforts to recruit from schools with a high number of students taking up free school meals and in areas of disadvantage. An evaluation found that quality and participant satisfaction was high; the Academy influenced participant's post-programme choices; it accelerates and opens up options for participant's early career development; and the local film education infrastructure benefitted.
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24. Creating a pipeline of talent starts early and initiatives, such as Into Film, are excellent examples of providing children with the chance to experience film creatively from an early age. This in turn leads to young people's interest in filmmaking as a career, who we nurture through

⁷ http://www.bfi.org.uk/education-research/5-19-film-education-scheme-2013-2017/bfi-film-academy-scheme?gclid=EAlaIqobChMItavvu8-q2QIVSRbTCh0Ptg-tEAYASAAEgKZ4vD_BwE

our Film Academy. But we know there are still barriers to entry, and our mission to eradicate these barriers is at the heart of the Future Film Skills Action Plan. The BFI will lead, alongside Creative Skillset, on the development of a professional skills framework for new entrants and employees in the creative screen sector.

25. This is not just about ensuring the economic success of the film sector, but making sure that all potential filmmakers and audiences are giving the opportunity and the tools to engage with film in a meaningful way. We know that access to culture can improve happiness and wellbeing and by opening doors where they might have appeared closed we can ensure that everyone is able to take advantage of the opportunities film has to offer. Even where participants in educational film initiatives do not grow up to become filmmakers, we can see the wider benefits their engagement with film brings to themselves and to society; film has the power to benefit literacy development, social skills and confidence. In this way, we are creating skilled adults of the future.

C. AUDIENCES

26. Audiences across the UK love film, and the BFI plays a role in enhancing individual's engagement with their own community through the power of film. It is our mission to embrace and value the rich and diverse range of great filmmaking that the BFI stands for and deliver this to communities right across the UK.

BFI Cultural Programme

27. The BFI organises seasons of film celebrating the vibrancy and diversity of the UK. In 2016, we unveiled 'Black Star', the UK's biggest ever season of film and television dedicated to celebrating the range, versatility and power of black actors. This far-ranging and comprehensive three-month retrospective examined the landmarks of black cinema and television in partnership with the BFI Film Audience Network, Into Film and the Independent Cinema Office in cinemas across the UK, online, on DVD/Blu-ray and on television.
28. We host the BFI's annual Flare: London LGBT Film Festival - the UK's longest running and largest LGBT film event. Last year's festival presented over 50 features, more than 100 shorts and a wide range of special events, guest appearances, discussions, workshops, and club nights, offering a broad range of programming exploring LGBT issues.
29. As part of UK/India 2017 – a major cultural collaboration between the two countries – we celebrated the diversity of Indian filmmaking and films about India in a season both in cinemas and online. Our programme included previews of the biggest new films, independent cinema and restorations of classic titles.

BFI Film Audience Network and Diversity and Access Initiatives

30. Our UK-wide Film Audience Network (FAN) - made up of eight regional and national hub lead organisations and 1,500 partners - provides a comprehensive geographic reach across the UK, increasing the breadth and depth of film available to audiences.

31. FAN develops and funds audience-facing projects at a local level. As part of our 2022 strategy commitment to devolve more decision-making we recently announced over £4 million of National lottery funding per year until 2022 for FAN and broadened their remit in England to include responsibility for supporting new and diverse filmmaking talent in their regions. Enhanced funding will also enable the FAN hub lead organisations to invest in local film festivals as well as to work on more joint projects across the UK. In England, FAN's geography has also been brought in line with Arts Council England's boundaries. This will increase the potential for cultural partnership and collaborations.
32. Last year an Access Officer was appointed across the BFI's Film Audience Network. Developed in response to the success of initial projects run by BFI FAN hubs across the UK the role seeks to unite activities and to offer a strong message of welcome to audiences that may otherwise have difficulty engaging in cinema. A year-round programme of dementia-friendly film screenings and supported events was announced alongside the production of a UK-wide accessible screenings model and an online resource enabling exhibitors to build confidence when working with diverse groups.
33. Data collected from the surveys issued after FAN events showed that 13% of FAN event attendees in 2016/17 belonged to a BAME group, which is representative of the UK population as a whole. This is particularly positive, as BAME groups tend to be underrepresented in participation in cultural activities.

Britain on Film

34. Through the work of the BFI's National Archive, we launched Britain on Film⁸, a project revealing the hidden histories and forgotten stories of people and places from the UK's key film and TV archive. The BFI digitised 10,000 films via the BFI Player giving everybody in the UK free access to films featuring where they live, grew up, went to school, holidayed as a child or any place of interest in Britain. Britain on Film presents a Britain that is vibrant, diverse and eccentric, whilst shining a light on social issues and situations that affect every generation. Many of these films had never or rarely been seen and can now be searched for by specific UK locations through BFI Player's ground breaking Film and TV Map of the UK. This has enabled people to share films with their family, friends and communities. Events and screenings were held across the country to engage communities with their own local histories as presented on film.
35. An Audience Impact Study conducted in 2017 showed that those engaging with Britain on Film were primarily doing so to make a connection to an area in which they currently live (42% of users surveyed) or used to live (24% of users surveyed). Around a third of respondents indicated that they had learnt something new about their local area or learnt something new about Britain. Those who used the Britain on Film programme self-reported significantly higher levels of happiness and sense of purpose. The project also complements the BFI's broader work opening up the UK's film heritage to UK audiences.

