



RADIOCENTRE

# ***TUNING IN TO DIVERSITY***

Diversity and inclusion  
across commercial radio





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# INTRODUCTION

The diversity journey of our industry over the past few years has been important and illuminating. Commercial radio now offers listeners a huge choice of stations and as a result we have an incredibly diverse audience, yet the diversity of the stations themselves has not always been clear.

***"It is actually some of the smallest radio stations that have the most powerful stories to tell on diversity."***

Ofcom now produces an annual report that reviews the make up of the whole radio industry, focussing on stations with more than 20 employees. We do not attempt to replicate that work here. Instead, this report will focus on industry initiatives as well as the rich diversity of some of the smallest commercial stations.

We know that we can do more to improve the diversity of commercial radio and there are a number of great schemes already underway, particularly those engaging new young talent. Ensuring that we reflect our listeners will ultimately help make better radio.

It is actually some of the smallest radio stations that have the most powerful stories to tell on diversity, so it is important that this is recognised. While Radiocentre proactively engages on diversity on behalf of the commercial radio industry, we recognise the important role played by both the BBC and community radio. We are therefore keen to collaborate further with both sectors in future.

Our industry has a vested interest in providing services that have the broadest appeal possible, as well as nurturing future talent. Radio is at the heart of the audio revolution and so it makes sense to harness this incredible opportunity. It's not only the right thing to do but also makes sound commercial sense.

For all of these reasons I will continue to champion greater diversity in commercial radio.



**Siobhan Kenny**  
Radiocentre CEO

# OVERVIEW

This report sets out to complement Ofcom's annual *Diversity and equal opportunities in radio* survey by looking more closely at some of the smallest commercial radio stations, as well as some of the industry initiatives to attract young new talent.

## KEY HEADLINES

***More than 4,000 people from across the UK make up this unique and important industry.***

***Commercial stations offer listeners an incredible choice of genres and stations reflecting the ethnic diversity of the UK.***

- Many of the smallest stations actually have some of the highest levels of workforce diversity within the industry, with several reporting ethnic diversity well above 90%. Small stations also engage in important community work.
- Commercial radio's share of hours – time spent listening – for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) audiences is significantly higher than BBC radio.
- Education and training initiatives, as well as masterclasses aimed at young people from BAME backgrounds have all contributed to greater engagement with sections of society that are underrepresented in radio.
- Academies and apprenticeships across the UK provide important opportunities for young people looking to gain radio and media experience.
- The Young Audio Awards, a new celebration of 8-18 year olds in radio, is helping to uncover a future talent pipeline.

# COMMERCIAL RADIO IN 2019

Over the past 10 years there have been significant changes within the commercial radio sector. Today, over 80% of the industry is made up of two main groups: Global and Bauer. The remainder of the industry includes groups such as Communicorp, Wireless, Nation and KM Media Group, as well as other smaller groups and independent stations.

The larger groups are featured prominently in Ofcom's diversity report (alongside the BBC), which includes a detailed breakdown of the diversity of their employees along with how they promote equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion.

This report is necessary as there is a risk that the complete picture of our sector is not portrayed in Ofcom's report as its remit is for larger broadcasters – those with 20 or more employees.

The remainder of the commercial radio industry comprises vibrant smaller groups (only some of which report diversity data to Ofcom) and independent stations, many of which are incredibly diverse.

There is no doubt that new technology has helped to facilitate an audio revolution with broadcast radio, streaming and podcasts all growing. While jobs in the audio sector have understandably changed over time, there are increasing opportunities for people with media skills.

## **MORE CHOICE THAN EVER, INCLUDING NEW NATIONAL BREAKFAST SHOWS**

Listeners now have more choice than ever for audio entertainment, both from traditional radio and digital competitors. The Government recently recognised that radio's pre-internet era regulation needed reform and for the first time national breakfast shows on FM (with local news) began this year.

