# Gathering Attitudes: The Status Quo of Inequality in Scotland's Media and Cultural Sectors

This paper presents the findings of the engagement work undertaken with stakeholders over the course of the development project, including staff from equalities organisations, campaigners, academics, journalists, creators, and broadcasters.[1] Section One explores a number of key themes that arose when discussing issues and barriers. Section Two turns to potential solutions that arose when talking about a new Women In Media Body. There is considerable overlap in Sections One and Two with the roundtables and events attended, as well as the findings of the GEMS Commissioned Research. Given the focus on news media elsewhere in these reports, I have taken the opportunity in Section Three to spotlight various sectors in the creative arts: traditional folk and piping, theatre, the visual arts and music production/podcasts.

## 1. Key Themes and Barriers

Every single person I spoke to talked of the urgent need for change. Those who had worked in England and Scotland talked of the specific perception here that women are achieving *despite* their gender, particularly at senior levels.

### Covid-19

Unsurprisingly, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic featured heavily. Many talked of the disproportionate effects on women as carers and home schoolers and the need for data on the damage this has done to women's careers and financial stability.

### Abuse and Harassment

This was a topic raised by almost everyone. In the creative sectors in particular, harassment and abuse continue to go unreported, so ingrained is it within the culture as to have become normalised. In the media sectors, this abuse is more likely to occur online, with little support from employers other than resilience training.

### Accountability

Almost everyone talked about the lack of accountability for media organisations to follow through on gender equality work. While many institutions "pay lip service", "say all the right words", and establish "tick box exercises", there is no consequence for failing to achieve targets or to improve diversity. Where EDI initiatives are in place, they are often under-resourced and "not built for what they're trying to do." The result is that those engaged in an initiative are then dropped when the support disappears.

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[1] For a full list, please see the Appendix at the end of this paper.

Moreover, the kinds of initiatives agreed to are generally relatively superficial or individualistic – like training, mentoring or resilience workshops, as opposed to more meaningful, reflective changes to practices which require greater time, money and attention to detail. "We need to spend less time on inclusion, and more time on culture."

Several people gave examples of accountability checks such as licenses and charters becoming subject to equality standards or journalists' parliamentary lobby privileges being removed based on publication improvement.

### Buy-In and Partnerships

Campaigners, activists and women's organisations advised that central to any shift would be collaboration between media/cultural institutions and the new change project. Exerting pressure in and of itself is insufficient. Incentives need to be identified, which encourage leaders and decision-makers in media to engage with change-makers proactively.

Many commented on the strength of partnerships, not just with other gender organisations but also with those who seek to change media in other ways, for example, the Centre for Media Monitoring examining media content for Islamophobia. Building strong relationships with editors was cited as an important way to influence change in news language. One example of successful collaboration and a potential international partner is On Road Media, which brings campaigners, journalists and broadcasters together to change content and communication.

### Leadership

Many people talked of the need for greater visibility of women in leadership positions – not just at board level but also in senior management roles. One person raised the issue of visibility alone being insufficient; there is a difference between appearing as a figurehead and having meaningful power within an institution to make change. Nevertheless, others talked of the significance of having more women on boards specifically to challenge institutional culture, which can be pervasive without diversity in the room.

One person talked of the need for a culture of humility in leadership of media and cultural organisations, which works to balance out inherent institutional arrogance and helps decision-makers listen, adapt and remain agile.

### Regulation

It was generally agreed that top-down, state-run regulation of media was not an appropriate way to increase gender equality. Issues around freedom of speech and censorship were raised, as well as resistance from older, established employees ("the old brigade"), and particularly men. It was also felt that enforcing regulation would be difficult – indeed, Scotland's devolved powers do not extend to media, making any legislative regulation impossible.

Nonetheless, it was strongly felt by many that forms of enforcement were necessary, alongside campaigning and pressure, to hold media organisations accountable. One person admitted that despite a series of initiatives and targets to increase equality and diversity at their institution, there were no consequences to the company if these were not achieved.

Equalities organisations felt that some form of regulation would be beneficial, but not immediately, as greater buy-in is necessary, and certain sectors are as yet in their infancy of gender awareness.

