



A Theory of Change for Making Scotland's Media and Cultural Sectors More Equal

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1.0 Summary Diagram

Impact: Opportunities increase for women & marginalised people in Scotland to create and consume representative media & culture

Media/Creative Content:
greater equality & diversity in creative output.

Decision-Making:
better balanced boards & leadership teams at all levels.

Flexible Structures:
policies, practices, funding, & recruitment systems are more equitable.

Outcomes

National Priority:
increasing gender equality is an explicit aim of SG: long-term dedicated funding & EMAP.

Unified coordination:
Initiatives, networks, academics, institutions coherently work together.

Institutional Self-reliance: orgs promote & protect rights of marginalised voices.

Evolution of culture: discourse shifts, proaction waxes, resistance wanes.

Outputs

State Expectations
Greater social pressure & National Equal Media & Culture Action Plan

Support & Reward
Self-assessment help, toolkits, resources, bespoke training, awards

External Pressure
Monitoring output, reports, research, complaints to regulators, Index

Sanctions
Reputational risk, licensing renewal and funding opportunities

Strategies

Societal:
Audiences & consumers made more aware of seeing themselves reflected in creative & cultural content

Sectors:
Initiatives address different stages, ages, priorities, minorities & models of media & creative industries

Institutional:
Disrupt governance, finance, recruitment and policy structures & support gender mainstreaming

Workforce:
Cultural & practical changes increase accessibility, facilitate inclusion & ease strain of conflicting priorities

Interventions

Evidence-based Interventions:
Initiatives targeting specific issues affecting sectors/institutions

Institutional Governance & Commitment to Equality

Autonomous Gender Competence:
Embedding gender awareness & self-assessment into projects, policies & processes

Supporting Grassroots Initiatives: local relationships, knowledge & passion

Approaches

Institutions:
lack senior will, accountability systems & expertise/resources.

Laws & Policies: SG limited & no media-specific policy. Adherence to EU law unclear.

Research:
lacking analysis of creative content, workforces, impact or initiatives.

Equalities sector under-resourced:
existing capacity & services limited.

Economic models:
funding precarity, pay-per-click, Covid-recovery.

Obstacles

Dominant Social Norms (values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and practices) support male dominance in and behind the media & creative sectors, upholding a status quo which perpetuates inequalities based on gender, race, class, sexuality, age & disability.

2.0 Methodology

Three main areas of work contributed to completing a theory of change for Scotland's media:

- A review of academic literature on gender and media, social change, and organisational change.
- A global review of UK, EU and international reports and papers on gender and media.
- Interviews with media professionals, academics, and equalities sector organisations.

2.1 Visual Framework

The summary diagram is adapted from the Department for International Development's theory of change framework for women and girls' empowerment.¹

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This piece of work is informed by a feminist social theory of change which (i) foregrounds the structural over the individual as sites of change, (ii) embeds intersectionality at its heart, and (iii) calls for radical, transformative change.

Structural over the individual

Focusing on the individual level to create gender change is problematic - as the 'individual' tends to be a woman. Meyerson and Kolb label this the 'equip the woman' strategy,² which makes several assumptions - about the meritocracy of recruitment practices, equal opportunities and the rigidity of the employment sector. There is absolute value in mentoring, development and training schemes which attempt to encourage and support women in male-dominated workplaces such as media, creative and cultural institutions. Yet there is a danger that an overarching liberal equality strategy³ based on a 'natural' equality of all individuals "sees inequality between men and women in organisations as the core problem and the solution is an improvement in the position of women".⁴⁵

Theories of change which instead focus on the structural dimension of change have far greater potential to create more diverse media and less archaic, hierarchical systems of power retention. Liberal equality is replaced by radical equality, which calls for a rearrangement of systems and processes, not merely creating more equal opportunities - but requiring equal outcomes.⁶ This requires emphasis on institutional, organisational and cultural change. By addressing multiple domains simultaneously⁷ - that is, both economic barriers within the industry as well as the hegemonic cultural norms that govern workplace environs and media content itself - there is perhaps an opportunity to create sustained structural change.

¹ DFID (2015) A theory of change on gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment. DFID PPA Learning Partnership Gender Group. Available at: <https://infohub.practicalaction.org/bitstream/handle/11283/565112/ToC%20Gender%20Equality%20&%20Women's%20Emp,%20DFID%20PPA%20Gender%20LG.pdf;jsessionid=AAC8D506F27BC50BD4B9BD676D9ACB20?sequence=1>.

² Meyerson DE, Kolb DM (2000) Moving out of the 'Armchair': Developing a Framework to Bridge the Gap between Feminist Theory and Practice. *Organization* 7:553-571.

³ Jewson N, Mason D (1986) The Theory and Practice of Equal Opportunities Policies: Liberal and Radical Approaches. *The Sociological Review* 34:307-334.

⁴ Benschop Y, Verloo M (2011) Gender Change, Organizational Change and Gender Equality Strategies. In: *Handbook of Gender, Work and Organization*, pp 277-290. London: John Wiley.

⁵ This was discussed at the BBC Creative Diversity Day (see: Event Review paper).

⁶ Greene A-M, Kirton G (2005) *The Dynamics of Managing Diversity: A Critical Approach*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

⁷ Benschop Y, Verloo M (2011) Gender Change, Organizational Change and Gender Equality Strategies. In: *Handbook of Gender, Work and Organization*, pp 277-290. London: John Wiley.

Intersectional change

Scotland's rich tapestry of identities requires an intersectional approach that highlights how exclusion is produced by the interconnectedness of social categories and a theory of change which does not prioritise certain marginalised groups over others. Ely and Meyerson posit gender as an axis of power and a core organising principle,⁸ which is a useful way for theory and practice to meet. In other words, we use gender awareness as a way to learn – and deconstruct – how oppression, discrimination and power relations work. The end goal is organisational and institutional structures which recognise differences in identity across multiple axes of power – not just gender. Meanwhile, Benschop and Verloo advise that an approach to gender change “must deal with intersectionality by developing a complex project that goes beyond gender equality alone.” Initiatives for change that fail to look beyond white, middle class heterosexual women cannot fundamentally rearrange organisational practice and culture to prevent marginalisation of any kind. Thus, an Equal Media and Cultural Centre (EMCC), while utilising gender mainstreaming as a strategic tool for change, must nonetheless prioritise equality of access, inclusion and visibility on all fronts.

Transformative change

Meyerson and Fletcher argue that gender inequalities are so entangled in work practices that to attempt large-scale transformative change is unrealistic and liable to provoke resistance. Instead, they promote ‘small wins’, which have an incremental, cumulative effect.⁹ Nevertheless, given the broad scale of inequalities across the Scottish media landscape, there is space for more revolutionary changes to organisations alongside smaller wins. One such revolutionary strategy is gender mainstreaming, which places accountability on policymakers (those with power but less specific knowledge) to collaborate with academics and activists (those with specific knowledge but less power) to change policies and challenge the embedded norms which reinforce inequalities.¹⁰ The collaborative element of this approach underpins its potential success as well as its downfall, relying as it does on political and institutional buy-in. Thus, an Equal Media and Culture Centre must focus on ways to engage institutions and organisations from the outset, through regular events, social media strategies, its own designated website, and a Communications and Engagement Officer able to maintain and extend the relationships that are already being built.

2.3 Potential Pitfalls

Important at the outset of any comprehensive theory of change is the consideration of possible difficulties, drawn both from practical and theoretical perspectives. While evaluation of specific interventions is contained in other papers,¹¹ there is an opportunity here to reflect on potential pitfalls identified in the literature.

Managerialism

By outlining specific goals, it is easy for a managerial approach to develop, based on monitoring and regulation. “Managerialism elevates control and regulation as the sole factors leading to effective and successful change”.¹² It can also encourage specific deliverables achieved through ticking a box, as opposed to deeper structural changes. However, meaningful change can develop in more ephemeral ways than can be documented on a spreadsheet. This theory of change thus foregrounds collaboration with grassroots

⁸ Ely RJ, Meyerson DE (2000) Theories of Gender in Organizations: A New Approach to Organizational Analysis and Change. *Research in Organizational Behavior* 22:103–151.

⁹ Meyerson DE, Fletcher JK (2000) A Modest Manifesto for Shattering the Glass Ceiling. *Harvard Business Review* Available at: <https://hbr.org/2000/01/a-modest-manifesto-for-shattering-the-glass-ceiling>.

¹⁰ Verloo M (2016) Mainstreaming gender equality in Europe: A critical frame analysis. *The Greek Review of Social Research* 117:11–34.

¹¹ See: Global Review of Strategies paper.

¹² Benschop Y, Verloo M (2011) Gender Change, Organizational Change and Gender Equality Strategies. In: *Handbook of Gender, Work and Organization*, pp 277–290. London: John Wiley.

initiatives and critical campaigns to embrace alternative forms of change and create space for flexible, innovative change projects.

Moreover, an EMCC designed to scrutinise media and cultural metrics – particularly in collaboration with experts in gender and media – will not necessarily have a managerial outcome. Such a model draws on post-equity strategy, whereby “change depends not on the action of one actor but on the fruitful collaboration between researchers and organization members who understand and accept a feminist critique and interventions that stem from that critique”.¹³

Non-intersectionality

Despite its transformative agenda, gender mainstreaming has received criticism as it “privileges the category of gender over other social categories such as ethnicity or class”.¹⁴

A theory of change for Scotland’s media must therefore combine gender mainstreaming strategies such as gender impact assessments, indices and financial controls with participatory tools to ensure the inclusion of marginalised groups in ways forward.¹⁵ An important first step in the formation of an EMCC will be a values-based exercise to cement a proactively intersectional, anti-racist approach.

Resistance

Understanding different forms of resistance is an important aspect of any theory of change. Organisational resistance can manifest in different ways, such as obfuscating - using confabulation or derailment techniques - denying that gender inequality is an issue,¹⁶ or “asking for research or training in order to avoid action, and attempt to escape involvement in gender change efforts”.¹⁷ One way to prepare for such resistance is an understanding of the ‘deep structures’ within organisations; the “collection of taken-for-granted values, and ways of thinking and working, that underlie decision making and action.”¹⁸ A Centre can address the gender-biased factors which appear baked into institutional DNA rather than leaving such work to individuals, often women, working within institutions.