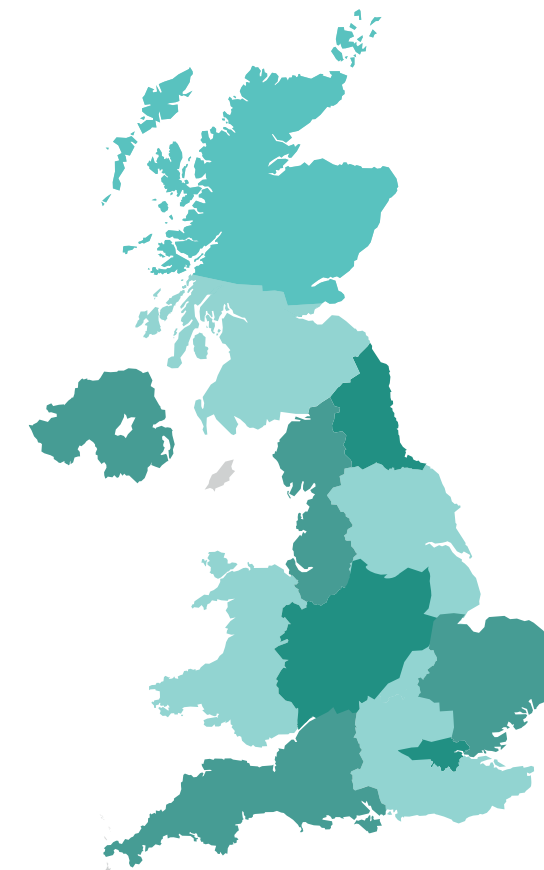
## **TRUSTED SOURCE OF PUBLIC VALUE CONTENT**

Commercial radio is an important source of local news, travel and other information bulletins. Across Europe radio remains the most trusted medium (Eurobarometer 90, 2018). Our sector is also involved with national campaigns on mental health and disaster fundraising for the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) – important public value content that is lacking from the content provided by digital streaming services.

## **LOCAL AND NATIONAL BRANDS – WITH GUARANTEED LOCAL NEWS**

While the popularity of national radio stations is growing, a strong sense of local and regional diversity also remains crucial to commercial radio. This is backed up by regulation from Ofcom which guarantees a minimum level of regular local news, as well as proportion of locally-made shows from all parts of the UK (see map below).

**Ofcom map of approved areas for local content**



# OUR LISTENERS

With over 36m listeners tuning in to commercial radio every week, the diversity of output is part of what attracts such a wide audience. Specialist stations, which now play a bigger role than ever, offer unprecedented breadth of choice.

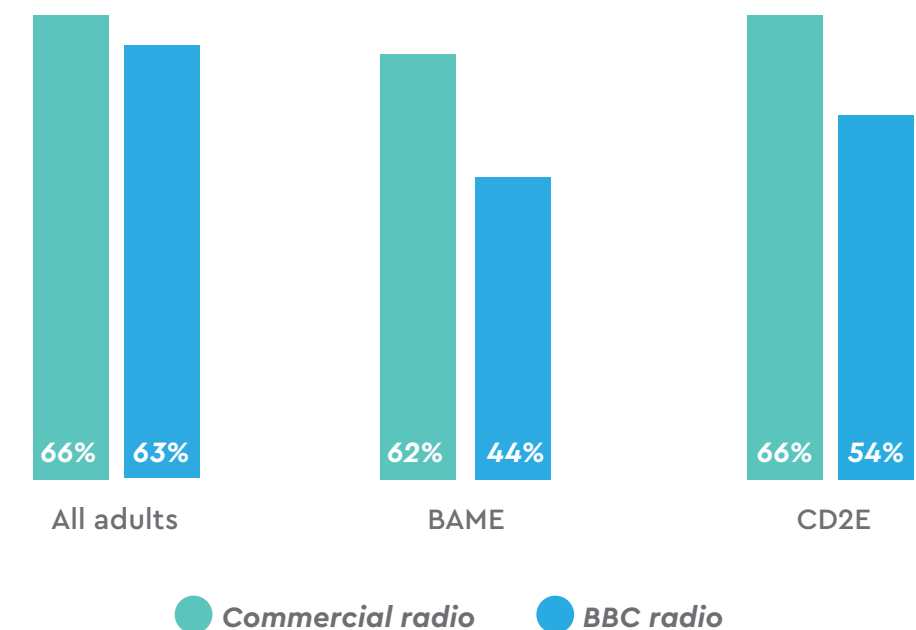
It is important to understand more about the makeup of this audience and why they continue to tune in. We know from Ofcom research that music and entertaining presenters are considered the most important elements of radio output, but listeners also trust radio as a medium and value the public service content such as news, travel and weather bulletins.