A few people mentioned working with regulators on their codes and guidelines, for example, contributing to reviews of the Editors Code of Practice (IPSO).

### Locality and Geography

A key consideration for a number of people was the difference between large, private companies and newspapers in Edinburgh and Glasgow and the plethora of smaller papers and companies across Scotland, many of them considerably more rural. While most felt that the latter were more antiquated in their attitudes to gender and were able to 'get away with worse', one person countered that, in fact, the opposite could be true, and their flexibility and lesser bureaucracy allowed for greater adaptability to social norms.

It was generally agreed that a Women In Media Body needed to reach out to forms of media across Scotland, ensuring activity included those working beyond the two urban centres.

Regional media organisations and cultural spaces/events often operate under their own sets of norms and practices. Is there a way to align them to a national set of equality priorities? A couple of people talked about the differences in local press and how this is relatively unstudied. Council press offices have ways into local media, which might be a way to reach out.

It is important that Gaelic-speaking women are consulted and their needs also taken into account, as often change projects focus on English-speaking sectors, which ignores patriarchal conventions embedded in Gaelic media and culture.

### Public vs Private Institutions

Similarly, several people talked about the difference between public and private organisations, observing that despite the public sector duty (PSED), the public sector is more difficult to change and has become a gatekeeper across sectors. Meanwhile, private companies which can afford loss, and also prioritise their commercial imperative, are more likely to engage in new ('risky') equality projects.

Size also plays a role; a couple of people talked about smaller companies having fewer regimented protocols, which on the one hand, allows for behaviours and practices which would not be acceptable in a larger company, but on the other hand, allows for greater flexibility for new ideas.

### Digital Media

The line between consumer and creator has blended, as have the lines between personal and public. On the one hand, this digitalisation of contemporary society has opened new doors for people whose voices are not easily amplified by traditional media sources. Yet, on the other hand,

misogyny has mutated online and found direct and intrusive ways to silence marginalised voices further.[2]

The visibility of those working in public spaces as creators or journalists is a problem. Models reliant on social media necessitate self-branding and self-promotion, but the flip side of this is abuse, making working life less safe for women in particular. An organisation doing important work here is [Glitch](#). Some commented that any Women In Media Body in Scotland would require protocols to protect those working for it to ensure that visibility does not endanger those who lift their heads above the parapet.

Others talked of the lack of focus on new media in unions, EDI committees and the government itself. The same problems are mutating and manifesting online, coded in new ways – but there are no structures implemented to protect women.

The importance of online news reporting on violence against women is particularly significant given its potential for recontextualisation (for example, shared in forums) to solidify misconceptions of inequality amongst men. What is covered by online news platforms and how they cover it is an important contribution towards the radicalisation of young men and the rise of digital misogyny.

Many respondents felt that a Women In Media Body should ensure that its activity included awareness of the impact of digital media on society as a whole – and on women in particular.

### Employment Rights

Many issues came to light across a broad spectrum of sectors: equal pay and pay transparency came up several times. Lack of support around menopause and maternity leave also arose, particularly in news media organisations. Flexible working, adapting around family needs and part-time working were all raised, but these apply more to contracted staff.

Freelancing is preferable across both media and cultural sectors, allowing much more control and freedom to work around care responsibilities. However, the lack of structural support for freelancers, who disproportionately tend to be women, is problematic. This is felt particularly across the creative sectors, where the gig economy dominates.

Several people talked about the lack of diversity of people behind the scenes of the creative and cultural sectors, despite (some) progress in public-facing contexts. The culture of "who you know" is still very much alive. Solutions include paid internships, creative access, shadowing opportunities and ending voluntary positions.

### Funding

Funding regimes, particularly within the creative and cultural sectors, are damaging. Many named the dependency on funding as a cause of both cultural and economic inequality. Systems of necessity, educational prerequisites for filling in forms, fast turnarounds for deadlines, short-termism and competitive behaviours are all linked to funding models in the industry, perpetuating intersectional inequalities.