Multiple resistance techniques have already manifested during the stakeholder engagement for this project. The theory of change, therefore, considers priorities from an institutional perspective, and how potential levers of change can encourage action and accountability from leaders sometimes *despite* these priorities.

Emphasising the commercial imperative¹⁹ is also an important incentive, supported by the literature. Dickens wrote of the need to include the business case, alongside any legal and social regulation strategies, as a basis for equality action.²⁰ A model which relies on a business case alone, however, fails to foreground gender as a category of power and privilege – outside of any market or labour forces. Thus, while the financial reasons for change should be highlighted, the moral imperative is as significant, if not more.

¹³ Ibid, p.284.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Walby S (2005) Gender Mainstreaming: Productive Tensions in Theory and Practice. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 12:321–343.

¹⁶ Connell R (2006) The Experience of Gender Change in Public Sector Organizations. *Gender, Work & Organization* 13:435–452.

¹⁷ Benschop Y, Verloo M (2011) Gender Change, Organizational Change and Gender Equality Strategies. In: *Handbook of Gender, Work and Organization*, pp 277–290. London: John Wiley.

¹⁸ Rao A, Kelleher D (2005) Is There Life After Gender Mainstreaming? *Gender & Development* 13:57–69.

¹⁹ See: BBC Diversity Day Review paper.

²⁰ Dickens L (1999) Beyond the business case: a three-pronged approach to equality action. *Human Resource Management Journal* 9:9–19.

Nevertheless, institutions are more likely to engage in equality and diversity initiatives where financial incentives are involved.^{21,22} For example, the change in the Scottish Highland Games in 2019 to allow more women to compete is understood to be influenced by funding requirements from Event Scotland.²³

Given the visible nature of the media, arts and creative sectors, the reputational risk to institutions, organisations, venues and agencies resistant to change is high. Ensuring any evaluations are made transparent and publicly accessible may therefore help to lessen resistance. There is also pressure on media organisations to attract content via creators, another lever which may be utilised to ensure institutions are an attractive prospect for creators to engage with.

The theory of change draws on all these levers of change to attempt to circumvent different forms of resistance – which will nevertheless remain a key obstacle to furthering equality in these industries.

A changing Theory of Change

Finally, it would be irresponsible not to note that as the project develops, further research is undertaken and experience in changing these particular sectors accrues, the theory of change itself may shift and require revision. To acknowledge this is, I think, key to its success, however, as it ensures a dynamic and responsive set of principles which can adapt to Scotland's economic, social and cultural needs.

3.0 A Theory of Change for Scotland's Media

3.1 The Context

The Scottish media and creative sectors are sprawling, interconnected, and dynamic. They include journalism, broadcasting, print media, digital platforms, the arts (theatre, comedy, visual arts, physical theatre, and music), advertising, communications, publishing and gaming. Each industry has its own set of practices, recruitment pipelines, funding streams, systems of power, internal regulations, priorities, and agendas. Yet there are various realities which inform how all these industries operate to exclude women and minoritised people.

Gendered norms

Gendered norms refer to the roles, behaviours and attitudes which society expects of women/girls and men/boys.²⁴ In Scotland, the effects of gendered societal norms are apparent in caring responsibilities, employment, pay scales, education, leadership roles, the occupation of public space, socio-economic disparity and rates of violence against women and girls. Understanding how women are disadvantaged by systemic sexism is key to changing the media and cultural sectors. The UN CEDAW Committee raised concerns about the damage of stereotyping, calling for government policy to “combat inhibitive gender roles and structures, so that all women and men, boys and girls can live their lives to their full potential”.²⁵

Equality and diversity

Gender alone is not the issue. Barriers actively exclude those with intersecting marginalised characteristics such as race, sexuality, gender identity, age, disability and socioeconomic background. The cumulative and compounding effect of societal exclusion of each of these means that workforces remain overwhelmingly

²¹ Xiao Y, Pinkney E, Au TKF, Yip PSF (2020) Athena SWAN and gender diversity: a UK-based retrospective cohort study. *BMJ Open* 10:e032915.

²² See also the Athena Swan model in academia.

²³ The Scotsman (2019) Scottish Highland Games organisers agree to allow women to compete. The Scotsman Available at: <https://www.scotsman.com/news/scottish-news/scottish-highland-games-organisers-agree-allow-women-compete-1418007>.

²⁴ Acker J (1990) Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations. *Gender and Society* 4:139–158.

²⁵ UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (2018) Concluding observations on the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Sweden: Addendum. United Nations. Available at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/SWE/CEDAW_C_SWE_CO_8-9_Add-1_21686_E.pdf.

difficult to access – and remain in – for many people. Theories of change often ignore such intersectionality; the kinds of issues that are talked about are those that disproportionately affect white, middle class, heterosexual women. “Without question, such women are the most likely beneficiaries of glass ceiling projects, part-time work arrangements, flexible leave policies and teleworking projects”.²⁶ A theory of change for Scotland must look beyond such measures to succeed.

Legislation

That the Scottish Government holds devolved powers, including education, sport and the creative industries, yet operates without reserved powers over key areas like broadcasting, employment and equal opportunities,²⁷ complicates any movement for change. Thus, while explicit state commitment to change is significant as a beacon of progression, practically, we must seek alternative incentives to engage change-makers. Moreover, the implications of Brexit are such that, despite the First Minister’s commitment to ensuring that policy in Scotland remains closely aligned with European Union law,²⁸ a powerful legislative force has been lost in areas where reserved powers are no longer backed by the EU.

UK-wide sectors

Changing institutional structures is complicated when governance, leadership and accountability are often not located in Scotland, and sometimes not even in the UK.²⁹ Contextually, this means that a theory of change must involve multiple achievable strategies and not rely solely on working with large-scale media companies.

Key Scottish stakeholders

The Scottish media and cultural landscape is expansive, but can also be inhibiting and overly interconnected, particularly within certain industries. Engaging central media and cultural stakeholders which set agendas and deliver funding (e.g., Creative Scotland, BBC Scotland, EIF) is key to developing a theory of change that best caters to Scotland.

3.2 The Problem

Barriers to equality and diversity in Scotland’s media production and representation continue to exclude women and other marginalised people, maintaining imbalances of gender, race, class, age, sexuality and disability in print, on radio, on screen, and behind the scenes. This section of the report refers to other papers submitted alongside it, as well as monitoring and research work, to provide a summary of existing evidence of sexism in Scotland’s media and cultural sectors, as detailed in the funding proposal. It examines media and creative content, industry and workforce norms, and leadership (see Section 4.0 below).

Media and creative content

A key pillar of systemic sexism in Scotland, and the UK in general, is the underrepresentation of women in artistic and creative output. Women’s numerical participation in media content must be addressed. Women are, for example, less likely to:

- have their work featured in art exhibitions;³⁰

²⁶ Benschop Y, Verloo M (2011) Gender Change, Organizational Change and Gender Equality Strategies. In: Handbook of Gender, Work and Organization, pp 277–290. London: John Wiley.

²⁷ Devolution (Further Powers) Committee (2016) Citizens’ Guide to Scottish Devolution. Scottish Parliament. Available at: https://archive2021.parliament.scot/images/Parliament%20Publications/Your_Guide_Mar_2016.pdf.

²⁸ McEwen N (2020) Devolution and Alignment with EU Laws. Centre on Constitutional Change Available at: <https://www.centreonconstitutionalchange.ac.uk/news-and-opinion/devolution-and-alignment-eu-laws>.

²⁹ See: Women on Boards paper.

³⁰ Shaw A (2019) Gallery representation dwindles for “established” female artists, new research finds. The Art Newspaper Available at: <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2019/01/25/gallery-representation-dwindles-for-established-female-artists-new-research-finds>.

- be the protagonist in a theatre or film production;³¹
- be nominated for a comedy award;³²
- be awarded full-length play commissions;^{33 34}
- be the primary characters in children’s television;³⁵
- are less likely to be the primary character in a game.³⁶

There is not a great deal of information about women’s quantitative and qualitative portrayals in Scottish media, which is in itself a stumbling block to fully assessing the problem – and which is covered in greater detail in the EMCC Monitoring Proposal paper. Generally, however, women are less likely to be a commentator in a news article, an expert in television or radio news, a journalist, or visible in broadcasts. In 2019 Melody House from the University of Strathclyde undertook a gender analysis of 288 news stories and 94 letters to the editor across three days of Scottish news. She found that women made up only 25.4 per cent of people in the news.³⁷ Research from 2020 analysed 106 Scottish news articles in 2016 and found 55 men were quoted or asked to comment – and only 18 women. The situation worsens for women of colour. Pass the Mic analysed samples of Scottish news and found that women of colour made up only 2.1 per cent of all people in the news and only 1.3 per cent of all those coded as experts.³⁸ We see similar male dominance in the digital sphere; in 2015, the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) found that men made up 68 per cent of people in tweets about the news across the UK.³⁹

The context in which women appear is hugely influential on the stereotypes that become gendered norms in Scottish society. Sarah Macharia from the GMMP has said that in global news, “the function in which women appear least is as experts. Women appear most as ordinary people, providing testimony based on personal experience or on popular opinion.”⁴⁰ This shapes our socio-cultural narratives around women being authoritative and knowledgeable experts. Stereotypes are reflected in other reporting spheres such as sports, where women’s football was found in one study to make up 4.7 per cent of all sports news coverage in Scotland, whilst the men’s game was the subject of 69.2 per cent of all sports stories in 2019.⁴¹

³¹ Redfern N (2009) Gender, Genre, and the UK Box Office. Research Into Film Available at: <https://nickredfern.wordpress.com/2009/03/26/gender-genre-and-the-uk-box-office/>.

³² Mathias L (2017) 12 ways diversity is still an issue in comedy. Chortle Available at: https://www.chortle.co.uk/correspondents/2017/09/14/37897/12_ways_diversity_is_still_an_issue_in_comedy.

³³ 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>.

³⁴ Bakare L (2020) Sexism and gender divide ingrained in UK theatre, study claims. The Guardian Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2020/jan/27/sexism-gender-divide-ingrained-uk-theatre-study-claims>.

³⁵ Hoffman O, Tumba P (2017) Children’s Television Worldwide II: Gender Representation in UK Children’s Television. International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television. Available at: <https://childrens-tv-worldwide.com/pdfs/UK.pdf>.

³⁶ MacDonald K (2014) Video games need more women – and asking for that won’t end the world. The Guardian Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/commentisfree/2014/feb/19/video-games-need-more-women-female-characters>.