Plurality of voice on the radio is also important, particularly regarding news provision – given that a quarter of local commercial radio listeners (6.5 million) do not tune in to any other type of radio service.

The demographics of our listeners are best understood by exploring the research data published by RAJAR (Q1 2019), the independent radio audience measurement service for commercial radio and the BBC. The survey is the most robust survey of its kind, engaging a sample of around 100,000 adults each year.

In terms of reaching a diverse audience, commercial radio performs strongly, particularly when compared to the BBC. For example, our sector reaches 62% of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) listeners, compared to a 44% reach by BBC services. We also reach 66% of listeners considered to be in a lower socio-economic classification (C2DE), with only 54% reached by the BBC.

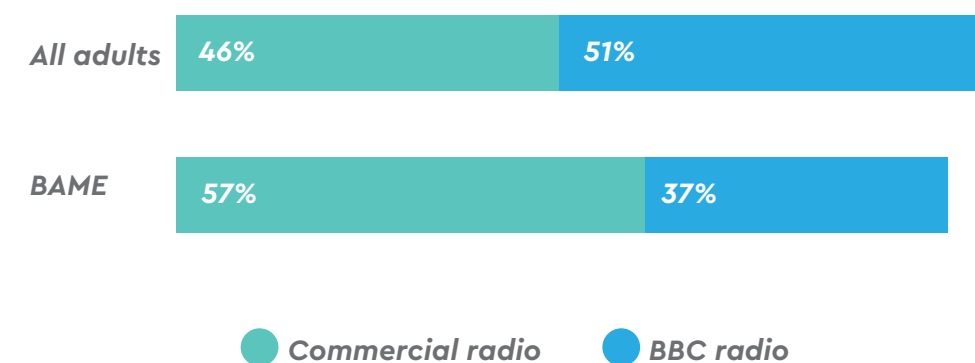
## RADIO REACH Listening for all adults, BAME and C2DE audiences



Source: RAJAR

The share of hours – or time spent listening – is also an important measure for radio as demonstrated in the chart below. While overall (for all adults) share of hours is 51% at the BBC, compared to 46% at commercial radio, for BAME audiences it is a different picture. For the BBC share of hours for BAME listeners is 37% yet for commercial radio it is 57%.

## SHARE OF HOURS Listening for all adults and BAME audience, split by commercial and BBC radio



Source: RAJAR

# SMALL STATIONS, BIG ON DIVERSITY

Ofcom's study of diversity in UK radio provides an informative snapshot of the sector, alongside some of the initiatives that broadcasters have set up in order to boost diversity. However, as it only covers broadcasters with 20 or more employees a significant proportion of the diversity within our industry is not adequately captured.

Commercial radio now offers listeners more choice than ever. Over 350 licensed stations offer a range of genres from pop, rock, rap, urban, dance and country to classical, jazz, news and sport. This has been made possible by advances in technology, the growth in digital radio and investment from radio operators.

## SURVEY

We surveyed some of our smallest members in order to highlight the important diversity of these stations and the communities that they serve across the country. While it was a relatively small sample<sup>1</sup>, the results were indicative of specialist stations and likely to be mirrored across other smaller stations.