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[2] Gill R (2002) Cool, Creative and Egalitarian? Exploring Gender in Project-Based New Media Work. Information, Communication & Society 5:1 70–89.

Several people noted that if you know the buzzwords, you are more likely to receive funding – instead of decisions being made based on the quality of the idea or application.

Creative Scotland funds both Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs) (with a focus on Creative Learning and young people) and Open Projects, the latter of which is more flexible in terms of priorities. Resources to support RFOs in their equality targets are limited.

### Audiences

Several people in the creative and cultural sectors talked of the need to listen to – and trust – audiences. The notion of 'risk' in itself is a damaging one – i.e., can we take the financial risk of staging an all-female production? – as it ignores the diverse appetites of audiences. Measuring audience behaviour and expectations is something more institutions should be doing instead of assuming the kinds of content that will "go down well". Proactively finding new voices to platform is longitudinally more beneficial to the production of artistic output as well as income.

### Media Institutions

Those working in news media and journalism talked of the male dominance in these sectors, particularly at senior levels and on boards. Many talked of the knock-on effect on content, focus, and even column width apportioned to diverse stories. Independent media organisations suffer similarly, with dependence on larger institutions for reach impeding efforts towards independence of content, including platforming more diverse voices.

An important point was raised about the balance of stories told and the underrepresentation of certain groups in journalism being tied to ownership of the news agencies themselves. The Media Reform Coalition released a report in 2021 called "Who Owns The UK Media?".[3] When online readers are included, just six companies share the entire weekly circulation market: News UK, the Daily Mail Group, Reach, the Guardian, the Telegraph and the Financial Times.[4]

Certain examples of good practice were heralded: Women in Journalism Scotland's survey work and peer support, Bella Caledonia's Many Voices Project, STV's Expert Voices Workshops, and NUJ-funded work highlighting key barriers to women's equality in journalism.

### Visibility in Awards

Several people raised awards schemes as a way to increase visibility of women working across sectors, discussing how the Creative Industries Awards, the Scottish Press Awards, BAFTA Scotland, the British Book Awards, the Scottish Jazz Awards, and the Scottish Alternative Music Awards have variable success in ensuring diversity in nominations and winners.

Journalists highlighted the exclusivity of the Scottish Press Awards, specifically the lack of diversity amongst nominated journalists each year, category choices and judging panels. Transparency would help, but journalists wanting change also work within the industry, so external pressure is needed.[5]

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[3] Chivers T (2021) Who owns the UK media? Media Reform Coalition. Available at: https://www.mediareform.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Who-Owns-the-UK-Media_final2.pdf.
[4] Ibid.
[5] See the Scottish Press Awards paper for more detail on this work.

### Quotas and Targets

Unsurprisingly a variety of, sometimes opposing, views were expressed. Some felt that tangible progress is only possible if targets are met and set – although there are few consequences at present if internally-set targets are not achieved. Others felt that a more organic, holistic approach is helpful.

Large organisations such as BBC Scotland and STV are setting their own internal targets, including disaggregated data-collection for Scotland based on race and disability, a leadership index, and updated strategies. Externally set guidelines and recommended quotas would be beneficial.

### Unions

Most unions are ill-equipped to handle equality complaints or appropriately support those seeking help for micro-aggressions, harassment, or even institutional disregard for HR support mechanisms. There is lack of awareness of the impact of such incidents on mental health, confidence, or economic stability. There is also lack of training or specialist resources to support those coming forward. This applies across the media and creative arts. Several people queried how freelancers are supposed to cope on their own. This is particularly acute for women of colour and disabled women.

### Intersectionality

Several people raised the need for any new change project to be intersectional and to involve people from a variety of backgrounds. At present many 'generic' change efforts continue to be dominated by white, middle-class, non-disabled women, while initiatives which push for progress for women of colour or disabled women, for example, operate separately. While acknowledging the powerful significance of spaces and platforms solely by/for multiply marginalised women, there must also be an integration of these voices into existing initiatives which claim to work for all women.

Balanced against this, however, is the understanding that such work constitutes unpaid emotional labour by already-minoritised and disenfranchised women and contributing ideas and experience to change efforts often falls, exhaustingly, to the same people.