³⁷ House M (2019) Where Are The Women? Media analysis of gender representation in Brexit news. Gender Equal Media Scotland Available at: <https://www.genderequalmedia.scot/news/blog/where-are-the-women-media-analysis-of-gender-representation-in-brexit-news/>.

³⁸ Boyle K, House M, Yaqoob T (2021) Where are the women of colour in Scottish election news? Pass the Mic Available at: <https://passthemicscotland.wordpress.com/where-are-the-women-of-colour-in-scottish-election-news/>.

³⁹ Macharia S (2015) Who Makes the News? Global Media Monitoring Project. Available at: https://www.media-diversity.org/additional-files/Who_Makes_the_News_-_Global_Media_Monitoring_Project.pdf.

⁴⁰ GEMS (2018) Gendered Representations in Scottish News. Gender Equal Media Scotland Available at: <https://www.genderequalmedia.scot/news/events/gendered-representations-in-scottish-news/>.

⁴¹ Jenkin A (2020) Still a Man’s Game? Monitoring the Scottish Sports Media. Gender Equal Media Scotland Available at: <https://www.genderequalmedia.scot/news/blog/still-a-mans-game-monitoring-the-scottish-sports-media/>.

The language used about women also remains gendered, and profoundly damaging, in Scottish news – for example, in articles covering violence against women, phrasing often reduces perpetrators’ accountability, such as not making the perpetrator the actor-agent of the sentence,⁴² and euphemisms for rape, such as ‘non-consensual sex’ ignore the power imbalances inherent within sexual assault and rape.⁴³ In response to the recent trial of Sarah Everard’s killer, and the public outpouring of anger and frustration over her murder across the UK, Professor Fiona Vera-Grey writes, “We could be the generation that ends violence against women and girls, if we start with changing not women’s behaviour, but the stories we tell about them.”⁴⁴

Imagery also remains gendered and stereotypical. Financial photography in the UK, for example, is more likely to portray women as child-like when it comes to money, and men as business-savvy.⁴⁵ Engender’s Gender Matters Roadmap towards women’s equality in Scotland states: “Sexualised imagery of women and girls across media platforms is so commonplace and widely accepted that it generally fails to resonate as an equality issue. This objectification of women’s bodies is extraordinarily damaging and shapes how women are valued, reinforces sexist attitudes and has negative impacts on body image, self-worth and health.”⁴⁶ Media and television portrayals of Black women in the UK affect young Black women’s self-perception as well as reinforcing negative stereotypes more broadly in society.⁴⁷ Representations of migrants, economically disadvantaged communities and Travellers in mainstream media remain deeply racist, classist and disenfranchising.⁴⁸

The impact of such qualitative representation is to position women in media as women first and foremost – and anything else secondary. The scale and repetition of this practice results in societal reinforcement of heteronormative, white supremacist sexism, which disadvantages women and minoritised people socially, economically and politically. Societal perceptions of women are moulded to a stereotype which negatively affects women’s health, confidence and value.

Advertising has taken steps towards equality with new regulations around gender stereotypes by the Advertising Standards Authority. The new regulations stipulate that advertisers cannot imply in their content that certain jobs can only be performed by one gender.⁴⁹

Industry and workforce norms

Media workforces in Scotland remain mostly male-dominated, with little flexibility in terms of workplace policies and industry practices which might facilitate the inclusion of more women and minoritised voices. According to a study conducted by Skillset in the UK in 2008, which was based on a labour market census,

⁴² Duffy E (2021) The Visibility of Women In Scottish News Media. Scottish Women’s Aid Available at: <https://womensaid.scot/the-visibility-of-women-in-scottish-news-media/>.

⁴³ Roberts S (2020) Why Language Matters: How are the violence and perpetrators framed? Zero Tolerance Available at: <https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/news/blog/why-language-matters-how-are-the-violence-and-perpetrators-framed/>.

⁴⁴ Vera-Gray F (2021) If we’re serious about ending violence against women, we need to talk about culture. The Guardian Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/oct/04/violence-against-women-culture-true-crime-pornography-onscreen>.

⁴⁵ Roberts L (2021) Women shown as small-time savers while men are big spenders in “sexist” stock images. The Telegraph Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/05/21/women-shown-small-time-savers-men-big-spenders-sexist-stock/>.

⁴⁶ Engender (2017) Gender Matters Roadmap: Towards Women’s Equality in Scotland. Engender. Available at: <https://gendermatters.engender.org.uk/content/resources/Gender-Matters-Roadmap---towards-womens-equality-in-Scotland.pdf>.

⁴⁷ Asare R (2017) ‘The Shonda Gaze’: The Effects of Television and Black Female Identity in the UK. Journal of Promotional Communications 5:342–261.

⁴⁸ Tyler I (2013) Revolting Subjects: Social Abjection and Resistance in Neoliberal Britain. London: Zed Books.

⁴⁹ BBC News (2019) Philadelphia and VW ads banned for gender stereotyping. BBC News Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-49332640>.

“women are a minority in virtually every segment of the media sector in the UK, including mainstream news and television, creative industries, gaming, and other digital media industries”.⁵⁰ Vertical and horizontal inequalities, unequal pay structures and masculinised workplace cultures make it more difficult for women to participate fully in the media sector and more likely to leave it after having children.

House’s 2019 sample found that only 26.8 per cent of reporters/journalists were women across three days of Scottish news about Brexit.⁵¹ Looking from a UK perspective, in 2015, the Global Media Monitoring Project found that 73 per cent of newspaper reporters, 86 per cent of radio reporters and 68 per cent of TV reporters in the sample were men.⁵²

This pattern holds across many topics. In 2020 Zero Tolerance found that, of 75 articles about violence against women and girls, 50 per cent were written by men, and 33 per cent by women (the author’s gender was not specified in 18 per cent). Moreover, across the 75 articles, not a single helpline number or contact was published.⁵³

Women journalists are also less likely to be publicly awarded for their work. In the report Gender Inequality and the Scottish Press Awards, analysing shortlists for the Scottish Newspaper Society’s annual awards, women lost out in almost all major awards from 2015-2020. In 2020, only 26 per cent of all journalists shortlisted for an award were women.⁵⁴

The working conditions, androcentric cultures, inflexible policies and lack of opportunities for career progression that continue to prevent women, particularly marginalised women, from remaining in the media industry are explored in great detail in work by Women in Journalism Scotland.^{55,56}

Scotland’s creative and cultural sectors are equally, if not more gendered, as highlighted by the recent NACWG Spotlight research, where it was found that women account for around one-third of the workforce and men two-thirds.⁵⁷ Women are also more likely (44 per cent) than men (12 per cent) to see gender as a barrier in itself to career progression in the arts.⁵⁸ Drilling down into the data also reveals sub-sectoral occupational

⁵⁰ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁵¹ House M (2019) Where Are The Women? Media analysis of gender representation in Brexit news. Gender Equal Media Scotland Available at: <https://www.genderequalmedia.scot/news/blog/where-are-the-women-media-analysis-of-gender-representation-in-brexit-news/>.

⁵² Macharia S (2015) Who Makes the News? Global Media Monitoring Project. Available at: https://www.media-diversity.org/additional-files/Who_Makes_the_News_-_Global_Media_Monitoring_Project.pdf.

⁵³ Chung N (2019) Spotlight on the Scottish Media: What’s the Story? Zero Tolerance Available at: <https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/news/blog/whats-the-story/>.

⁵⁴ Barty-Taylor M (2021) Gender Inequality and the Scottish Press Awards. Gender Equal Media Scotland. Available at: <https://www.genderequalmedia.scot/files/gender-inequality-and-the-scottish-press-awards.pdf>.

⁵⁵ WIJS (2020) Where things stand for women in the Scottish media in December 2020. Women in Journalism Scotland Available at: https://www.wijscotland.com/news/snapshot-survey-where-things-stand-for-women-in-the-scottish-media-in-december-2020?fbclid=IwAR3GjiQ9SZTKI6oazLG_AFYAs8-4bd-oCj7k1hPZ89m7HwV6AjxSsjwtqOo.

⁵⁶ See also: Kenny M, Liu S-JS, McKay F, Thomson E (2021) ‘I just didn’t see anyone like me’: Women’s experiences in Scottish media, creative and cultural industries. University of Edinburgh and Robert Gordon University, the Surviving Social Media report, and in the Women in Journalism Scotland Survey Analysis.

⁵⁷ 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/>.

⁵⁸ Creative Scotland (2017) Understanding Diversity in the Arts 2016. Creative Scotland. Available at: https://www.creativescotland.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/42923/Diversity-In-The-Arts-Final-Report.pdf.

segregation: “In film, TV and performing arts, women are the majority of the creative workforce only in casting, make-up and costume, and are clustered in ‘feminine’ genres, such as romance, lifestyle and homes.”⁵⁹

The music industry in Scotland remains imbalanced and exclusive. The Musicians’ Union membership reveals a 30:70 ratio of women to men,⁶⁰ a statistic borne out in gig and festival line-ups which remain dominated by men.⁶¹ Musicians such as Jenn Butterworth⁶² and Rona Wilkie⁶³ have spoken out publicly about the rife sexual harassment and pub culture inherent within the trad and folk scene, which inhibits and excludes women, particularly younger women, from career progression. Women’s safety is a concern across the music industry in Scotland, with Scottish Women Inventing Music highlighting the need for a professionalised and safer, more inclusive society.⁶⁴ Fair Fringe has said that the Edinburgh Fringe has a huge issue with sexual harassment of festival workers and performers alike.⁶⁵

Piping and drumming in Scotland are also male-dominated and lag behind most other sectors when it comes to progressive action towards inclusivity. Again, safety is a key concern, with Megan Canning writing in 2017, “By the end of my teenage years in pipe bands, I’d already experienced both harassment and stalking. And I knew other women who had experienced physical assault by men in pipe bands, in some cases by extremely prominent members of the pipe band community.” Moreover, the culture itself remains entrenched in patriarchal norms: “For women like me who have spent decades of their lives playing in pipe bands, we can all point to the ways in which gender discrimination has affected us, both big and small.”⁶⁶ Acclaimed piper Jenny Hazard said in 2020, “I do see a change – not a good one. In recent years it seems clear to me that the number of females in piping is actually declining”.⁶⁷ Edinburgh’s Royal Scottish Pipers Society only voted to admit women in 2015.⁶⁸

The Scottish Highland Games Association (SHGA) only made substantive changes to include more women in 2019. Rhoda Grant, an MSP for the Highlands and Islands, said “Obviously it is disappointing that it took this

⁵⁹ Engender (2017) Gender Matters Roadmap: Towards Women’s Equality in Scotland. Available at:

<https://gendermatters.engender.org.uk/content/resources/Gender-Matters-Roadmap---towards-womens-equality-in-Scotland.pdf>.

