

Anti-Racism Commitment

Following the murder of George Floyd on 25 May 2020, the NFTS consulted with staff and students about what we could do as the leading film and television school in the UK, to effect lasting and meaningful change to the issue of racism and race bias in the film and television industry.

In July 2020, we published a plan to try and address the inequalities and disadvantages which many Black and ethnically diverse members of our community told us they regularly experienced. As part of the plan, we made a series of commitments underpinned by actions and, where appropriate, targets. We recognised that many of these commitments are ongoing, and we will need to keep revisiting and reviewing them to ensure we make the progress we need.

We have committed to sharing our progress at key junctures, providing greater transparency to our work so that we can continue to be held to account and enact change. We recognise that this is a journey. We regularly discuss our areas of priority and develop our approaches in between the updates we share.

We continue to work towards the end of systemic racism. We are committed to being actively anti-racist across all areas of our work and we are determined that all of this work in progress will lead to long-term culture change at the NFTS. If you would like to share any thoughts or suggestions, please email [ljeoma Akigwe](mailto:ljeoma.Akigwe@nfts.co.uk) [iakigwe@nfts.co.uk](mailto:ljeoma.Akigwe@nfts.co.uk)

Below is an update on progress as at December 2021:

The infographic features a dark grey background on the left and a bright pink background on the right. The NFTS logo is in pink on the dark grey background. The title 'Anti-Racism Commitment' is in white on the dark grey background. A paragraph of text is also in white on the dark grey background. On the pink background, there is a numbered list of seven commitments (01-07) in white text, followed by a call to action in white text.

NFTS

Anti-Racism Commitment

We are determined to ensure the NFTS strives for lasting and systemic change, resulting in a long overdue, more multi-racial UK film, television and games industry for generations to come. We are dedicated to the on-going process of re-shaping the industry and will continuously review our pledges and the progress we are making.

- 01** Double the number of ethnically diverse teachers and increase the diversity of staff
- 02** See student diversity targets as a minimum, not a maximum
- 03** Increase Access through Outreach
- 04** Decolonise the curriculum
- 05** Set the tone by delivering diversity training for students and staff
- 06** Analyse and address power inequalities
- 07** Offer personalised support to our Black and ethnically diverse graduates

For more information and to see our commitment in full please visit nfts.co.uk

Double the number of ethnically diverse teachers and increase the diversity of staff with an immediate focus on the black community

We have continued to focus on improving the diversity of our workforce, using a number of national and local jobsites to attract candidates. We have amended the wording used in adverts to ensure it is inclusive and makes reference to the School's anti-racism commitment. We have increased the number of permanent staff from a Black, Asian or Minority ethnic background from 12% to 13% in 2021, and we will continue to focus on this as part of our recruitment strategy in 2022.

Recruitment of visiting tutors from a Black, Asian or Minority ethnic background has moved from 8% to 12%, but we didn't achieve our target of 16%. We will continue to work alongside the Heads of Department to support them in their approach to recruiting visiting tutors and devise a strategy based on the bi-monthly reports, giving specific support to departments where there is a lack of diversity.

See student diversity targets as a minimum not a maximum

We have worked hard to ensure that applicants from diverse backgrounds felt welcomed, encouraged and supported during the application process. Our advertising, social media and PR campaigns championed diverse stories so followers could see themselves reflected within the NFTS, regardless of whether the advert, story or post was specifically about inclusivity.

We developed the "StandOut" student recruitment campaign to feature more students from diverse backgrounds and created partnership campaigns with key stakeholders.

We celebrated Black History Month with in depth profiles of our NFTS Black students and alumni which generated good positive feedback.

As a result, 32% of the student cohort for January 2022 will come from ethnically diverse backgrounds of which over 15% will be Black students (compared to 22% and 5% respectively the year before).

Increase access through Outreach

Our [AccessNFTS](#) Outreach Programme, and work with our partners has created viable entry routes into the School for ethnically diverse students.

In April the School hosted a 3 day residency for the Ghetto Film School where their students, aged between 16-18 years old, were given a brief to write, produce, shoot, light and edit a dialogue scene with NFTS student mentors on hand to help.

In November 2021 the School held its first NFTS For You access event, a day designed to empower future NFTS applicants from ethnically diverse backgrounds to apply to the School. Over 100 participants attended the event with panel sessions and Q&A's with current and alumni black students as well as leading industry figures from BBC Film, BFI, Film4 and We Are Parable.

Both events received excellent feedback from participants and the School aims to ensure they become annual events.