### Anti-Blackness

Several people raised the pervasive anti-Blackness of not just media and cultural institutions but also equalities organisations, change efforts and unions. Where the inclusion of other protected identities, such as LGBTQIA, and even other people of colour, such as those of East Asian heritage, is emphasised, the lack of Black people involved in such spaces is noted and notable.

### Fracturing of Efforts

Several people mentioned the fracturing of grassroots equality work, which is diluting the strength of efforts. The specification of certain issues means that umbrella work connecting different forms of inequality is missing. In addition, there is duplication of effort, with certain organisations or initiatives carrying out similar work – sometimes unaware of each other.

The fracturing also comes about due to a "protectiveness over the fight", with some feeling passionately that their idea is *the* solution. The review of change literature in the *Theory of Change* paper makes evident that only by employing numerous change efforts simultaneously can we affect substantive, long-lasting change.

## 2. The Function of a Potential 'Women in Media Body'

Attitudes towards the creation of a Women In Media Body were wholly positive, although there were few explicit views on how it should operate. However, many respondents agreed strongly that any change project should look beyond "just news" to other forms of media in Scotland, including the creative industries. Others raised, however, that not all media and cultural industries are subject to the same issues or challenges, and that their funding, legislative and employment structures differ considerably. Art forms are collectively at different stages of awareness of the importance of equality. For any intervention to be successful, it must adapt its processes to best suit the needs of each. Some of the ideas discussed are reviewed below.

### Gender Equal Media Scotland

Gender Equal Media Scotland (GEMS) as an organisation is passionate and diverse in its associated organisations, making it a hub of broad experience and expertise. GEMS members are interested parties who meet quarterly to discuss issues around gender and media, feedback information on projects ongoing and decide on new joint pieces of work. At present, it is in the initial stages of drawing up a formal governance plan and sets of objectives, including expanding its membership to become more inclusive. Its chief issue is capacity; all members volunteer their time to meet alongside their paid employment, and any events, interventions or campaigns are delivered through their primary organisations. It has limited capacity and low resources to spearhead a new change project, however, its knowledge of the Scottish context is unparalleled and thus will be integral to the success of any efforts moving forward.

### Database

Broadcasters commented that their single biggest issue was finding women experts willing to come on television/radio for interview. They felt that a dynamic, interactive database – much like Pass the Mic but more generic – would be an important tool for quickly and efficiently increasing the number of women commentators in mainstream media (see *Global Review* paper for expansion on this idea).

### Hub

One person believed a website which was a landing page – housing gender and media information – would be beneficial. Others talked of cohesion of effort, having a centralised space which, over the years, could become the go-to for information, events, queries, new research, opportunities and policy recommendations.

### Toolkits

Several people across sectors talked about the need for toolkits which are subject/audience-specific. Creating a concrete resource which can be taught and implemented is likely to have greater success than simply talking about the importance of change. A good example of this is

Zero Tolerance's [Handle With Care](#) Handbook or Level Up's [Media Guidelines](#) for journalists reporting on violence against women.

## Contingent Funding

Many people across sectors talked of the possibility of contingent funding as a lever for change. This would need to be strategically developed with key partners such as Creative Scotland and Screen Scotland, taking into consideration:

- the limited public funding available
- the caution some might feel at reporting lack of progress/HR incidents
- the support needed to help organisations reach targets
- variable targets needed across sectors and organisations to ensure achievability.

An example of this is the [BFI Diversity Standards](#), which are a contractual requirement for all BFI funding.

## Education

The need to tackle the education of journalists was raised by several people, although one remained concerned that by this point disrupting patriarchal norms is too late. Nevertheless, embedding gender training in education is seen as a way to create space for conversations about reporting with young journalists-to-be.

## Research and Monitoring

Several people spoke of the need for a strong evidence base for any future work, not only to prove why such work is important in the face of expected resistance but also to advise how best to change practice. Others talked about the lack of research, particularly Scottish-specific, intersectional research. This is borne out in the literature review undertaken as part of the GEMS Commissioned Research.