⁸ <http://www.bfi.org.uk/britain-on-film>

BFI Mediatheques

36. BFI Mediatheques provides free access to the BFI National Archive, the world's greatest and most diverse archive of film and television. There are Mediatheques in locations across the UK including in Birmingham, Glasgow, Manchester, Yorkshire and Wrexham.
37. Anyone can drop in to browse an extraordinary range of complete films and television programmes drawn from the BFI National Archive and partner collections. Curated collections of films range from the film-making of our industrial past – showing shipbuilding, coal-mining and steel-making – to the finest in British television drama. A wide range of other themed collections are available, exploring aspects of British social and cultural history from the 1890s to today, and new titles are added regularly.

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38. By representing the breadth of the UK population, and reaching out to communities across the country, we deliver a rich, engaging and diverse cultural programme. We engage young audiences and keep them for life and ensure that everyone everywhere in the UK is able to enjoy more of the UK's moving image heritage. Not only does this help individuals engage with film and culture more widely, but also with the communities they belong to. Audiences can see people like themselves in archive footage and in this way feel a real sense of belonging and community. Participants also learn more about their own and their communities' histories and that of the UK. They learn about different cultures and other lives and in this way have greater empathy. In this way, audience engagement in cultural films – new or old - can make a real impact on wider society.

D. MOVING IMAGE AND HEALTH

39. Great filmmaking enriches our lives and contributes to our wellbeing through revealing shared experience and understanding as well as things we do not yet know. There is a growing wealth of evidence to support the role that culture can have in improving wellbeing. A 2015 Arts Council England study into cultural activities, arts forms and wellbeing⁹ found that “all forms of cultural engagement and all art forms are positively associated with happiness and relaxation [...] Cultural activities rank very highly in terms of impacts on happiness and relaxation in comparison to the other activities”. Whilst contributing to health issues is not specifically addressed in our 2022 strategy, we recognise the value that great filmmaking can have to wellbeing, and audiences' understanding of the experiences they or others face.

BFI-funded films exploring health issues

40. We seek out the opportunity to explore health and wellbeing issues in the films we fund and bring them to audiences who may be able to relate to these issues themselves, or learn more about others experiences. The BFI used National Lottery funding to support the ground-breaking and award-winning feature film *Notes on Blindness*¹⁰. This film brings to life John Hull's audio recordings, which he began when he became blind. Filmmakers Peter Middleton and John Spinney made deliberate visual and audio choices to bring to life Hull's experience to the audience, as well as producing an accompanying unique virtual reality experience which

⁹ http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Cultural_activities_artforms_and_wellbeing.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.notesonblindness.co.uk/>

focused on Hull's process of mapping acoustic space. Audiences are given the opportunity to become immersed in what it was like for Hull to lose his sight.

41. Through our Development Fund, we are supporting Raging Quiet, a film project with Gingerbread Pictures, and written by Chloe Wicks. Raging Quiet is set in the 17th century and will explore the relationship between a young woman and a young deaf man. We are also supporting Orlando Von Einsiedel's next documentary feature Evelyn, which is based on the writer/director's personal experiences of death and pain portrayed through an epic walk across the UK.

Wellcome Screenwriting Fellowship

42. We support the Wellcome Screenwriting Fellowship in partnership with the Wellcome Trust and Film4. The prize is awarded to screenwriters looking to explore the relationship between cinema and science. Previous fellows have often gone on to explore issues of health – including mental health – in the films they make.

Innovation and medical research

43. There are also some innovative new video games aiding improvements in medical research by collecting play data. For example both Sea Hero Quest¹¹ and Reverse the Odds¹² are using collective user play data to complement medical studies on Alzheimer's disease and cancer research respectively.

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44. The BFI agrees with the Art Council England Cultural Activities, Artforms and Wellbeing report recommendation that it would be "important and fruitful for cultural institutions to collect data on momentary wellbeing and experience from their visitors and participants. This data can be linked with specific interventions and activities to provide a more fine-grained level of analysis on the drivers of affective wellbeing in the cultural sector" and in this way we can continuously evaluate and improve our interventions in this space. The BFI also looks forward to working with Government on exploring ways in which the moving image and the BFI archives can be used to aid our understanding of health and wellbeing.

E. CONCLUSIONS

45. The BFI strongly believes in the positive social impact the moving image can have on individuals and on society. From an early age, engagement with film in a meaningful way can provide opportunities for teachers to broaden children's cultural horizons, have a positive impact on student's confidence and attainment, and open up options for participant's early career development where the opportunity may not have existed before. By offering these opportunities to individuals from a broad range of backgrounds and opening the door to careers in film, we can in turn improve the diversity of great stories told in the UK through the medium of the moving image.
46. This also has the power to attract new audiences, who can benefit from the community engagement and wellbeing a life-long relationship with film can have. The three priorities

¹¹ <http://www.seaheroquest.com/site/en/>

¹² <https://www.oncology.ox.ac.uk/page/reverse-odds>

outlined in the BFI's 2022 strategy – Future Learning and Skills, Future Talent and Future Audiences – all have their role to play in this virtuous circle. Improving diversity, community engagement, education, and social mobility are central to the BFI's priorities both for our own activities and for the wider screen sector.

47. We have a leading role to galvanise the screen sector to understand the social impact of the moving image better. The building blocks are already in place and we have the opportunity to meaningfully measure our work in a way that helps us understand its social value, as well as its economic value.

48. We look forward to undertaking further work with other culture and sport organisations, the Government and the Committee to strengthen of understanding of these interventions collectively.