Decolonise the curriculum

In March 2021, all teaching staff were offered the opportunity to attend a workshop on decolonising the curriculum as a way of helping staff understand how to approach this. A list of resources on writing and creating stories was also provided. This work will be continued next year as we conduct a full review of all the MA pathways and examine the curriculum through the lens of diversity.

Our flagship Screen Arts programme aims to give each student at the National Film & Television School the opportunity to engage with the history, contemporary practice and wider culture of the moving image. Through its screenings and talks, the programme aims to include a wide range of voices and perspectives from different periods, cultures and specialisms, including those which have been marginalised.

Setting the tone by delivering diversity training for students and staff

From January 2021, all our students have received Unconscious Bias training when they join the School and from January 2022, they will also all be offered Active Bystander training. Diversity training is offered in a targeted way to individual or groups of students to support and promote positive behaviour.

We will reinforce the expectations of standard of behaviour to students in our induction week, Springboard, and through the new Student Code of Conduct.

For staff, there have been two induction events in 2021 which includes a Diversity and Inclusion session for all new starters. As part of this session staff receive Unconscious bias training and an understanding of the School's values and commitments, as well as encouraging personal commitment and being a catalyst for change.

In February 2022 we will be offering all staff the opportunity to attend Active Bystander training which will promote positive behaviours and attitudes. From March 2022 this will form part of the onboarding process, with an online Active Bystander module being made mandatory for all new starters.

In 2021 our employee handbook was updated to specifically refer to racism to reinforce that any reports of discrimination and other forms of unacceptable behaviour can be made with increased confidence. We continue to make use of the School's Report and Support tool, implemented in September 2020, which ensures staff and students are aware of how to formally raise issues in relation to discrimination.

Analysing and addressing power inequalities

Focus groups have been held with staff and students to understand where we need to work harder to ensure that a diverse range of views feed into the decision-making process. This has revealed that we have more to do in areas including student selection and when it comes to production work.

As a result of these conversations, all those involved in the selection of students will be required to undertake Unconscious Bias training, and staff will be encouraged to have diverse selection panels.

Teaching staff have been reminded that it is crucial that students are encouraged to tell their story, and of the value to the industry of diversity of thought. Increasing the numbers of tutors and industry reviewers from ethnically diverse backgrounds is key to giving students confidence that there is a place for them at a senior level within the film, television and games industry. We will identify the departments that find this challenging and support them to make the changes needed, addressing training needs where these are identified.

Diverse storytelling will also be supported by appropriate casting, and with technical training to students in the areas of lighting, hair and make-up.

Creating a safe space for student voices

Our student misconduct policies and procedures have been strengthened to include express reference to racism, and to include the requirement for students to undergo training where this is appropriate. A new Student Code of Conduct has also been published, setting out our expectations of behaviour towards others at the School. Students will be reminded periodically throughout the year how they can raise any

concerns to us, including anonymously through our Report & Support tool, and for the support available to any student who raises a concern.

Offer personalised support to our Black and ethnically diverse graduates

Ethnically diverse students graduating have been directly supported by senior staff through a variety of interventions. Some new graduates used the School connections to secure an industry mentor, others were provided with professional coaching. The School also helped graduates secure high level shadowing opportunities and to meet potential employers.

Moving Forwards

We intend to push our work further in 2022-2023 in the following ways:

- Further increase the number of permanent staff from ethnically diverse backgrounds and visiting tutors from 12% to 16%.
- Continue to provide staff and students with regular learning opportunities to enhance understanding of the School's values and commitments in being an Anti-Racist institution.
- Use the periodic review of the MA as an opportunity to look at aspects of the curriculum through the lens of diversity
- Secure funding for and deliver the Diverse Directors Workshop
- Work with the Student Union to highlight the ways that students can raise issues of concern to us, and work in partnership to address them
- Maintain and build on the achievement of 32% of ethnically diverse students in future recruitment campaigns.
- Host annual events, similar to NFTS For You to empower future NFTS applicants from ethnically diverse backgrounds to apply to the School
- Explore opportunities for NFTS Black and Asian Alumni and students to gather and network

We know we need to do more. We are determined to ensure the NFTS strives for lasting and systemic change, resulting in a long overdue, more multi-racial UK film, television and games industry for generations to come. We are dedicated to the ongoing process of re-shaping the industry, and will continuously review our commitments and the progress we are making alongside those already set out in our Equality Objectives. We are listening and learning and are determined to be a driver for sustainable change.