BBC Radio Diversity & Inclusion Commissioning Guidelines
“Diversity and inclusion really matters to the BBC – nothing can be more important than ensuring that we represent our audiences and a vibrant, changing Britain with absolute authenticity. The simple truth is that audiences will stay tuned to BBC Radio if they recognise themselves in our output.

This is also a cultural imperative. We must actively seek out and embrace a broad range of voices in all areas of the Radio programme-making process to make this the most creative organisation. New voices, new talent and fresh perspectives will enrich our output.

BBC Radio has made excellent progress. But we can – and must - do better. We have set ourselves some pretty stretching BBC-wide targets to deliver diversity both on-air and across our people, and we are accountable.

But this is a collective challenge and we can't achieve this without the efforts of our programme-makers, whether that’s BBC Radio Production or our independent partners.

We trust that these new Diversity Radio Commissioning Guidelines will provide support and clarity to suppliers, and embolden our mission to reinvent and grow BBC Radio.

We need to work together to deliver lasting change”

Bob Shennan
Director, Radio
Our charter demands it
Our audience deserves it

We are tasked by the Royal Charter to ensure that our output reflects the diverse communities of the whole of the UK, accurately and authentically, with specific emphasis on reflecting under-represented communities, cultures and languages, and all socio-economic backgrounds.

As set out in the BBC Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, these guidelines put a particular emphasis on our commitment to black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), disabled people, those identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), and on ensuring gender balance. In addition, we are setting stronger objectives to improve our geographical portrayal across the UK to ensure we better capture and celebrate the distinct stories and lives across all four Nations.

Shared values
Shared commitment

By 2020, the BBC aims to have met stretching new on screen portrayal and workforce targets, covering a wider range of diversity than ever before. We want diversity and inclusion to be something that everyone at the BBC understands, and all those who make programmes for us support.

We are using our position in the industry to ensure that anyone who makes programmes for us shares our values and commitments.

Our responsibility is clear. So too is our vision.
“If you really care about being creative and you really care about reflecting the nation in your programme making, you need to read this!”

Jonathan Wall
Controller, Radio Five Live
How we can work together

Set at national level but with full awareness of the demographic differences across the UK, and the size of teams and independent companies, the BBC’s targets for 2016-2020 demonstrate our ambitions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORKFORCE</th>
<th>2017 Target</th>
<th>2020 Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>5.3%*, 5%**</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Asian and ethnic minorities</td>
<td>14.2%*, 10%**</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBT</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>8%</td>
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* All Staff ** Leadership

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† Portrayal only

In addition, we’re deeply committed to improving representation of all socio-economic backgrounds, as we strive for a wider range of voices to be heard on and off air.

To help us deliver some of our responsibilities against these targets and ambitions, we have created a set of guidelines for all independent suppliers of our on air content. These guidelines give a particular focus to the UK's ethnic minority and disabled communities, and apply to all radio genres.

We will further evolve these guidelines as we learn what works.

In order to ensure we achieve our aims and targets, we will all need to be ambitious – particularly with returning commissions. We understand that these guidelines constitute a big ask for some. Smaller independent suppliers may find some suggestions particularly challenging. But we ask that, with our support, you join us in moving the content landscape forward. Sharing resources and know how, we can strengthen the industry together, becoming sustainably diverse and increasingly creative – and our audiences will be better and more widely served than ever before.
“If you want to connect with your audience, then you need to have shared experiences, common points of reference and authenticity in your story telling.”

Ben Cooper
Controller, BBC Radio 1/1Xtra/Asian Network
What are the aims of the Diversity Commissioning Guidelines?

They are intended to provide clear direction for our production partners to help us in our aims to:

• Meet our portrayal targets for BAME, Disability, LGBT and women by 2020.
• Increase opportunities for talent (on and off air) from under-represented groups.
• Release greater creativity as more voices and experiences feed into production processes.
• Reflect the audience better by widening the range of backgrounds portrayed on screen, maximising engagement across all audience groups.
What you can do

1. Create your own Diversity and Inclusion policy
When you submit an Editorial Specification and/or Development Agreement, you will be asked whether you have a Diversity and Inclusion policy in place for your company. If you do not currently have a policy, a template is available from the Creative Diversity Network (CDN): www.creativediversitynetwork.com/resource/template-equality-and-diversity-policy-2/

