

# Publishers Association Launches Industry Wide Inclusivity Action Plan

- The plan, developed with Creative Access, comprises a set of ten commitments for publishing businesses to undertake over the period 2023 to 2026.
- This builds on the first Inclusivity Action Plan launched in 2017 and aims to further advance progress.
- There are **21** founding signatories, with more expected to follow.
- Final workforce diversity survey points towards progress but work still to do in some areas.

**London, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023:** The Publishers Association has today launched the newest iteration of its 'Inclusivity Action Plan' to promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the industry's workforce. Created alongside leading diversity and inclusion social enterprise [Creative Access](#), the plan sets out ten commitments for publishing businesses to undertake over the period 2023 to 2026. The pledges outlined in the plan aim to promote equality of opportunity, drive action, and empower individuals working within the UK's world-class publishing industry.

The Inclusivity Action Plan has been created following focus groups with a range of employees from different firms across the publishing sector. Those involved in the sessions were asked to discuss some of the most pressing issues the industry is facing when it comes to diversity, equality and inclusion, as well as areas where they see room for improvement. These conversations informed the development of each pledge set out in the plan. These include:

- Develop and embed an inclusivity policy which is set and driven by senior leadership.
- Commit to data collection and support consistent cross-industry data collection.
- Provide opportunities for flexible, hybrid, agile, and part-time working.
- Work towards pay equity, including salary transparency.

The full Inclusivity Action Plan can be found below, or [here](#).

As well as committing to the plan, publishers are being asked to work towards new targets for their UK workforce. These should reflect national demographics at all role levels, across the following characteristics: race and ethnicity, socioeconomic background, disability, gender, and sexual

orientation. These targets will be measured at an industry level and reported every two years between 2023 and 2026.

A full list of the 21 founding signatories can be found below.

**Dan Conway, CEO at the Publishers Association said:** “Through the hard work of everyone in the publishing industry, we have made great progress in moving the dial when it comes diversity, inclusion and equality. Since the launch of our first plan in 2017, we have seen significant inroads across many characteristics- but there is no time for complacency.

We are proud to be launching our new Inclusivity Action Plan to bring our members and businesses across the industry together, to further break down barriers and to drive real, meaningful change. This is just a starting point and we look forward seeing further progress over the coming years. Real change is achieved when we work towards a common goal, and we are certainly stronger when we work together”.

**Josie Dobrin, Executive Chair at Creative Access said:** “The Publishers Association and the publishing industry is really blazing a trail for the whole creative industries with the launch of this new inclusivity plan. It is a great example of organisations in a sector, putting aside competition, to come together and drive real, meaningful change and we actively encourage other creative sectors to follow suit. We’ve been partnering with the Publishers Association now for over a decade and are immensely proud of our role in providing strategic consultancy on the development of this plan, it marks a significant step forward for the industry.”

The plan is being launched in tandem with the *final UK Publishing Workforce: Diversity, inclusion and belonging in 2022 survey*. The survey shows that whilst there has been an increase in the diversity of the workforce, there are still areas which need to be improved on. Some key findings include:

- Females continue to dominate the workforce, accounting for two thirds of respondents (66%), with an increasing proportion of executive leadership and senior management positions being held by females (56% and 60% respectively).
- Representation of people from ethnic minority groups (excluding White minorities) has increased to 17% from 15% in 2021.
- LGBT+ representation has increased, with 15% (up from 13% in 2021) of respondents either identifying as lesbian, gay, or bi, or self-describing their sexual orientation, a figure which has grown each year since 2017 (5%) – and as in 2021, 1% of respondents identified as trans.
- Socio-economic background continues to represent major barriers to inclusion, with two thirds (66%) of respondents being from professional backgrounds.

The Publishers Association will continue to support its members in meeting their DE&I goals and thanks all individuals involved in the creation of the Inclusivity Action Plan. We encourage publishers and other industry stakeholders to support the initiative by signing [here](#).

**+ ENDS +**

### **Contact Information**

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### **Notes to Editors**

- The full list of signatories of the Inclusivity Action Plan are:
  - Taylor & Francis
  - DK
  - IOP Publishing
  - Pearson UK
  - Bonnier Books
  - SAGE Publishing
  - Oneworld Publications
  - Penguin Random House
  - Hachette UK
  - Bloomsbury
  - HarperCollins Publishers
  - Cambridge University Press
  - Macmillan Learning
  - b small publishing Limited
  - Kogan Page Ltd
  - Princeton University Press (European office)
  - Profile Books
  - Saraband Limited
  - SRL Publishing
  - Everything With Words
  - Firefly Press Ltd

- Data from the Publishers Association’s final Workforce Survey comes ahead of similar initiatives from the Society of Authors, Booksellers Association and Association of Authors, which are due to be released in the coming weeks. We stand united with these organisations on diversity issues and continue to work collaboratively to create a more diverse and equitable industry.
  - A total of 11,866 employees from 50 businesses took part in the Workforce survey in 2022.
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## The Publishers Association Inclusivity Action plan

Guiding principles for the plan are:

- It is broad enough to be able to be adopted by large companies and SMEs/micro-enterprises, across publishing sectors and is designed to protect competitive freedom
- It promotes equality of opportunity, drives action and empowers individuals within the UK’s publishing industry
- Publishers are encouraged to pledge their commitment to the plan by signing up via [this link](#)

The Publishers Association Inclusivity Action comprises a set of 10 commitments for publishing businesses to undertake over the period 2023 – 2026.