The nature of the stations mean that they all employ only a small number of full-time and part-time staff. Of those that responded it was an average of 81% freelancers versus 19% employees.



**90%**  
ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Overall, ethnic diversity was extremely high among these specialist stations – 90% on average.



**58% 42%**  
MALE FEMALE

Gender balance was generally strong, although there was a slightly higher ratio of men to women.

## SMALL-SCALE DAB

New small-scale DAB technology is paving the way for small stations already serving diverse audiences (either on FM or online) to secure a digital broadcasting future. It also provides an opportunity for new services to launch and provide an even more diverse range of specialist output for audiences.

The nature of the technology will likely facilitate collaboration between commercial and community radio to provide a mix of exciting new content for listeners.

Trial services have been running since 2015, with a further expansion and licensing of new services expected towards the end of 2019. This should provide a platform for new stations to go on-air in early 2020.

## AUDIO CONTENT FUND

The Audio Content Fund, which launched in early 2019, is a new pilot scheme supported by Government to provide funding to support the creation of original radio and audio production in the UK. It will distribute up to £3m over three years to help radio stations fund public service content that they would not be able to produce on a commercial basis.

The first round of winning bids were announced in June 2019 and include nine projects that together meet many of the important bidding criteria, including supporting diversity, Nations and regions, new voices, plurality and innovation. The Fund is only just getting underway, with three funding rounds planned each year and many more exciting projects expected to apply during the trial period up until 2022.

## SOME OF THE SPECIALIST STATIONS BROADCASTING AROUND THE COUNTRY







## COMMUNITY WORK

Commercial radio stations across the country work closely with their local communities and this public value often goes well above and beyond what is expected from broadcasters.

Understandably, community work plays a big role for small commercial stations and those that we surveyed were no different. A snapshot of some of these campaigns is featured here.



- Pay school fees of 250 children and funded 11 weddings for poor families in India.
- Gave £600 to 21 families in India who lost their main breadwinner in a train disaster.
- Sikh relief received over £73,000 from Panjab Radio listeners with their 2 day on-air appeal.







- Mi-Soul Radio is based in the Stephen Lawrence Trust building and work on a number of community initiatives with the charity.
- Outreach programmes, such as the Learning Project, help engage local groups and provide training in media skills. Fundraising also contributes to local charities.



- Fundraise for children with special needs.
- Assisted fire stricken victims from the 2018 Attica wildfires in Greece.



- Work placements with schools in Leicester, Coventry and Birmingham.
- Support and coverage of Diwali, Vaisakhi, Navratri, Eid, Christmas events and programming on-air and outdoor.
- Support for charity and community events, including Leicester's Healing Little Hearts, Rainbow and South Asian Health Action.



Sabras Radio Diwali event



A live Sabras Radio music event at the Leicester Mela Festival



- On-going support and campaigns with the British Asian Trust to tackle poverty and hardship across South Asia.
- Support for Cancer Research UK which gained media coverage and included celebrity interviews, case histories and presenter live reads.

## TRAINING

Training is also an important service carried out by these broadcasters. Opportunities for young people looking to get into the industry are facilitated by many small stations. A small snapshot of this is below.

- **Panjab Radio** trained six people in 2018 both in administration and radio presentation.
- **Mi-Soul Radio** provided work experience for a number of pupils from Lambeth College. They also offer work experience for a number of individuals throughout the year.
- **Sunrise Radio** trains prospective new presenters and has worked with university students interested in media.





# INDUSTRY INITIATIVES

Radiocentre actively supports initiatives to boost diversity and inclusion within the radio industry. Our goal is to be as transparent as possible – through publications such as this report – but also by promoting and featuring initiatives prominently.

The following section features work undertaken by commercial radio that aims to increase the representation of people from a broad range of underrepresented backgrounds.