Several people spoke of a monitoring body which acted as a critical friend. One person suggested that student placements might be used to help gather data, and several people mentioned the success of the Geena Davis Institute in the USA. Zero Tolerance and Pass the Mic have both already undertaken important monitoring research, demonstrating the need for a framework to gather comparable data regularly to examine trends and patterns. Several people talked about the prevalence of unhelpful narratives in the media which sustain harmful gender relations. Methodologies already exist for monitoring work, such as the Coalition for Race Equality, GMMP, Runnymede and the Centre for Media Monitoring, so there is no need to start from scratch. Yet others talked about the need to build gender competence in media organisations and that they could be encouraged in some way to do their own monitoring, like gender pay gap reporting.

Gender pay gap reporting came up several times as an example of an impactful lever of change which supports organisations to become more cognizant of their practices and embeds gender awareness into their annual figures. Larger institutions have been forced to look at salaries and identify gaps in HR services.

**A Mega Project**

The success of a new, unique mega-project, several said, will depend on the language used to signal its objectives (e.g., "modernising boards"). The communications work around such an initiative will be key, using super-charged, positive language, creating buzz around its uniqueness and ensuring that it is not simply a diversion from business as usual, but rather a brand-new, cutting-edge initiative, attractive to industry leaders which offers a fresh method of delivery at scale, within a pressurised timeframe. The Gender and Media MOOC run by University of Strathclyde has already given Scottish organisations working in this area an international platform, on which we can continue to build.

An important comment was the need to manage expectations. There is huge desire, as demonstrated from those I spoke to, for a centralised body which wields power to make change. Yet there is an enormous amount of work to do, and change is slow. A new change project cannot be all things to all people. Appropriate, nuanced communications will be required to sustain engagement, but not over-promise results.

## 3. Status Quo: Women in the Creative Industries

Much of the anecdotal evidence and observations below are mirrored in reports outlining the composition and state of the creative arts in Scotland, including Creative Scotland's Understanding Diversity in the Arts Survey Summary Report,[6] the Scottish Contemporary Art Network's Scottish Visual Art Demographics Report,[7] the National Advisory Council on Women and Girls' Gender Inequality in the Creative Arts Report,[8] Hettie Judah's Representation of Female Artists in Britain During 2019[9] Report, UK Music's Diversity Report 2020,[10] Prospects Luminate's Report, Why don't more women enter creative industries,[11] Voices of Culture's Gender Balance in the Cultural and Creative Sectors[12] report, the European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual's report on Gender gaps in the Cultural and Creative Sectors,[13] Why Not Her's Gender

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[6] Creative Scotland (2017) Understanding Diversity in the Arts Survey Summary Report. Creative Scotland. Available at: https://www.creativescotland.com/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/42920/Arts-and-Diversity-Survey-Summary.pdf.

[7] Ziadat S (2018) Scottish Visual Art Demographics Report. Scottish Contemporary Art Network. Available at: https://sca-net.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/EDIReport.pdf.

[8] NACWG (2021) Arts and Creative Industries – What we already know. First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls Available at: https://onescotland.org/nacwg-news/arts-and-creative-industries-what-we-already-know/.

[9] McMillan Dr K (2020) Representation of Female Artists in Britain During 2019. Freelands Foundation. Available at: https://freelandsfoundation.imgix.net/documents/Representation-of-female-artists-2019-Clickable.pdf.

[10] UK Music (2020) Diversity Report 2020. UK Music. Available at: https://www.ukmusic.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UK_Music_Diversity_Report_2020.pdf.

[11] Hobson C (2019) Why don't more women enter creative industries? Luminate Available at: https://luminate.prospects.ac.uk/why-don-t-more-women-enter-creative-industries-.

[12] Voices of Culture (2019) Gender Equality: Gender Balance in the Cultural and Creative Sectors. European Union. Available at: https://voicesofculture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/VoC-Brainstorming-Report-Gender-Balance-in-the-Cultural-and-Creative-Sectors.pdf.