- 1. Develop and embed an inclusivity policy which is set and driven by senior leadership.** This should state your organisation’s commitment to ensuring an equitable, diverse and inclusive workplace. The policy should include the process for making complaints of discrimination in the workplace; how the company will monitor and assess the effectiveness of the policy; and working best practices including the support and reasonable adjustments available for all individuals. You can download a template policy [here](#).
- 2. Develop a governance model** (which might include nominating an inclusivity champion that reports to your board or management committee) to ensure your organisation is held to account on policy implementation and meeting targets. Investigate opportunities for staff feedback which is fed into senior leadership, such as employee networks or anonymous surveys, ensuring visibility on how this feedback is used.
- 3. Commit to data collection and support consistent cross-industry data collection.** This will help measure both the demographics of the publishing workforce (to ensure we are building diverse

and representative teams) and the culture within the sector (to help ensure equity in experience, progression and retention).

- **Commit to distributing and completing the Publishers Association’s independent industry-wide workforce survey once every two years which will be launched during 2023.** This does not preclude you undertaking your own regular internal workforce survey. This will allow us to measure intersectionality across the industry.
  - **Consider representation beyond your direct employees and think about supply chain data collection** including your researchers, authors, peer reviewers, editors, external suppliers and freelance staff. You can use the Publishers Association’s [author data collection toolkit](#).
4. **Ensure your output is accessible, authentic and inclusive** including content, design, imagery and language. Try to widen the pool of contributors to bring in new voices to the sector, aim for speaker panels at events and festivals to represent all audiences. Ensure efforts are made to reduce bias in content across all channels and that you are compliant with relevant legislation around accessibility of content and employer duties as outlined in the [Equality Act 2010](#).
  5. **Ensure all staff participate in inclusivity training or have opportunities to learn** about diversity, equity and inclusion concepts. This may focus on inclusive recruitment (for those responsible for hiring), allyship training, disability equity and mental health and well-being workshops. Training aims to affect behavioural change, identify any barriers to doing so, and help ensure inclusive structures and practices are consistently implemented across the industry.
  6. **Provide opportunities for flexible, hybrid, agile and part-time working** to allow more easily those who live outside cities to be able to work in the industry and to be considerate of those with different working needs and requirements.
  7. **Create clear career progression pathways** so that staff understand what they need to do to move roles or reach the next level and that promotions are equitable. This will help support industry progression and retention and ensure a talent pipeline from marginalised backgrounds into senior management.
  8. **Provide opportunities for mentoring** to support new and existing staff from under-represented groups, either internally or via external organisations. Consider implementing a formal sponsorship programme to accelerate career development, strengthen talent and improve

engagement of staff that are under-represented in the sector, or who are at transitional career stages.

9. **Create opportunities for hiring from under-represented groups;** consider hiring a Publishing Assistant [apprentice](#) or via a third party (such as Creative Access, Change100 or 10,000 Black Interns). This will provide opportunities for those who might not otherwise be able to access careers in the sector. Ensure any roles are advertised as widely as possible and, when possible, using specialist organisations to do so.
10. **Work towards pay equity, including salary transparency.** Aim to Include a figure or salary range on job adverts to encourage candidates to apply both through your organisation and via third-party recruiters. Try to benchmark salaries and learn more about the case for salary transparency [here](#). Provide expenses to all work experience candidates and pay interns or work experience candidates who are with you for one week or longer. Work towards parity of pay and address any issues highlighted in relevant pay gap surveys.

As well as committing to the plan, we also ask publishers to aim for their UK workforce to reflect national demographics at all levels, across the following characteristics:

- Race and ethnicity
- Socioeconomic background
- Disability
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

These targets will be measured at an industry level and reported bi-annually between 2023 and 2026.

**Notes:**

- When setting any company targets, you may want to consider your regional location and whether national targets are appropriate (*for example to reflect that your office is located in a more or less ethnically diverse area of the UK*).
- We recognise that any data collection will need to be carried out according to all relevant legislative and legal restrictions
- For international companies, the commitments relate to their UK workforce.

+ ENDS+

**THE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION** (PA) is the member organisation for UK publishing, representing companies of all sizes and specialisms. Our members produce digital and print books, research journals and educational resources across genres and subjects.

We exist to champion publishing to the wider world and to provide our members with everything they need to thrive. We have helped change laws, improved business conditions and inspired people to become publishers.

We are passionate about the capacity for books and reading to make life better for people.

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### **About Creative Access**

Creative Access is a not-for-profit social enterprise, unrivalled in diverse recruitment, training and inclusion. The organisation aims to support talented people from groups that are under-represented in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic background and disability, or facing significant barriers to employment, to not just access the creative industries, but to thrive when they get in.