## RADIO MASTERCLASSES

Radiocentre works closely with Creative Access<sup>2</sup>, an organisation that helps to try to improve the representation of young people from BAME backgrounds in the creative industries. In conjunction with the BBC we have hosted a series of radio masterclasses for Creative Access interns who are looking to start careers in the creative industries. Radiocentre and commercial radio businesses have also taken part directly in their internship programme.



The most recent masterclass, with over 250 attendees, was held at the beginning of 2019 and featured (above, left to right) **Keturah Cummings** (BBC Radio 1 & 1Xtra), **Joey Addai** (Global), **Reece Parkinson** (BBC Radio 1Xtra), **Neev Spencer** (KISS) and **Josh Ryan** (BBC Sounds).

Students from the Bauer Academy, Global Academy, Radio Academy, Audiotrain and the Community Media Association also attended the session which was followed by a networking reception.







## THE YOUNG AUDIO AWARDS

The Young Audio Awards (formerly the Young ARIAS) is a new awards scheme for 8-18 year olds who love audio. Thousands of under 18s across the UK are actively involved in making great audio in nearly a thousand schools, along with community stations and podcasts.

The radio industry wants to showcase their passion and shine a spotlight on their talent, highlighting the appetite young people have for audio and giving under 18s from all backgrounds a chance to take a first step towards working in the media industry.

Support from the awards has come in from all quarters, including the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, the BBC and commercial radio groups. The first awards ceremony was held at the BBC Radio Theatre on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019 during Radio Audio Week.

Categories for the awards include: Rising Talent, Technical Excellence, Music, Factual, Sports, Comedy or Drama, Community Achievement, School Radio, Education and Innovation.



Swarzy - KISS

*"Woke up to see this and I'm shaking! So excited and grateful to be nominated."*

**Tyler Selby**  
Award nominee



Living China Doll - Winner: Best in Comedy or Drama



Reece Parkinson - BBC 1Xtra



Lion Radio, Atwood Primary School

*"I just wanted to say thank you for giving me the opportunity to come down to London and have a day out with so many audio enthusiasts! It was one of the best days of my life!"*

**Ollie Anderson**  
Audio Imaging Manager & Presenter



EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academies are important vehicles for delivering educational programmes to young people who are looking to broaden their education. The two largest radio groups – Global and Bauer – have both invested heavily in academies of a very different sort in order to boost opportunities for media education. This is an important contribution for the individuals involved as well as the wider economy.



The Bauer Academy is the educational division of Bauer Media, which operates popular radio brands such as Absolute Radio, KISS, Magic & the Hits Radio Network. It is a government registered training provider and delivers a range of creative, digital and media programmes at 22 sites across the UK.

The Academy has a team of leading academics working alongside professionals to design and deliver unique learning experiences for individuals, communities and businesses. Unlike many other academies and colleges, Bauer Academy tutors work inside the industry to provide cutting-edge training that brings learners into the workplace and takes them behind the scenes of some of the UK's biggest brands.

Training programmes that actively promote diversity and support underrepresented groups are also provided. For example, *Making Creativity Work*, which was funded by the European Social Fund, trained over 1,200 unemployed people with over 500 progressing to employment and apprenticeships. Currently, the Academy is delivering *This Is Me: Creative London*. Funded by the JP Morgan's Chase Foundation, 200 unemployed Londoners will benefit from fully-funded training and mentoring opportunities.

The Academy is also an apprenticeship training provider. It delivers journalism, content production, sales, digital marketing, advertising, and leadership apprenticeships to a range of clients including ITV, the7Stars, Space and Time, Immediate Media, Sue Ryder and many more.



Global, the media & entertainment company behind Heart, Capital, LBC and Classic FM is the driving force behind the Global Academy.