⁶⁰ STUC (2016) Challenges experienced by women working in music and the performing arts sectors. Scottish Trades Union Congress. Available at:

<https://stuc.org.uk/files/Women%20and%20Work%202016/Women%20in%20Music%20&%20Performing%20Arts.compressed.pdf>.

⁶¹ Hawksworth C (n.d.) Gender Equality in the Scottish Folk and Traditional Music Scene. Hands Up For Trad Available at:

<https://projects.handsupfortrad.scot/handsupfortrad/gender-equality-in-the-scottish-folk-and-traditional-music-scene-by-catriona-hawksworth/>.

⁶² BBC News (2020) Women speak out over Scottish trad music scene “misogyny.” BBC News Available at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-53949571>.

⁶³ Wilkie R (2020) Sexual Harassment in the Trad World. Bella Caledonia Available at:

<https://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2020/08/20/sexual-harassment-in-the-trad-world/>.

⁶⁴ SWIM (2020) A Response. Scottish Women Inventing Music Available at: <https://www.scottishwomeninventingmusic.com/a-response>.

⁶⁵ Bakare L (2019) Edinburgh fringe “must do more” to tackle sexual harassment. The Guardian Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/aug/21/edinburgh-fringe-must-do-more-to-tackle-sexual-harassment>.

⁶⁶ Canning M (2017) #MeToo: A collective call to members of our community. pipes | drums Available at:

<https://www.pipesdrums.com/article/metoo-a-collective-call-to-members-of-our-community/>.

⁶⁷ pipes | drums (2020) The status of females in piping and drumming in 2020. pipes | drums Available at:

<https://www.pipesdrums.com/article/the-status-of-females-in-piping-and-drumming-in-2020/>.

⁶⁸ O’Byrne E (2016) Margaret Dunn is piping up for gender equality. The Irish Examiner Available at:

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/lifestyle/arid-20415131.html>.

long for them to get to this point, but the SHGA have now seen sense to join the rest of us in the 21st century and allow women to compete on a level playing field at Highland Games events.”⁶⁹

The number of authors in Scotland is also gender-imbalanced, with recent research by Represent, Object, Advocate and Rewrite (ROAR), which aims to combat inequality in Scottish writing and publishing, showing that only 37 per cent of authors whose books were published in Scotland were women, while only four women authors of non-fiction about Scotland were published in 2017, compared to 30 men. Meanwhile, 86 per cent of reviews were by men.⁷⁰ Publishing appears to be in a better position, with Publishing Scotland reporting in 2021 that 50 per cent of publishers in Scotland are owned or managed by women.⁷¹ Similarly, a report from 2015 by Creative Scotland indicates that 46 per cent of the UK visual arts workforce are women.⁷²

Reports from the gaming industry indicate that women make up just under half of the gaming market globally.⁷³ Yet despite nearly equal numbers of gamers, “only one-tenth of video game designers are women, and the widespread cyber-harassment of female game designers has drawn renewed attention to the importance of increasing diversity in the gaming industry.”⁷⁴ The Scottish Games Network has signed up to Raise The Game, a diversity initiative aimed at making the gaming industry more inclusive.⁷⁵ The gaming industry is significant in Scotland,⁷⁶ with data showing that employment in the Scottish video games development industry grew 17 per cent between 2018 and 2020.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, women are underrepresented in digital technology occupations across the sector in Scotland (18 per cent), including gaming.⁷⁸ Efforts are being made to support younger women gamers, but opportunities are still limited.⁷⁹

The available data outlined above adds up to an understanding of the creative labour economy that remains patriarchal and exclusive at its essence.⁸⁰ From gaming to galleries, publishing to performing, the irregular hours, fast-paced content production, increasing reliance on self-branding, lack of flexible working,

⁶⁹ The Scotsman (2019) Scottish Highland Games organisers agree to allow women to compete. The Scotsman Available at: <https://www.scotsman.com/news/scottish-news/scottish-highland-games-organisers-agree-allow-women-compete-1418007>.

⁷⁰ Kumar J (2019) Ready to ROAR: Group calls out gender inequalities within the Scottish Literary Sector. Literature Alliance Scotland Available at: <https://literaturealliancescotland.co.uk/ready-to-roar-group-calls-out-gender-inequalities-within-the-scottish-literary-sector/>.

⁷¹ Publishing Scotland (2021) “Celebrating #InternationalWomenDay with our inspiring & strong women in #publishing - a fabulous 50% of publishers in Scotland are owned or managed by women, and a significant proportion of our brilliant network members are run or led by women too. #IWD21 <http://shorturl.at/arGNW>.” Twitter Available at: <https://twitter.com/PublishScotland/status/1368875458364907520?s=20>.

⁷² Blanche R (2015) Mapping the Visual Arts in Scotland Survey of Individuals Working in the Visual Arts Sector in Scotland. Scottish Contemporary Art Network. Available at: https://www.creativescotland.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/36483/Survey-of-Individuals.pdf.

⁷³ Scotland T (2021) Women in gaming: is the industry changing to become more inclusive? The Herald Scotland Available at: <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19106978.women-gaming-industry-changing-become-inclusive/>.

⁷⁴ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁷⁵ Scottish Games Network (2020) #RaiseTheGame Diversity Pledge. Scottish Games Network Available at: <https://scottishgames.net/raise-the-game/>.

⁷⁶ Mackay N (2021) Why Scotland’s bizarre silence on our genius at video games does not compute. The Herald Scotland Available at: <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19257294.neil-mackays-big-read-success-another-level---scotlands-bizarre-silence-genius-video-games-not-compute/>.

⁷⁷ PR Newswire (2020) Scottish Video Games Industry Grows by 17 per cent. PR Newswire Available at: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/scottish-video-games-industry-grows-by-17-per-cent-301164041.html>.

⁷⁸ Digital Scotland (2016) Tackling the Technology Gender Gap Together. Skills Development Scotland. Available at: <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/42478/tackling-the-technology-gender-gap-together-2.pdf>.

⁷⁹ Scotland T (2021) Women in gaming: is the industry changing to become more inclusive? The Herald Scotland Available at: <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19106978.women-gaming-industry-changing-become-inclusive/>.

⁸⁰ Conor B, Gill R, Taylor S (2015) Gender and creative labour. The Sociological Review 63:1–22.

inconsistent maternity and health policies, logistics of childcare and reliance on freelance or unpaid workers – more often women⁸¹ – remain significant barriers to women’s inclusion behind the scenes in the production of creative content in Scotland.

Leadership

Scotland’s media and cultural sectors remain largely led by men. The findings from Scotland’s new Gender Equality Index found the ‘Power’ domain to have the lowest score, driven by women’s underrepresentation on the boards of private and public sector organisations, and in senior positions across police, the judiciary, the media and sport.”⁸² A few examples are detailed below to provide insight into the situation in Scotland.⁸³

As of September 2021, the Directors of all three major broadcasters in Scotland are men. In 2019, 10 per cent of editors of major newspapers in Scotland were women (two women compared with 18 men);⁸⁴ in 2020, this figure fell to 5.9 per cent.⁸⁵

Leadership in the creative and cultural sector, too, remains highly gendered in Scotland.⁸⁶ In sport, only 14 per cent of CEO positions across Scotland’s national governing bodies are held by women.⁸⁷ Only two of nine national arts and culture bodies are led by women.⁸⁸

	Women	Men	Total	% women
Directors of major museums and art galleries	3	15	18	16.7%
Directors of national arts and culture bodies	2	7	9	22.2%
Heads of production companies	2	5	7	28.6%

3.3 Obstacles to Change

To summarise, the historic and ongoing underrepresentation of women across Scotland’s media and cultural industries has led to:

- A solidification of men in critical decision-making roles at the top of key institutions;
- Commissioning of content reflecting male-coded interests and priorities;
- The propagation of damaging gender – and other – stereotypes which shape societal views;
- Lack of visible, representative role models for children and young people to recognise themselves in;
- Rigid organisational policies reinforcing the status quo at the expense of flexible, inclusive practices;
- Cultures of production that promote masculinised, hierarchical, and alienating workplaces;
- The continued undermining of equal opportunities to work across the Scottish media and cultural sectors.

⁸¹ Scottish Government (2020) Scotland’s Gender Equality Index 2020. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://data.gov.scot/genderindex/gender-equality-index-2020.html>.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ This is explored more comprehensively in the Women On Boards paper.

⁸⁴ Scottish Government (2020) Scotland’s Gender Equality Index 2020. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://data.gov.scot/genderindex/gender-equality-index-2020.html>.

⁸⁵ Engender (2020) Sex & Power in Scotland 2020. Available at: <https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/Engenders-Sex-and-Power-2020.pdf>.

⁸⁶ Louise D (2016) Women in the visual arts: “Leadership is not a gender neutral space.” a-n The Artists Information Company Available at: <https://www.a-n.co.uk/news/women-in-the-visual-arts-leadership-is-not-a-gender-neutral-space/>.

⁸⁷ Engender (2017) Gender Matters Roadmap: Towards Women’s Equality in Scotland. Available at: <https://gendermatters.engender.org.uk/content/resources/Gender-Matters-Roadmap---towards-womens-equality-in-Scotland.pdf>.

⁸⁸ Engender (2020) Sex & Power in Scotland 2020. Available at: <https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/Engenders-Sex-and-Power-2020.pdf>.

These are distilled into five boxes in the Summary Diagram and explored in greater detail here.



Institutions

Institutions are slow to enact change, dealing with competing priorities, including bureaucracy, compliance, funding, creative output, guidelines, policy and capacity. Although there is interest in equality and diversity, as well as commitment to legal duties, more often than not, this takes a back seat to financial-related issues, with Covid-19 and Brexit putting greater stress on an already-strained sector. Often male-dominated senior management and boards⁸⁹ have resulted in a lack of decisive commitment to equality initiatives (and resource towards these) from the top down. Large institutions can be unwieldy and slow-moving – but often have better infrastructure in place to make change – whereas smaller media bodies and organisations often have less regimented protocols in place but have the capacity to affect change more quickly.

