



**BBC response to Ofcom's Consultation on the
Terms of reference: Thematic review of
representation and portrayal on the BBC**

April 2018

Response

Audiences are at the heart of everything the BBC does. Representation and portrayal is in the fabric of the BBC. Licence fee payers fund the BBC, so they deserve to see their lives, their communities, their stories and the places where they live reflected within the content the BBC commissions across TV, radio and online. In *British, Bold, Creative*, we identified diversity as one of the BBC's most important objectives for the new Charter period. This ambition was incorporated into the Charter as part of our Mission and Public Purposes. We, therefore, welcome the opportunity to respond to Ofcom's Terms of Reference for its *Thematic Review of representation and portrayal on the BBC*. We look forward to working with Ofcom on its further research in this vital area.

In recent years the BBC has continued to make significant progress in representation on-air and in commissioning content that authentically portrays our audiences, particularly on peak-time flagship shows such as the *One Show* and *Strictly Come Dancing*. We have also developed landmark series for children such as *Pablo*, with its central character and cast on the autistic spectrum, and championed stories that reflect our regions such as *The Moorside*, *Broken* and *Three Girls*. Later this year, subject to regulatory approval, we will launch BBC Scotland, a new channel reflecting all aspects of life in Scotland. On-screen outputs are supported by a number of initiatives aimed at improving our diversity both on- and off-screen; a number of which are detailed in our *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2016-2020*. We also support industry developments in diversity by working with PACT and the Creative Diversity Network.

Our approach to interventions is evidence led. Based on our research and through feedback on existing initiatives, we develop interventions both on- and off-screen to drive ever better outcomes for representation and portrayal. We have previously conducted both content analysis, to look at representation, and research assessing portrayal in our shows. We, therefore, have a range of experience in this research that we are happy to share.

We strive for continual improvement in representing and portraying the UK's ever changing diversity. We look forward to working with Ofcom throughout this review. In particular we offer our assistance and experience in developing the methodologies Ofcom will use to assess these issues.

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