The Global Academy is a University Technical College for students aged 14 to 19 years old. It welcomed its first students in September 2016. Global recognises that it is crucial to equip students with the proper technical, business and creative skills they need to work in the broadcast and digital media industry, and to help them connect their core studies with vocational skills in a practical and entrepreneurial way.

The Academy has a partnership with the University of the Arts, London (UAL) which enables them to offer a rigorous and challenging curriculum. The students study for GCSEs and A-Levels plus a qualification in Broadcast & Digital Media.







## APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships are increasingly important routes for new talent to enter organisations and develop important skills while working. Global and Bauer, the two biggest commercial radio organisations in the UK, both run apprenticeship schemes that offer roles in a broad range of positions that are fundamental to a modern radio industry.

As a government approved Apprenticeship Training Provider, the Bauer Academy also specialises in creating bespoke apprenticeship programmes. Aligned to company culture and strategy, these programmes develop both entry-level talent and upskill existing employees.

The Academy provides apprenticeship training to almost 200 people. This not only upskills the existing workforce but links new entry level places to Bauer's diversity agenda by ensuring underrepresented groups are targeted and supported into roles.

Outside Bauer, the Academy helps employers make the most of their apprenticeship levy by designing customised programmes that specialise in journalism, creative content, digital marketing, leadership and sales. What started out as initiative to create 'home-grown talent' for Bauer has gone from strength to strength, with the Bauer Academy now benefiting thousands of individuals and businesses each year.

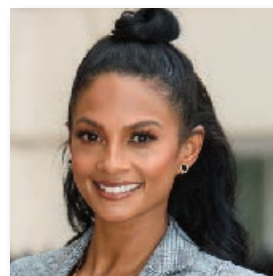
Global launched its first Apprenticeship Scheme in September 2018 with the aim of providing entry level career opportunities for individuals with minimal or no previous media experience. Global worked with its own school, the Global Academy, to offer 14 students apprentice positions in programming, marketing, digital and commercial. Alongside the Apprenticeship Scheme over 85% of the first graduating cohort from the Global Academy are now employed or training in the creative industries.



# MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE

For the past two years the whole radio industry – commercial radio, BBC stations and community radio – has come together to broadcast an important message on mental health. The Mental Health Minute has unparalleled reach and is supported by the Royal Foundation's Heads Together charity.

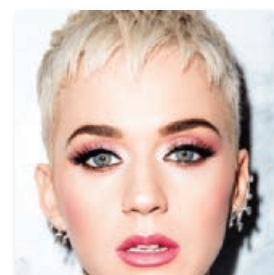
After the success of the first campaign a second Mental Health Minute was broadcast on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019. Once again the message was broadcast on over 400 radio stations, reaching 20 million people. National and international press coverage of the event was extensive and tweets using #MentalHealthMinute reached over 100 million accounts.



ALESHA DIXON

*Are you listening? Are you really listening? Answer these questions out loud, what does S – H – O – P spell? And what do you do at a green light? Stop? Or should you go on green?*

*I'd say stop. I mean most people do. So while we are listening, we're not really listening. Jameela.*



KATY PERRY



JAMEELA JAMIL

*We do it all the time. Life can just get too busy, can't it Mr Fry?*

*It can indeed, but there are people out there desperate to be heard and you can help by taking the time to listen, even if you're a Prince.*



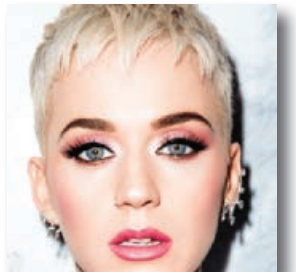
STEPHEN FRY



PRINCE WILLIAM

*Being able to talk about how you're feeling is essential for keeping mentally fit and healthy. So maybe now is the time for us to stop and to really listen.*