Where initiatives are in place, these often remain tokenistic, unsustainable, unsupported and with limited accountability. Appointing a ‘Head of Equality’, for example, without providing sufficient resources, authority, funding and commitment to implement recommendations, has limited impact on system change. Requiring funded art-sector groups to undertake self-evaluation of equality and diversity is similarly less impactful when there is no follow-up on targets set, or sanctions in place for lack of progress (see Gathering Attitudes paper).

In addition – and due to the historic masculinisation of public space^{90,91} – the culture of media institutions is often unresponsive to change. The status quo within, for example, news journalism or the Highland Games is protected by tradition. Where there is a will to change, there is little understanding of how to go about successfully implementing initiatives – or indeed what to focus on. Yet both large and small institutions express interest in learning more and often see the business sense behind diversification of content – if not the workforce. By following the approach towards institutional change and power detailed by Kathleen Thelen⁹² and Meryl Kenny,⁹³ transformation projects can acknowledge change in certain aspects while leaving other elements in place. For a theory of change, this approach holds potential in negotiating resistance. Other strategies to incentivise change are detailed above in the discussion of resistance.

Laws and policies

The Equality Act (2010) exists to protect individuals from discrimination in the workplace and society based on ‘protected characteristics’ including: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ See: Women on Boards paper.

⁹⁰ Beard M (2014) The Public Voice of Women. London Review of Books 36 Available at: <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v36/n06/mary-beard/the-public-voice-of-women>.

⁹¹ Baxter J (2016) Speaking Out The Female Voice in Public Contexts. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

⁹² Thelen K (2003) How Institutions Evolve: Insights from Comparative Historical Analysis. In: Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences, pp 208–240. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁹³ Beard M (2014) The Public Voice of Women. London Review of Books 36 Available at: <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v36/n06/mary-beard/the-public-voice-of-women>.

⁹⁴ UK Government (2010) The Equality Act 2010. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (2011) delineates how public bodies must meet their duties in making society more accessible by challenging discrimination and offering equal opportunities.⁹⁵

As discussed, the Scottish Government's limited powers present a potential obstacle; while devolved powers include sport and the arts, at present, broadcasting and employment are reserved to the UK parliament.⁹⁶ Generally, public broadcasters – e.g., BBC Scotland – tend to be more compliant with both industry codes and legislative requirements than private media corporations.⁹⁷

Hesitancy has been noted across many EU member states to introduce regulatory measures to ensure both public and private media companies are compelled to embed equality into their practices. This stems from a reluctance to restrict freedom of expression or impose legal stipulations on what can or cannot be depicted. “The prevailing narrative pits freedom of expression against the promotion of gender equality, without recognising the more nuanced position that promoting gender equality in the media is a means for women to achieve full access to freedom of expression.”⁹⁸ Moreover, there is clear resistance in some areas of media to such regulation. Research in 2018 interviewing women working in media across EU member states described the following: “Respondents working in broadcast or print media maintained the primary importance of freedom of expression, and believed that regulation on what can and cannot be reported or depicted risked undermining this. It was felt that self-regulation and ethical codes of conduct are sufficient to ensure and promote fairness and gender equality”.⁹⁹

A key obstacle to equality for women in media is the lack of flexible working arrangements, part-time contracts, maternity leave policies and re-entry opportunities which systematically reduce the chances for women with caring responsibilities to contribute to the workforce.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, the lack of policies around the protection and support of women, particularly in their online existence, means women are dealing with traumatic abuse and violence in the workplace via online spaces. Commitment to, and application of, certain policies are subject to senior leadership teams and executive directors of media and cultural institutions. There is, at present, a lack of accountability or consequence for those who remain non-compliant.

Lack of research

Unfortunately, there is a severe lack of meaningful, disaggregated data on the Scottish-specific context.¹⁰¹ There has been little research conducted on workforces in Scottish media companies, and the impact of initiatives undertaken is rarely measured, certainly with little publicly available data. The European Parliament paper on Gender and the Media highlights the impact that disaggregated data analysis could have:

⁹⁵ Government Equalities Office (2011) Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty What Do I Need To Know? A Quick Start Guide For Public Sector Organisations. UK Government. Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85041/equality-duty.pdf.

⁹⁶ Scottish Parliament (2022) What are the powers of the Scottish Parliament? Scottish Parliament Available at:

<https://www.parliament.scot/about/how-parliament-works/powers-of-the-scottish-parliament>.

⁹⁷ EIGE (2013) Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media — Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations. European Institute for Gender Equality.

Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/advancing-gender-equality-decision-making-media-organisations-report>.

⁹⁸ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at:

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁹⁹ Ibid, p.54.

¹⁰⁰ WIJS (2020) Where things stand for women in the Scottish media in December 2020. Women in Journalism Scotland Available at: https://www.wijscotland.com/news/snapshot-survey-where-things-stand-for-women-in-the-scottish-media-in-december-2020?fbclid=IwAR3GjiQ9SZTKI6oazLG_AFYAs8-4bd-oCj7k1hPZ89m7HwV6AixSsjwtq0o.

¹⁰¹ This is highlighted in the literature review of the Commissioned Research Report, Kenny M, Liu S-JS, McKay F, Thomson E (2021) 'I just didn't see anyone like me': Women's experiences in Scottish media, creative and cultural industries. University of Edinburgh and Robert Gordon University.

“Further research into gender inequality in the media would support this work to promote social change. In particular, ongoing analysis of comparable data on gender inequality across Member States, and of ‘what works’ in promoting equality, is key to raising awareness not only of the scale of the problem, but also of how to address it.”¹⁰²

Moreover, there has been little systematic monitoring or study of cultural or creative content in Scotland with regard to equality and diversity.¹⁰³ There are calls from specific sectors in Scotland for greater research. Catriona Hawksworth, investigating gender equality in the Scottish folk and trad music scene, writes, “Firstly we need some research into the extent of current gender inequalities. In order to make, and record positive change, the present situation must be observed and analysed.”¹⁰⁴ From the Scottish Contemporary Art Network comes a call for better defined research parameters and specific recommendations, like using data from the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey in order to allow organisations to benchmark their own monitoring against broad trends.¹⁰⁵ Efforts to improve the representation of women and marginalised people in Scotland will falter without greater research which can in turn inform evidence-based initiatives such as standards, guidelines, toolkits and training.

Equalities sector underfunded

While there have been efforts to address gender inequality across the media and cultural sectors in Scotland, this has fallen to equalities sector organisations or creator-led initiatives. The former tend to approach initiatives from specific angles or perspectives, and certain sectors receive greater attention than others.¹⁰⁶ Piecemeal work undertaken by passionate researchers, activists and creators holds enormous worth but is neither lauded nor utilised meaningfully. UNESCO’s International Association for Media and Communication Research has identified the need to “reduce knowledge fragmentation, particularly across regions, by fostering the networking of knowledge and practices related to gender-aware media governance”.¹⁰⁷ A well-resourced hub to liaise with all those involved in such work would provide knowledge exchange and cohesion of output.

Economic models and funding

Both the media and the creative sectors are largely built on economic models which disadvantage many - and maintain an exclusionary status quo. While this theory of change does not propose initiatives which can immediately alter these economic models, it is nevertheless worth acknowledging the role they play and their interplay with other obstacles, such as caring responsibilities, organisational internal policies and cultural barriers.

An increasingly mediated reality involving high levels of digital engagement¹⁰⁸ is a key factor in news media organisations which must attract traffic to their platforms to attract readers and advertisers. This carries its

¹⁰² McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

¹⁰³ This is explored in greater detail in the EMCC Media Monitoring Proposal paper.

¹⁰⁴ Hawksworth C (n.d.) Gender Equality in the Scottish Folk and Traditional Music Scene. Hands Up For Trad Available at: <https://projects.handsupfortrad.scot/handsupfortrad/gender-equality-in-the-scottish-folk-and-traditional-music-scene-by-catriona-hawksworth/>.

¹⁰⁵ Ziadat S (2018) Scottish Visual Art Demographics Report. Scottish Contemporary Art Network. Available at: <https://sca-net.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/EDIRreport.pdf>.

¹⁰⁶ As discussed in the EMCC Media Monitoring Proposal paper.

¹⁰⁷ Monteil AV (2020) Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG). In: The International Encyclopedia of Gender, Media, and Communication 1-3. Oxford: John Wiley.

¹⁰⁸ O’Neill D, Savigny H, Cann V (2016) Women politicians in the UK press: not seen and not heard? *Feminist Media Studies* 16:293–307.

own risks.¹⁰⁹¹¹⁰ The creative and cultural sectors are built on funding models which necessitate time-sensitivity, intense periods of work followed by unemployment, and travel – all of which are deeply exclusionary of women, particularly women experiencing intersectional marginalisation and discrimination who are less likely to benefit from traditional ‘one size fits all’ EDI measures.¹¹¹

A consequence of the dominance of these economic models is a lack of protection, support and inclusion of women. Fear of repercussions prevents women, and indeed gatekeepers from reporting violence and abuse when carrying out their job.

3.4 Interventions at Different Levels

Initiatives undertaken to improve gender equality within Scotland’s media and cultural sectors must target specific groups with different needs and characteristics: Scottish society, the different sectors, institutions and the workforce.



Scottish society

Cultural inequalities are underpinned by attitudes, in turn influenced by media representations and visibility – which are themselves informed by cultural inequity. While this can be perceived as impenetrable, in fact, it makes a focus on the media and creative sectors all the more central to substantive shifts in Scottish attitudes more broadly. Creating an Equally Safe Culture in Scotland could not be more reliant on sustained work in these sectors.

Sectors

A central aspect of any change project must be participation and engagement horizontally and vertically across the media and creative workforces. Increasingly apparent are the conflicting priorities and agendas (economic, political and social) of people working in different industries, at different stages of their careers, and with various levels of power to affect change in their own spheres of influence. One solution cannot improve equality across the board. More realistic are multiple simultaneous solutions which may be championed by some actors in some sectors – but not as relevant or embraced in others.

Institutions

The word “institutions” itself encompasses organisations of different sizes, public and private, with various governance styles and at different stages of development. To varying degrees, they are open to discussing ways forward, and to learning more about pragmatic steps they can take towards greater representational inclusivity and equality. Strategies involve several forms of leverage with the overall aim to embed self-sufficient intersectional gender mainstreaming into practices and policies.

