

How to Hire, Contract and Retain Parent and Carer Employees and Workers

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) ¹
- Creative Access, 'On the Verge: The Impact of Coronavirus on Underrepresented Communities Within the Creative Industries' (2020)
- 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: Management practices in UK Unscripted Television', Bournemouth University, supported by Bectu (2020)
- Natalie Wreyford, Helen Kennedy, Jack Newsinger and Rowan Aust, "Locked Down and Locked Out: The impact of the pandemic on mothers working in the UK television industry." Institute for Screen Studies Research (2021)¹

There are resources already available for you to consult, including Raising Films' own **Creating Inclusive Productions** page on our website 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.²

1. <https://www.broadcastnow.co.uk/freelancers/the-coalition-for-change-freelancers-charter/5162754.article>

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

2 Raising Films recommends

Beyond of 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 Freelancers³
- The Uncultured, Freelancer Supporters' Menu
- We Shall Not Be Removed, Seven Principles to an Inclusive Recovery for the Arts & Creative Sector⁴
- 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.

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:** 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.

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.

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

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

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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.

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POSITIVE OUTCOME

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

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 an 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



6 Raising Films recommends

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.

This document is one of the outcomes of our
How We Work Now survey and reporting - October 2021

See our website for full information, reports
and other assets and downloads.