*Right now, you are one of 20 million people listening.*



KATY PERRY



STEPHEN FRY

*On more than 300 radio stations.*

*And each and every one of us has the power to make a difference to someone.*



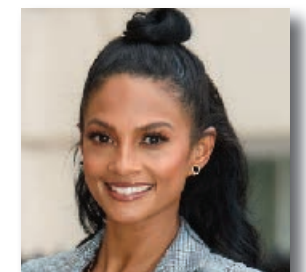
PRINCE WILLIAM



JAMEELA JAMIL

*Just by taking a minute to stop.*

*And to listen, to really listen.*



ALESHA DIXON



# DIVERSITY AT RADIOCENTRE

At Radiocentre we value the diversity of our team. As champions for diversity, equality and inclusion for the commercial radio industry it is important that we lead by example.

While we are a small organisation we take a proactive approach to address these important issues, including training (a company-wide unconscious bias workshop, for example) and regular reviews of staff welfare.

We conducted a diversity survey of our entire team to help us understand more about our staff. We were keen that the survey was as broad as possible, which is why it covered the following important characteristics: age, race, gender, faith, sexual orientation, disability, as well as social mobility.

Headlines from our survey:

- The majority of our organisation is female, including the senior management team (67%)
- Almost three quarters of our team attended state school (74%)
- Our team is made up from across a broad range of ages



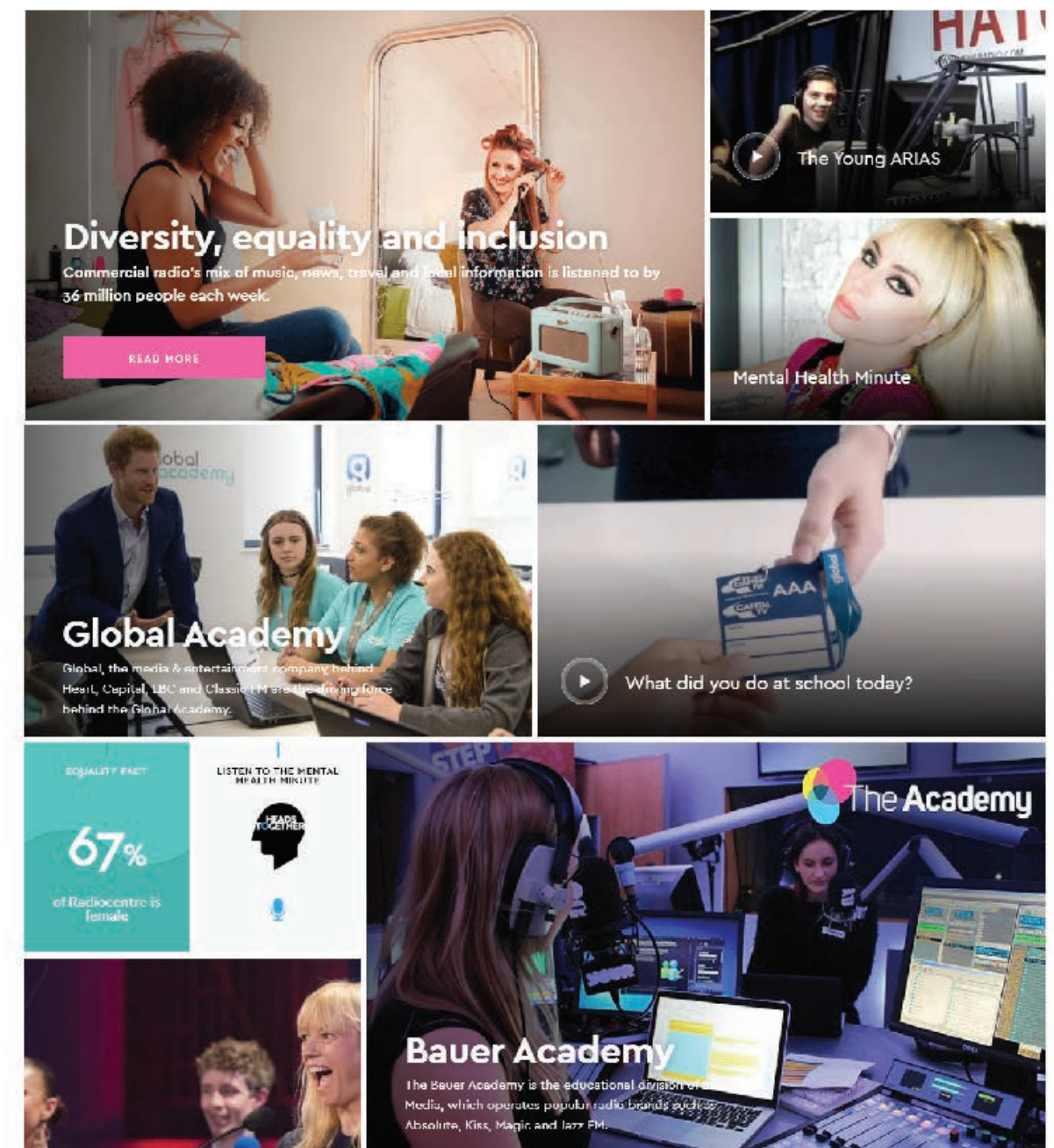
Radiocentre is a proud member of the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (ENEI) and we continue to develop best practice both here at Radiocentre and on behalf of the industry.