¹⁰⁹ Beleslin I, Njegovan BR, Vukadinović MS (2017) Clickbait titles: Risky formula for attracting readers and advertisers. In: IS’17, pp 364–369. Novi Sad, Serbia.

¹¹⁰ These are explored in the Women In Journalism Scotland Survey Analysis and the Surviving Social Media paper.

¹¹¹ Benschop Y, Verloo M (2011) Gender Change, Organizational Change and Gender Equality Strategies. In: Handbook of Gender, Work and Organization, pp 277–290. London: John Wiley.

Workforces

A theory of change must engage with the intersecting inequalities found in the workplace, for example, the complex cultural, social and economic inequalities found in the journalism sphere. Work targeting the specific agendas and priorities of women in the workforce is carried out by various agencies, including the Gender Commission, Creative Scotland, Close the Gap, Unions including the NUJ, the Fair Work Convention, the Scottish Business Pledge and the EHRC. A theory of change for the media and creative sectors must hear from women and minoritised people directly about the issues and solutions experienced, and work with these agencies to create strategies, achievable goals and policies to improve working conditions.

3.5 Approaches

There are two key, linked approaches which underpin any successful gender change in Scotland's media and cultural sectors: Evidence-based interventions and autonomous gender competence.



Evidence-based interventions

Recognising the strength of evidence-based interventions informed by quantitative and qualitative data and analysis is a powerful step. This can take the form of measuring demographic data of workforces, critical analysis of media and creative content, thematic analysis of people's experiences working in the sector, and evaluation of initiatives used in similar contexts both in Scotland and further afield.¹¹² Using an external agency to coordinate, if not deliver, subsequent interventions ensures that competing financial or bureaucratic agendas do not undermine the outcomes.

Institutional governance and commitment to equality

The adoption, engagement or buy-in to any such intervention relies on a degree of institutional commitment to equality as a priority and, crucially, the weight of leadership behind such activity. Equally, institutional governance must prioritise their own autonomous work to improve the gender balance and egalitarianism of their workforces and creative outputs: "organisations that are most successful in achieving gender parity in their workforce are those with strong leadership that demonstrates commitment to including women at all levels of media production."¹¹³

Autonomous gender competence

No long-term change can be achieved without embedding gender competence into the practices underpinning all activity in media, creative and cultural sectors. In other words, they have to learn how to do it for themselves. A theory of change must ensure an approach that creates self-sufficiency to affect long-term substantive change within organisations.

¹¹² As outlined in the EMCC Media Monitoring Proposal paper.

¹¹³ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

3.6 Strategies

There are four strategic mechanisms that can be implemented to effectively instigate structural gender change: exerting external pressure, supporting and rewarding best practice, setting broad expectations at a state level, and sanctions for lack of progress.



Within each box are a number of different options; combinations of these operating simultaneously are the key to successful change. For example, the European Broadcasting Union published their report All Things Being Equal¹¹⁴ in December 2019. In it, successful strategies for a media institution or organisation to become gender equal are laid out clearly: “gathering of workplace data and staff feedback to diagnose the issues, development of clear workplace policies to support equality of opportunity, and enabling a positive workplace culture through flexibility, leadership and changes in behaviours to retain talent.”¹¹⁵

External pressure

Sustained public pressure based on evidence of inequality through monitoring, reports and research is a powerful strategic tool. Some examples of external pressure include: marshalling existing agents of change working throughout the media and cultural sectors, many of them grassroots or part-time initiatives; harnessing consumer power through campaigns; providing up-to-date information for policy and strategy reports; creating longitudinal data which is transparent and accessible; utilising complaints procedures to regulators, developing an app to allow consumers to record and report data (including bylines, interruptions on panel shows, problematic reporting on GBV); and creating a form of public Excellence Index which lists those organisations making progress towards greater equality.

Using the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) as a case study, a great deal more can be done by utilising existing regulatory mechanisms to encourage and demand better reporting. A search of rulings on an array of Scottish publications showed no rulings had been made for a five-year period (see table below). This does not mean that no complaints have been made but that they have not prompted rulings by the Complaints Panel.

IPSO Ruling Results: As of 18.12.2020			
Publication	Time Period	Code Provision Rulings: 11. Victims of Sexual Assault	Code Provision Rulings: 12. Discrimination that relates to the representation of women
The Scotsman			
Scotland on Sunday			
The Sunday Mail			
The Herald			
The Sunday Herald			

¹¹⁴ EBU (2019) All Thing Being Equal: Gender equality guidelines from public service media. European Broadcasting Union. Available at: <https://www.ebu.ch/guides/all-things-being-equal-gender-equality-guidelines-from-public-service-media>.

¹¹⁵ COE (2020) Gender Equality and Media. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/prems-064620-gbr-2573-gender-equality-in-media/16809f0342>.

The Daily Record	Jan 2016 – Dec 2020	0	0
The Sunday Post			
The National			
The Scottish Sun			
The Scottish Sun on Sunday			

Supporting and rewarding

Change projects that shame and ridicule lack of progress are not ultimately as successful as those which encourage and reward.¹¹⁶ The Women’s Media Action Group, which existed from 1977-1989, monitoring media for stereotypes, felt that its lack of support stemmed from having a negative mission, as opposed to promoting a positive viewpoint.¹¹⁷ From developing expertise, research and Scottish-specific data can come helpful, sector-led toolkits, self-assessment and self-monitoring templates, bespoke leadership training and award schemes which support institutions and agencies seeking to make proactive change. The Roundtable Event in April 2021 organised as part of this development work revealed that many believe an independent, safe space is necessary to have honest conversations with varieties of actors whose motivations are unknown.

Setting expectations

As can be seen in change management literature, a top-down agenda sets the tone for shifts in culture, attitudes and behaviours.¹¹⁸ A powerful tool for gender change is a request at the state level for institutional commitment to engage in new measures. While it is clear that public bodies are more likely to follow this than private corporations, nevertheless, setting expectancies for action can be significant. In France, the CSA “asked TV and radio broadcasters to make a commitment for 2014 to move the media landscape towards a better gender balance,”¹¹⁹ after which broadcasters began undertaking equality measurements. An example of this in Scotland could be a National Equal Media and Culture Action Plan.

Positive discrimination such as quotas, preferably temporary, have proven effective not only in putting women’s equality in the spotlight but also in implementing numerical change. Quotas that target the representation of women on the boards of governing bodies have been implemented in several Nordic countries, and quotas in Norway have also spread to the private sector.¹²⁰

Applying sanctions

Although positive reinforcement is preferred over negative, the degree of inequalities within the media and cultural sectors in Scotland, particularly those related to power, requires an assessment of firmer levers of change.¹²¹ Yet alternatives to state regulation can offer powerful incentives. Reminders of legal requirements alone can elicit proactive change. Media and cultural institutions are keen to portray themselves as leading by excellence when it comes to equality and diversity, and their reliance on visibility and recognition makes reputational risk an important mechanism.

¹¹⁶ As discussed in the Global Review of Initiatives.

¹¹⁷ Women’s Media Action Group (1977-1990) Records of the Women’s Media Action Group - Archives Hub. Jisc Available at: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb106-5/wma>.

¹¹⁸ Ryan N, Williams T, Charles M, Waterhouse J (2008) Top-down organizational change in an Australian Government agency. *International Journal of Public Sector Management* 21:26–44.

¹¹⁹ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

¹²⁰ Tienari J, Holgersson C, Meriläinen S, Höök P (2009) Gender, Management and Market Discourse: The Case of Gender Quotas in the Swedish and Finnish Media. *Gender, Work & Organization* 16:501–521.

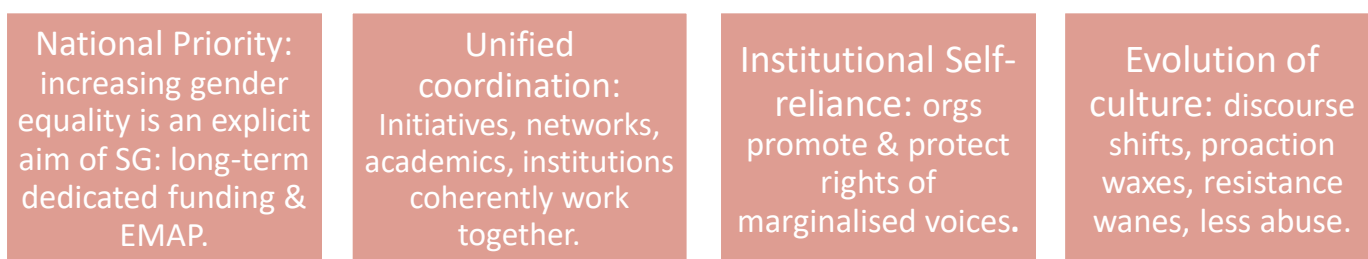
¹²¹ Scottish Government (2020) Scotland’s Gender Equality Index 2020. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://data.gov.scot/genderindex/gender-equality-index-2020.html>.

An existing resource is the influence wielded by regulatory bodies, such as the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), Office of Communications (Ofcom) and IPSO. Engagement with these is described above, and long-lasting impact on equality can be achieved through changing regulation guidelines/codes, as has recently successfully been done by the ASA on stereotypes. IPSO can undertake standards investigations where there have been serious and systemic breaches of the Editors' Code, for example, or if Editors' Code compliance issues are raised. If sufficiently concerned, IPSO can then impose sanctions, including fines, quarterly statements, or the termination of membership.¹²² Submitting complaints based on regular monitoring and evidence has never been employed in Scotland as a measure to enforce gender change, although it has been used to great effect by, for example, the Centre for Media Monitoring.¹²³

Contingent funding and licenses can also be levers of change: "Initiatives such as the granting of broadcast licenses on the basis of gender equality criteria, co-funding media projects that strengthen gender equality, or supporting gender equality programmes in the media are concrete steps that can contribute to change mindsets and encourage media professionals to report through a gender lens".¹²⁴

3.7 Outputs

Being able to see clear pathways between implemented strategies and equality outputs is a key tenet of a successful theory of change.¹²⁵ Undertaking a combination of the approaches, strategies and initiatives described above, one could expect to see outputs falling under four main areas: a shift in national priority, a more unified coordination of change efforts, greater institutional self-reliance and awareness of their role in upholding the rights of women and marginalised people, and an evolution of workforce and industry culture.