2. Consider the Diversity Commissioning Guidelines and talk to us about your ambitions
The following guidelines focus on five key areas:
1. On air: portrayal
2. On air: talent
3. Off air: production team
4. Off air: entry level
5. Off air: senior editorial roles
As set out on the Editorial Specification and/or Development Agreement, you will be expected to have a conversation with your BBC Commissioning Editor – to discuss your diversity ambitions and how they align with our diversity priorities. BBC Commissioning teams will be advised and supported by the BBC’s relevant Diversity and Disability experts.
Please note that we are intentionally not setting specific targets. We want all our suppliers to set their own ambitions that progress us towards a truer reflection of modern Britain, whilst acting within the law.
“It is our challenge and our privilege to seek out a more diverse range of talent, ideas and experiences to create the best possible programmes for our discerning listeners. Our output must reflect modern British society, and we can only maintain our relevance and be brilliant by embracing diversity.”

Gwyneth Williams
Controller, Radio 4
We now expect each commission to be doing everything it can to meet the guidelines. The positive steps you plan to take to address under-representation will be factored into commissioning discussions ahead of productions being green lit.

We do recognise that our suppliers are all different. Some face distinct diversity challenges due to their size or geographical base. Therefore, we ask that you liaise with your commissioner about any particular hurdles as they come up – and a proportionate approach can be considered.

These are guidelines we’re expecting all suppliers to adhere to. Any suppliers unable to work with these guidelines must let their BBC commissioner know as soon as possible.

To further support you, we offer:

• Points of contact at the BBC.

• Access to the Expert Voices database of diverse experts to use as contributors

• Continued contact with commissioners to discuss genre plans and priorities in terms of on-air under-representation.

• An active discussion between commissioner and producer on every commission at the point of Editorial Specification and/or Development Agreement.
“These guidelines are welcome and will help 6 Music broaden, deepen and enrich its mission to reflect the British alternative musical experience.”

Paul Rodgers
Head of Station, 6 Music
**BBC Diversity Commissioning Guidelines:**

To support the BBC’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, commissioning editors will develop an approach with suppliers to improve representation, taking into account the genre, existing talent base, geographical location and specific nature of the programme.

These guidelines are here to support you in helping us to meet our ambitions and published targets. It may not be possible or practical to improve diversity in all areas for all productions both on and off screen but we expect companies to demonstrate having taken active steps towards making improvements in this area. We also expect programme makers to operate within the law.

To assist companies, set out below are a range of approaches and guidelines.
On air: Portrayal

We are committed to meeting ambitious new portrayal targets that cover a wider range of diversity than ever before – with positive impact for audiences and greater opportunity for diverse talent. We need your help to ensure that the UK’s diverse communities and groups are authentically represented on air and that we deliver a rich and thought-provoking mix of portrayal.

We’re asking you to:

• Consider widening the pool from which you select talent and contributors to include more LGBT, BAME and disabled talent working across the whole range of output, not just stories that reflect their background.

• Encourage your researchers to look to accurately reflect all communities in the UK, including the Nations and Regions and all socio-economic backgrounds, plus regional and minority languages.

• Consider authenticity in the incidental portrayal of ethnicity, sexuality and disability across all content.

• Demonstrate you have considered diversity across the board, not just in one programme.

• Deploy disabled talent across all sorts of shows, not just disability content.

• Widen your pool of talent, by identifying new faces and voices and training and developing key disabled, LGBT, BAME and other presenters, reporters and actors from underrepresented groups; spot potential by identifying diverse contributors who could benefit from development opportunities in presenting.
Clearly every programme is different. You could set yourself targets where relevant for example:

- Consider how your programme appropriately reflects a diverse UK. On drama productions are there characters from a variety of backgrounds who have a storyline unrelated to their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or disability?
- On factual programmes are presenters or guests/contestants accurately representing all parts of the community?
- On music or specialist programmes, are you drawing from a wide enough range of contributors?
- Are you ensuring disabled talent are prominently featured on programmes covering a variety of content not just on issues around disability?

- Widen your network when sourcing contributors and programme participants, making use of digital channels and social networks to reach under-represented groups.
- Improve the diversity of panels and studio audiences.
- Broaden your database of diverse expert contributors, for example through partnerships and talent events.
- Ensure a wider pool of diverse on air talent is drawn on when an opportunity arises to refresh talent on a programme.
- Set out your own proportionate ambitions for on air diversity, tailored to your programme or series, the scale of your productions and the under-representation you have identified.
On air: Talent

We need to eliminate all barriers that might exclude diverse talent.