We aim to be as transparent as possible which is why we have dedicated a prominent section of our website to the people that make up our fantastic industry. For more visit: [www.radiocentre.org/commercial-radio-people](http://www.radiocentre.org/commercial-radio-people)



## Commercial radio people

At the heart of commercial radio are the passionate and talented individuals (over 4,000 of them) that make up this unique and important industry.



## RADIOCENTRE DIVERSITY STATEMENT

In conjunction with the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion, Radiocentre has drawn up a diversity statement for the commercial radio industry.

At Radiocentre we appreciate the importance of creating a radio industry in which everyone feels valued, included and empowered to bring great ideas to the table.

This statement is a vehicle for any stations within our industry to adopt and abide by a set of values and offer a commitment to improve diversity in their workforce.

Here at Radiocentre we believe that a commitment to diversity and inclusion is essential to reflect the society we serve today. Commercial radio seeks to actively improve equality and diversity, and to benefit creatively and commercially from the inclusion of a diverse range of innovative creative and business talent. It helps our industry to understand and meet our listeners' needs more effectively and provide more relevant output.

Accordingly, commercial radio will:

- strive to achieve best practice in recruitment, retention and career progression practices, recruiting from a wide talent pool
- improve equality and diversity at senior decision making levels. Identify talented individuals and help them to make progress in their careers at all levels of the industry
- assign responsibility for meeting diversity commitments to a named, senior level individual
- work together to develop and adopt future policies and practices that support the implementation of the aims of this statement
- contribute to activities that promote equality and diversity in the commercial radio industry
- work with Ofcom on their Diversity in Broadcasting programme which will publish annually the diversity profile of the UK radio industry
- support Radiocentre's initiatives, supported by the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion, for improving diversity within our industry

# ABOUT RADIOCENTRE



Radiocentre is the industry body for commercial radio. We work on behalf of stakeholders who represent more than 90% of commercial radio, generating over £700 million in revenues in 2018. 36 million people in the UK listen to commercial radio's mix of music, news, travel and local information every week.

We perform three main functions on behalf of our members:

- drive industry revenue by promoting the benefits of radio to advertisers and agencies through a combination of marketing activity (e.g. events, advertising, PR, and direct mail), research, and training
- provide UK commercial radio with a collective voice on issues that affect the way that radio stations operate, working with government, politicians, policy makers and regulators to secure the best environment for growth and development of the medium
- ensure advertising messages on commercial radio stations comply with the necessary content rules and standards laid out in the BCAP Code of Broadcast Advertising and the Ofcom Broadcasting Code.





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*See radio differently*