National Priority

A clear route to gender equality in the media and cultural sectors becoming a national priority would be:

- i) a sustainably resourced Women In Media Body – or Equal Media and Culture Centre, as it is outlined below – which is funded and supported by the government;
- ii) A National Equal Media and Cultural Action Plan, calling on institutions – public and private – to engage with research and self-monitoring work.

Scottish societal understanding of the significance and impact of greater equality across these sectors would also increase, which in itself creates a cyclical impact.

¹²² IPSO (2022) Standards investigations. Independent Press Standards Organisation Available at: <https://www.ipso.co.uk/monitoring/standards-investigations/>.

¹²³ See: EMCC Media Monitoring Proposal paper.

¹²⁴ COE (2020) Gender Equality and Media. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/prems-064620-gbr-2573-gender-equality-in-media/16809f0342>.

¹²⁵ CCAFS (2015) Lessons in Theory of Change: Gender and Inclusion. CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security. Available at: <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/61900/Learning%20Brief%2014.pdf>.

Unified coordination

Fragmented and duplicated activity will lessen, replaced by a hub of activity, creating cohesion, knowledge exchange and solidarity between efforts across industries and communities. Collaborative work between researchers, women's sector organisations, creators and industry leaders will have greater impact as a result.

Institutional self-reliance

The strategies outlined above are designed to encourage institutions (large and small) to self-monitor, create targets, self-reflect and gain confidence in changing their policies and practices to create more equal opportunities and outcomes. The rights of marginalised people will be acknowledged and promoted more readily and effectively.

Evolution of culture

The final output refers to both workplace/industry culture, and indeed socio-cultural gender norms in Scotland as a whole. With greater focus on the media and creative sectors as spaces of employment comes sectoral shifts in expectations that women and minoritised people will hold as much power, be as present, and be represented as much as men. This will, in turn, reduce the amount of abuse that women face doing their jobs. Focusing on the media and culture sectors as spaces of creativity, public discourse and attitudinal expression means improved equality in our cultural DNA – and in the stories we tell about ourselves.

3.8 Outcomes

Change is not, of course, linear – or indeed always deliberate,¹²⁶ yet there is a great deal of evidence amassed in this and accompanying papers to suggest that were resources to be allocated to initiate action using this template, gender equality – and other forms of equality – would improve. The three interrelated outcomes of the theory of change relate to content, leadership and workforce, and are explored in greater detail in Section 4.0 below.

Media/Creative Content:
greater equality & diversity
in creative output.

Decision-Making:
better balanced boards &
leadership teams at all
levels.

Flexible Structures:
policies, practices,
funding, & recruitment
systems are more
equitable.

Impact

This theory of change is built upon the problem of not having enough women and marginalised people creating, working, and leading in the media and culture sectors in Scotland. These three outcomes are specifically framed to address and overcome these problems, leading to greater opportunities in all three and more representative industries as a result.

Impact: Opportunities increase for women & marginalised people in Scotland to create and consume representative media & culture

¹²⁶ Itzin C, Newman J (2001) Gender, Culture and Organizational Change: Putting Theory Into Practice. New York: Routledge.

3.9 Assumptions

A key stage in developing a theory of change is examining critically whether the project is doable, testable and what external factors may affect its success.¹²⁷¹²⁸

Assumptions which may have been made about the delivery of such a change project include:

- That there is sufficient political will at state and institutional leadership levels to engage with a new Equal Media and Cultural Centre for Scotland.
- That the needs of the 'media' and 'cultural' sectors are too different from one another to plausibly enable effective change to both in one project.
- That consensus can be reached on what constitutes "good" media and creative content.
- That "accountability" in practice is difficult to design comprehensively for such a diverse set of actors.
- That small and mid-scale organisations do not have the same resources to enact change as larger institutions, and may not have capacity to prioritise monitoring, training or policy work.

Possible unintended consequences

- That there is a backlash felt in certain sectors at the notion of forms of regulation, sanction and monitoring.
- That monitoring work will result in more equality box-ticking than substantive change.

External Factors

Issues or agents which may hinder or threaten the work include:

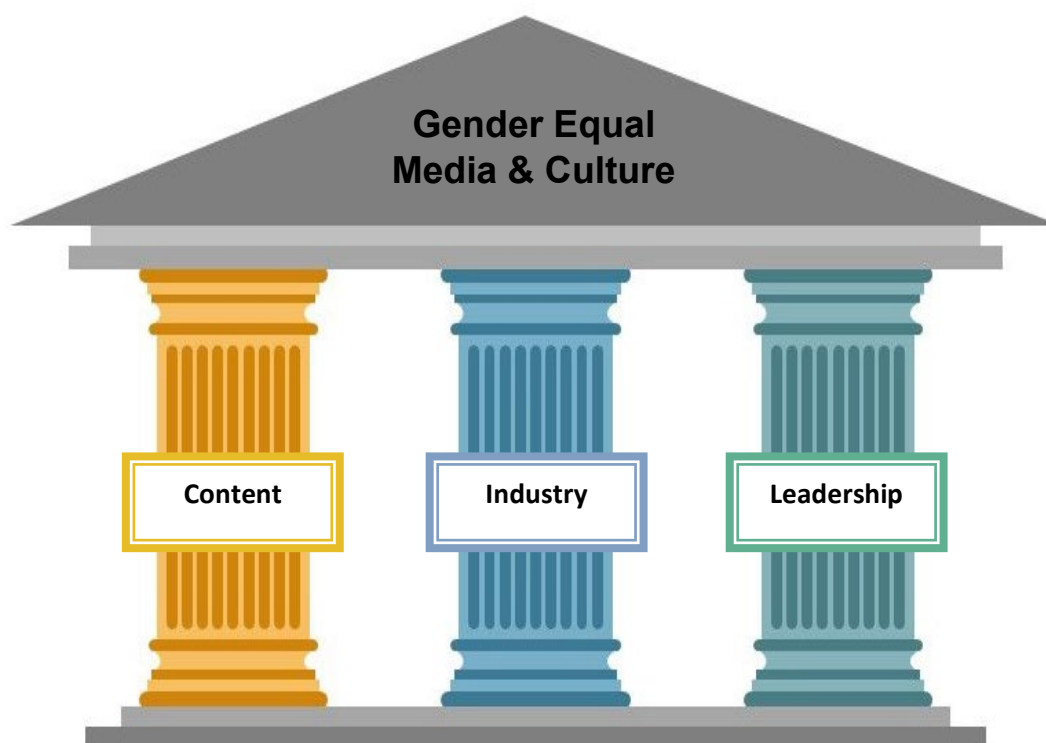
- A lack of gender competence, even in those supportive of the project
- Complacency that equality has already been achieved
- Bandwidth in public discussion given other central topics (Covid-19, the climate crisis, Brexit, Scottish independence)
- Precarity and short-term funding for this or partner projects
- Trauma – the need for facilitated discussions that are well managed, safe and do not disempower or endanger
- The power of the status quo; patriarchy as embedded norms, deep-rooted obstruction and resistance
- A lack of respect for women's attitudes and opinions
- The ongoing stigmatisation of feminism and feminist work
- Exhaustion on the part of those willing and needed to push the debate forward.

Regular reflection, consultation and collaboration with a variety of actors and stakeholders can help to mitigate these assumed risks. Strong relationships with those working across the fields and sectors outlined above will be central.

¹²⁷ ESS (2020) ESS Support Guide 1c – Developing a Logic Model. Evaluation Support Scotland. Available at: <https://evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/ess-support-guide-1c-developing-a-logic-model/>.

¹²⁸ NPC (2019) Theory of change in ten steps. New Philanthropy Capital. Available at: <https://www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub/ten-steps/>.

4.0 The Three Pillars of Gender Change



A cycle that remains central to debates around change projects for women's equality in the media and creative sectors is the relationship between:

- i) representational balance in media and creative **content**;
- ii) representational participation and visibility behind the scenes, working in the **industry**;
- iii) representational balance in **leadership** positions.

It is generally understood that the three are interrelated,¹²⁹ as outlined in Section 3.8 above, and improving one can have a positive effect on another: "gender imbalance across media outlets can have a negative impact on gender equality and the stereotyping of women."¹³⁰ This is also explained by Journalist 15, as interviewed by the GEMS Commissioned Research team: "... the problem with that is that you have a very singular perspective of the stories that go into the next day's national papers. You're getting a very specific perspective on the stories of the day – typically white, middle-aged, middle class male – and it doesn't include half the population, or it doesn't really include the minority view. And that filters through our news into our conversations and into society and informs societal attitudes, and I believe feeds into wider sexism."¹³¹

The link with leadership is also clear: "better representation of women in decision-making roles may be associated with improvements to gender portrayals in media content. Mitigating negative stereotypes and

¹²⁹ Gender Equality Commission (2015) Handbook on the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)1 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on gender equality and media. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590558>.

¹³⁰ Scottish Government (2020) Scotland's Gender Equality Index 2020. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://data.gov.scot/genderindex/gender-equality-index-2020.html>.

¹³¹ Kenny M, Liu S-JS, McKay F, Thomson E (2021) 'I just didn't see anyone like me': Women's experiences in Scottish media, creative and cultural industries. University of Edinburgh and Robert Gordon University.