[13] EENCA (2020) Gender gaps in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (with the exception of the audio-visual sector). European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual. Available at: https://eenca.com/eenca/assets/File/EENCA%20publications/Final%20Report%20-%20Gender%20in%20CCS%20EAC.pdf.

Disparity Radio UK report,[14] and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2014 report, Creative Industries: Focus on Employment.[15] These reports, and others, demonstrate gender segregation which varies significantly by industry, sub-sector and occupational group, although almost universally, there is unequal representation amongst senior staff and leaders. This section explores some of the key issues behind sustained inequality in certain creative sectors in Scotland.

## Trad Music

Trad music is often used as an umbrella term to cover a number of different genres, including folk music, folk-rock, dance bands, dance itself, piping and song. The culture in Scottish folk music and piping remains patriarchal and exclusive. Many of those I spoke to had studied the Folk and Traditional Music undergraduate degree at Newcastle University and noticed a markedly more egalitarian culture there than in Scotland. Similarly, in piping, a better gender balance is observed in bands outside of Scotland. The BIT Collective is doing important equality work in Scotland.

There are gender divides within the music itself; some instruments tend to be gender coded, with fewer women accordion players, for example, and fewer men clarsach players. Women are more likely to become singers than instrumentalists, as their lack of capacity as the latter is still openly talked about. The genre of music is also coded, with fast 'party bands' generally attracting more men and perceived as "better-quality" music. They often headline the night and play late at the end of the night, which is further exclusive of women with caring responsibilities. Meanwhile, music with emotional depth is considered less accomplished. This prejudicial attitude affects bookings and gigs on the performance circuit, as well as choices that young trad musicians make about careers. It also affects the pay gap, as higher profile, more lucrative gigs are given to men.

Gatekeepers are a marked problem raised by everyone I spoke to. Promoters, bookers, festival organisers, award panels, competition coordinators and venues are in positions of power. The system relies on "who you know", with men employing men – but women not employing women. Festivals remain male-dominated, which affects musicians' careers through lack of exposure at showcase events. The misogynistic culture endemic in the Scottish trad and folk scene means that for those who speak out or are seen as 'troublesome', there is often a financial cost as well as risk to their career.

In piping, the specific heritage and recruitment pipelines of pipers – through the military, private boarding schools and police – mean that the sector is male-dominated, and the culture is still extremely patriarchal. Based on identities of education, class and generations, greater diversity is perceived by many to be a threat to the identity of piping itself. In some spaces, there is an "unwritten rule not to accept women".

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[14] Why Not Her? (2021) 12 Months on Gender Disparity Data Radio Report. Why Not Her? Available at: https://www.canva.com/design/DAEnjj69jvQ/bUdTzFz_GqxYxdkJ2ZqDUg/view?utm_content=DAEnjj69jvQ&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=sharebutton#1.

[15] UK Government Department for Culture Media and Sport (2014) Creative Industries: Focus on Employment. UK Government. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/324530/Creative_Industries_-_Focus_on_Employment.pdf.

While there are plenty of girls doing chanter in schools, this number decreases after university in women's early twenties. Some spoke of the need for more women teachers at an education level (although the itinerant lifestyle poses problems for women pipers with caring responsibilities), the need for visible "champions", and the culture of bands changing.

The National Piping Centre has an important role to play, particularly the National Youth Pipe Band, as does Creative Scotland in looking at funding, training programs and addressing misogynistic 'banter' at a cultural level.

## Visual Arts

All those I spoke to working in and around the visual arts sector talked of similar issues: the fragility of small organisations, prohibitive funding cycles, short-term contracts, artists as freelancers, and the lack of creative spaces designed to function for women.

There was a feeling, echoed in other sectors such as broadcasting, that gender equality is a box that had been ticked, and that the sector as a whole could move on. The kinds of initiatives often touted however really only benefit a small section of women artists who tend to be middle/upper class, white, educated – and often with a supportive partner and resources to help with childcare. They talked of a need for more egalitarian structures to support women who may be single parents, from lower SED backgrounds and/or disabled whose talent is being lost due to low, often irregular pay and the need to support their families.