We’re asking you to:

• Make your casting directors, bookers and business affairs units aware of your commitment to diversity and inclusion.

• Advertise roles as widely as possible - consider using a broader range of talent agencies to encourage a greater diversity of talent to be put forward.

• Ensure that all auditions are accessible to disabled actors and presenters by routinely asking for any access requirements in advance.

• For scripted programmes:
  - Ensure a range of diverse actors are considered and seen as standard for on air parts – including disabled actors being considered for roles not written as disabled.
  - Promote incidental casting across the diversity spectrum; consider artists from all backgrounds regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic background and geography for all roles.
  - Ensure authentic portrayal when casting for a character with a specific disability, making every effort to audition suitable disabled actors to play that role.

• For factual programmes:
  - Make your teams aware that we expect pools to be wide enough to ensure there are suggestions for diverse talent included in the mix on presenter-led programme proposals and treatments; we need to work especially hard to increase disabled talent.
“The ‘Where It Begins’ scheme at Asian Network, Radio 1 and 1Xtra has given me that motivation to pursue a career in Radio. I was handed more creative control than expected and given the opportunity to try my hand at all areas of radio production.

I had previously done work experience at the BBC but was pessimistic about my chances of ever getting a job here. I certainly hadn't come across any other people from a similar background to me, born outside of the UK with parents who aren't from Britain. My time on the scheme has helped to change that perception.

I have now been accepted in a Team Assistant role across the three networks and have gone on to present my own show on Community Radio.”

Mo Ayoub
Team Assistant, Radio 1, 1Xtra, Asian Network
Off air: **Production Team**

We want to see diversity in the entire production team.

We recognise the small scale of many teams and independent companies, but where possible, we’re asking you to:

- Set your own proportionate goals that address under-representation you have identified and that will help us meet our aspirations; we aim to have 50% women and at least 15% BAME, 8% LGBT and 8% disabled working across each production by 2020. Your own ethnicity staffing targets should be appropriate to your geography.
- Widen your pool of writers to include those from identified underrepresented groups – for example, women, BAME, disabled or LGBT.
- Ensure all hirers consider disabled talents’ skills and experience before questions about reasonable adjustments or access issues.
- Make sure all hiring staff are fully aware of Access to Work.

Off air: **Entry Level**

We are committed to increasing and accelerating opportunities for entry level talent, regardless of their background.

We recognise the small scale of many teams and independent companies, but where possible, we’re asking you to:

- Eliminate unpaid internships; make all paid internships and time-limited unpaid work experience open to a diverse pool of talent.
- Where possible, provide at least one paid training and development placement on each production to either a participant or alumni from approved industry schemes.
- Ensure that the abilities advertised are true requirements of the role and are not an unnecessary barrier to participation from any particular group.
- Identify/create networking opportunities that will benefit the progression of diverse talent.
“Diversity matters in all aspects of what we do at BBC Radio 3. Why? Because as a network devoted to connecting people to the most remarkable music and culture we will only succeed in this if we reflect the amazing diversity of this country. Put simply: if we really do reflect diversity and don’t exclude anyone by virtue of ethnicity, class, sexuality and economic background, then we’ll get better and more creative output. We want to create the conditions for talent to reach its full potential. Without that, we will be less than we can be.”

Alan Davey
Controller, Radio 3 / Proms / Performing Groups
Off air: **Senior Editorial Roles**

We are committed to working with suppliers to support progression of diverse talent and retention of those already working at a senior level.

We recognise the small scale of many teams and independent companies, but where possible, we’re asking you to:

- Identify talent from under-represented groups with potential and equip them to compete for senior roles.
- Use returning brands to create new opportunities for progression.
- Ensure that you advertise all senior editorial roles, rather than relying on word-of-mouth recommendations.
- Offer training, development and/or coaching to senior editorial staff new to the role from under-represented groups.

“We want to welcome everyone to enjoy Radio 2 and that means making sure everyone feels included. We’re working hard so that what people hear on air reflects their daily lives and interests, wherever they are from, whatever they do.”

*Lewis Carnie*

*Head of Station, Radio 2*