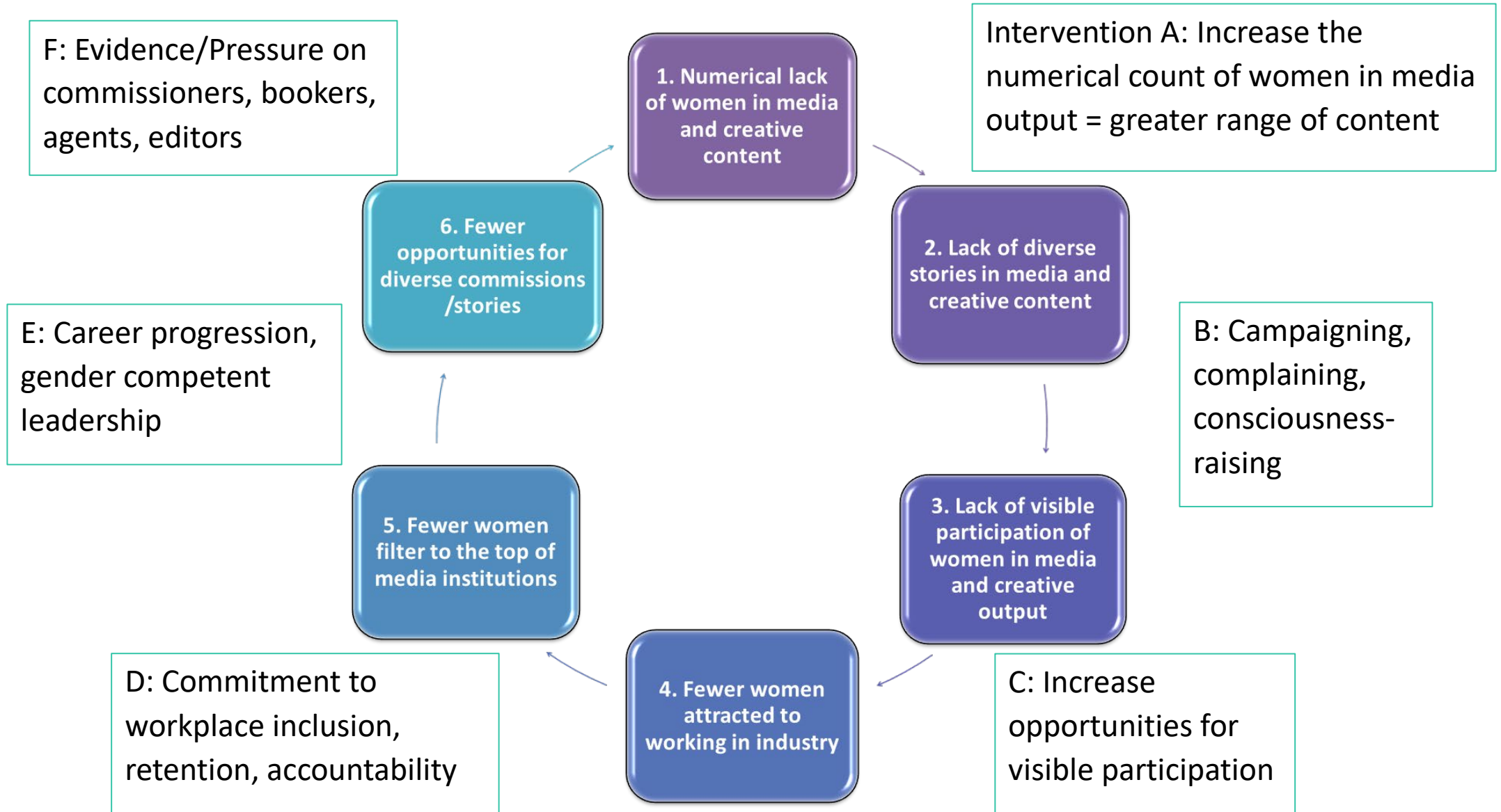
diversifying portrayals of women would be a welcome consequence.”¹³² In her discussion of political representation, Mansbridge describes the effect of historically embedded perceptions of ability, mapping neatly onto media representation: the absence of women representatives as, say, theatre technicians, conveys not only that women *do* not do the job but also that women *cannot* do it.¹³³ Untangling how the decisions of those in power affects the invisibility of diverse voices, faces and stories in Scotland’s media and creative production and content is crucial to the theory of change.

Understanding the relationship between the three clarifies the need for - as well as the outcome of - specific interventions (Cycle 1). Rather than stabbing in the dark, we can see how specific initiatives may contribute impactfully to certain points in the cycle. Briefly, the inner ring defines the problem, and the outer ring defines the kinds of individual interventions which can be applied at each stage.

¹³² McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

¹³³ Mansbridge J (1999) Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent “Yes.” *The Journal of Politics* 61:628–657.

Cycle 1: Relationship between unequal content, employment and leadership (inner circle) alongside corresponding interventions.



- **Box 1** refers specifically to quantitative content, e.g., numbers of talking heads in TV news, commentators in digital or print news, proportion of time women's voices are heard on radio, screen time, experts in documentaries, and characters in films, programs, books, games, plays.
Intervention A: Increasing the numerical count of women and marginalised voices in such outputs creates more opportunities for a range of content that is less likely to rely on stereotypes.
- **Box 2** refers to this dearth of diverse stories. Fewer chances to feature women and minoritised voices/characters limits broader depictions of the heterogeneity of lived experience in Scotland.
Intervention B: Highlighting the problematic nature of content in its representation of women can be achieved via complaining, campaigning, and consciousness-raising. Pointing out how harmful depictions impact women's inclusion in public space creates space to discuss the need for a greater diversity of stories. Zero Tolerance's media monitoring work is an important example.
- **Box 3** shows the outcome of insufficiently diverse stories: less participation of women and minoritised people. If fewer games are made featuring women characters, then fewer women will voice those characters. The visibility of a range of voices and faces is crucial to greater equality.
Intervention C: Increasing the participation of women in front-facing, visible roles and spaces is a significant step towards not just equality in media, but in shifting societal attitudes around gender norms and abilities.¹³⁴ Pass the Mic is an important example of this kind of work.
- **Box 4** captures the phrase coined by the Geena Davis Institute: 'If she can see it, she can be it'. If women and minoritised people in Scotland see people like them participating more often and more fully in the sectors, they are more likely to follow suit.
Intervention D: Normalising and facilitating women's inclusion creates more attractive prospects for women in the media and creative workforces. Women In Journalism Scotland does important work in this area to support women at different stages in their careers.
- **Box 5** refers to women's experience, career progression and seniority being disproportionately curtailed due to the burden of caring and domestic responsibilities and policies which fail to adequately support them. Thus, leadership and boards remain dominated by white men.
Intervention E: Initiatives which support and require media bodies to change their practices and embed gender competence in their project planning and policies would help to shift patterns of exclusion of women beyond a certain point in their careers and facilitate a critical mass of women in senior, decision-making roles.
- **Box 6** describes the impact of insufficient women and minoritised people in decision-making roles: less commissioning of stories and projects foregrounding diverse experiences. Alongside changes to workplace norms and policies, more balanced leadership can increase the quantitative and qualitative representation of women in media content, completing the cycle.
Intervention F: Using evidence, pressure can be exerted on commissioners, boards, editors, creators, booking agents etc. to contract greater diversity in media and creative content.

Interventions A, B and F relate more to content provision, whereas interventions C, D and E relate more to workplace practices, industry norms and employment. While both these areas are instrumental in progressing

¹³⁴ Ibid.

substantive change in the sector, given one of the major obstacles identified is the glacial pace at which institutions shift their internal protocols and cultures, considerable impact could be achieved initially by addressing content-based interventions through transparent data and evidence collection.¹³⁵

5.0 Changing Scotland's Story: An Equal Media and Cultural Centre

This paper has illustrated the urgent need for change within Scotland's media, creative and cultural sectors, to make them more accessible, participatory and representative of the country's people. The theory of change has described the problem and laid out a number of approaches and strategies built on both social change literature and examples and models of best practice achieved elsewhere.

A fresh, innovative project is needed to place Scotland at the forefront of gender equality, not just in the media and creative sectors but also within societal attitudes towards gender, by the dismantling of stereotypes. An Equal Media and Cultural Centre will be a catalyst for change, engaging meaningfully with partners across sectors horizontally and vertically to support progress towards equality.

- Sitting outside of the current employer/employee paradigm, it will operate as a critical friend to media institutions and creative and cultural organisations, holding them to account where necessary, while providing insight, expertise and encouragement.
- It will act as a hub for activists, commissioners, creators, researchers, industry leaders and policymakers, creating space for much-needed dialogue and cohesion of initiatives.
- It will work with the Creative Industries Leadership Group and the National Partnership for Culture to support the embedding of equality and diversity awareness and initiatives into their strategic objectives and projects.
- It will broadcast Scotland's sincerity in tackling power imbalances within the very fabric of our country's self-characterisation. In time it will position Scotland as a world-leader in understanding – and successfully implementing – gender change.
- It will identify and abide by a set of foundational values in line with the current women's sector, guiding and shaping operations in a collaborative, streamlined way. These include **listening, collaboration, openness, intersectionality, safety** and **courage**.
- **Listening** to the lived experiences of those working in and around the industries will be crucial to its success. Proactively seeking out perspectives is an important step towards insightful interventions which address the needs of those most disadvantaged. Equally as important is to listen to those consuming media and cultural content to better understand its impact.
- **Collaborative** partnerships with the many existing initiatives and agents working towards equality across the media and creative sectors are an essential resource. Recognising that “gender change in practice entails an eclectic amalgam of strategies”,¹³⁶ the EMCC will learn from diverse experts,

¹³⁵ This is explored in greater detail in the EMCC Media Monitoring Proposal paper.

¹³⁶ Benschop Y, Verloo M (2011) Gender Change, Organizational Change and Gender Equality Strategies. In: Handbook of Gender, Work and Organization, pp 277–290. London: John Wiley.

creating a space for innovative, cooperative routes towards equality.

- Its success will be built on its capacity for self-reflection and **openness** – to ideas, to understanding competing priorities and agendas, to hearing from leaders about how best to adapt interventions to best suit the nuances of each sector.
- The significance of an **intersectional** approach to this theory of change has been detailed above. An Equal Media and Cultural Centre is named in such a way as to encourage, “a complex project that goes beyond gender equality alone”.¹³⁷ An important characteristic not yet mentioned is Scotland’s geographical diversity. Ensuring geographical inclusivity and sensitivity will be an important hallmark of the EMCC.
- Those on the front line of change are often most at risk of backlash. Unapologetically feminist social justice movements experience violence in many forms. Having **safety** systems in place to protect those involved will be an important step towards making its work as inclusive as possible while ensuring workers’ safety, security and wellbeing.
- Like the Ladies of the Scottish Climbing Club below, an Equal Media and Culture Centre for Scotland – and its partners – must have the radical **courage** to envisage the possibilities, the opportunities and the potential for progress.



Lucy Smith and Pauline Ranken of the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club, Salisbury Crag. c.1908

¹³⁷ Ibid, p.288.

Equality for Equality's Sake

There are multiple reasons to seek out equality and diversity in Scotland's media and creative industries. It makes good business sense, reduces potentially harmful stereotypes, and creates better opportunities for wider sections of the population. Alongside these must remain the legal and ethical imperative that equality is a human right. The establishment of a long-term, resourced Equal Media and Culture Centre would undoubtedly reflect Scotland's commitment to this principle.

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.