One person talked of the need for processes, not policies, as the former allows for flexibility of pragmatics, enabling more diverse artists to work and exhibit. An example of such flexibility is the Travelling Gallery.

Again, the male dominance was flagged at a senior level; within the hierarchy, there are plenty of women working in administrative and organisational spheres, but the top remains pale, male and stale.

## Theatre

Similar, theatre is extremely hierarchical, and there tends to be a preponderance of men in senior artistic and creative decision-making roles, although this has improved in the last five years.[16] Leadership itself was contested by one person as a patriarchal concept, offering that a more collaborative approach in theatre generally leads to better results. The notion of talent, 'genius', and quality being gender coded is also prevalent. Historically women playwrights have always been a minority in Scottish theatre.[17]

One person estimated that around 70 per cent of the sector are freelancers, which "is increasingly the only way women can work." They talked of the arts being "bitty" – with one person often wearing many hats in different sectors, which is borne out in the identities of those contributing

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[16] McMillan J (2016) Women's voices are growing stronger in Scottish theatre. The Scotsman Available at: https://www.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/theatre-and-stage/joyce-mcmillan-womens-voices-are-growing-stronger-scottish-theatre-1480689.

[17] Horvat K (2005) Scottish Women Playwrights Against Zero Visibility. Études Écossaises 10:143–158.

to this paper, as well as in research by Creative Scotland on diversity in the arts, in which on average respondents selected 2.5 other jobs in addition to their primary role.[18]

Like music and piping, because of its rehearsal and venue-based activity, sexual assault is also rife in the theatre. Venues take little responsibility and often do not have policies in place to support women. Since smaller organisations are trying to make the biggest impact, their focus is often elsewhere, while larger organisations are able to get away with more. Safe spaces and initiatives are therefore popular – such as Stellar Quines, the Feminist Fringe, Fringe of Colour, and We Are Here Scotland.

Funding was again cited as a major issue, with a fear of loss of funding if complaints were levied – for example, at Creative Scotland or the Edinburgh International Festival. An ultra-dependency on funding means Creative Scotland's role is significant in this sector and is not being capitalised on. There are certain checklist mechanisms already in place, for example, but these are not audited, and the data not made available. The lack of diversity in Creative Scotland itself was noted, particularly at the top of the organisation. This is borne out in the Women on Boards paper.

Greater outreach long-term was highlighted as an important way to engage more diverse performers and audiences, as it breaks down barriers of perception around education and class.

### Music

Music venues are sites of power in Scotland and remain culturally exclusive of women and minoritised people. Production remains dominated by men, but women are moving increasingly into podcasts, both hosting and behind the scenes. Freelancing both in music performance and production is common among women, contributing to precarity of employment.

Scottish Women Inventing Music was borne out of the need for an organisation to advocate for women's rights in the sector. Stories of abuse and harassment were, and still are, being ignored or knowingly swept under the rug. Some talked of the need for a toolkit for people who witness abuse and better reporting mechanisms that are disseminated to help women protect themselves. Others mentioned informal lists shared amongst women, which name-checked problematic venues to work with. A new initiative is being developed and aims to create a kitemark against a set of standards that private sector companies would be required to adhere to.

Examples of good practice highlighted are KeyChange, BBC's podcast Word Up, Dardishi festival for screenings, the Glad Café and Emu Bands.

## 4. Conclusions

Taken alongside the other engagement and events papers, as well as the GEMS Commissioned Research and the Roundtable Summary, it is clear that there is tremendous appetite for a new change project. That it be sustainable from the outset was raised repeatedly as key to its success. It also needs to cater to a wide variety of sectors with different issues. Acting as a critical friend to institutions across industries may be an important step forward, providing an axis of research,

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[18] Creative Scotland (2017) Understanding Diversity in the Arts Survey Summary Report. Creative Scotland. Available at: https://www.creativescotland.com/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/42920/Arts-and-Diversity-Survey-Summary.pdf.

data analysis and monitoring to better support sector-specific interventions, guidelines and targets. There is important work already being done by passionate journalists, creators, producers and administrators. Aligning with these efforts and engaging cooperatively with diverse stakeholders from academia and the third sector as well as the media and cultural sectors is crucial.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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## ABOUT ENGENDER
Engender is Scotland's feminist policy and advocacy organisation, working to increase women's social, political and economic equality, enable women's rights, and make visible the impact of sexism on women and wider society. We work at Scottish, UK and international level to produce research, analysis, and recommendations for intersectional feminist legislation and programmes.

## ABOUT GENDER EQUAL MEDIA SCOTLAND
Gender Equal Media Scotland is a coalition of journalists, organisations and academics working to bring about women's equality in Scotland's media. The post of Development Officer is hosted by Engender, Scotland's feminist policy and advocacy organisation, on behalf of GEMS.

Appendix: List of stakeholders who contributed to this paper.

| Name | Organisation/Institution |
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| **Emma Ritch** | Engender, NACWG |
| **Alys Mumford** | Engender, GEMS, Women 50:50 |
| **Karen Boyle** | GEMS, Strathclyde University |
| **Maureen McGonigle** | Scottish Women in Sport |
| **Cat McPhee** | Women in Journalism Scotland |
| **Rhiannon Davies** | Women in Journalism Scotland |
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| **Jo Zawadka** | Zero Tolerance, GEMS |
| **Saffron Roberts** | Zero Tolerance |
| **Brenna Jessie** | Rape Crisis Scotland |
| **Talat Yaqoob** | Women 50:50, Pass the Mic, GEMS |
| **Megan Gordon** | Scottish Women's Aid, GEMS |
| **Margaret Hughes** | UWS |
| **Lindsey Miller** | Close The Gap |
| **Helen Trew** | Creative Scotland |
| **Francesca Sobande** | Cardiff University, Black Lives in Scotland |
| **Layla Roxanne-Hill** | NUJ, Black Lives in Scotland |
| **Margaret Mary Murray** | BBC Scotland |
| **Sandeep Gill** | BBC Scotland |
| **Arusa Quereshi** | Bella Caledonia, The List |
| **Nichola Kane** | STV |
| **Fiona McKay** | Robert Gordon University, journalist |
| **Ana FitzSimons** | Opcit Research, |
| **Halina Rifai** | Scottish Women Inventing Music, Word Up |
| **Rona Wilkie** | Trad musician, The BIT Collective |
| **Jenn Butterworth** | Trad musician, The BIT Collective |
| **Catriona Hawksworth** | Trad musician, The BIT Collective |
| **Marit Falt** | Trad musician |
| **Rizwana Hamid** | Centre for Media Monitoring |
| **Rosie Priest** | Stellar Quines, EH-FM |
| **Rhea Lewis** | Stellar Quines |
| **Fiona Bradley** | The Fruitmarket Gallery |
| **Andrea Boyd** | Piper, The Walrus |
| **Steven Blake** | The Piping Centre |
| **Suzanne Miller** | Help Musicians, Project 4 UK |
| **Nick Barley** | Edinburgh International Book Festival |
| **Francesca Hegyi** | Edinburgh International Festival |
| **Moira Jeffrey** | Scottish Contemporary Art Network |
| **Sekai Machache** | Artist, SCAN |
| **Isobel Clarke** | Lancaster University, CfMM |
| **John McLellan** | Scottish Newspaper Society, Scottish Press Awards |

This list is not comprehensive, and there are certain sectors I would have liked to spend more time working with – theatre, gaming and publishing, for example.

In addition, findings from events attended informed this paper, including:

- The Digital Lives of Black Women in Britain, Dr Francesca Sobande, Cardiff University
- How not to exclude artist mothers, chaired by art critic Hettie Judah, with artists Rana Begum, Laura Ford and Cally Spooner, Fiona Bradley (Director, Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh) and Laura Smith (Curator, Whitechapel Gallery, London and Max Mara Art Prize for Women).
- Everyday Misogyny, with Laura Bates (Engender and Rape Crisis Scotland)
- Gendered Domestic Violence and Abuse in Popular Culture Webinar, Emerald
- An evening in conversation with Deborah Kayembe, Rector of the University of Edinburgh, Augustine United Church