

Employer Panel Results March 2014



Contents

1. March Panel Responses by Sector and Nation	2
2. Training	4
3. Creative Skillset Tick	5
4. Diversity	6
5. Sector Specific Questions	
5.1 Skills Investment Fund	8
5.2 Animation	9
5.3 Computer Games	10
5.4 Film	11
5.5 Publishing	13
5.6 Television	13
5.7 VFX	14
6. Appendix A: Open ended responses to the Employer Panel Survey – March 2014	16
7. Appendix B: Additional comments	21

Creative Skillset invited members of the Creative Media Employer Panel to participate in a survey on issues affecting the Creative Industries including skills needs, investment opportunities and insight into training needs and diversity.

March 2014 Panel Responses

Figures 1, 2 and 3 show the make-up of survey respondents by sector and nation. If you would like more in-depth information please contact research@creativeskillset.org.

Figure 1: Proportion of total panel members responding

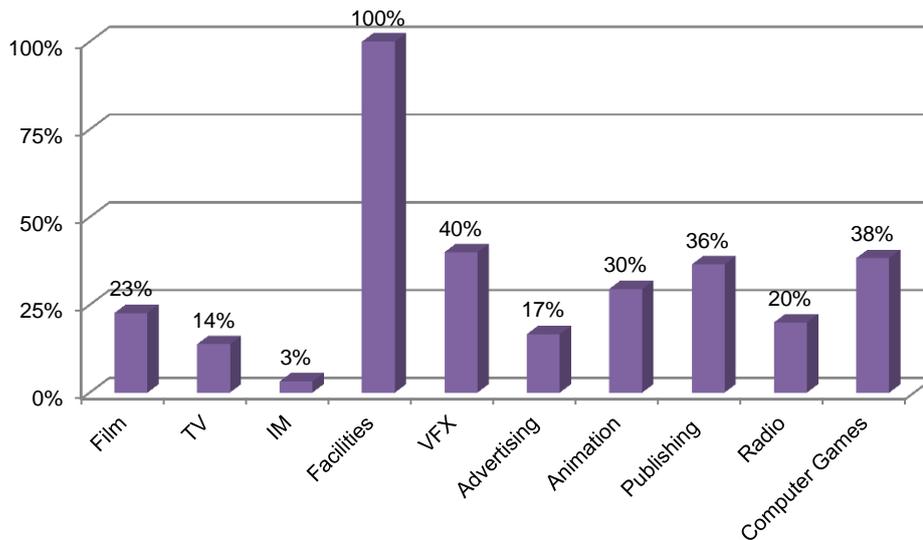
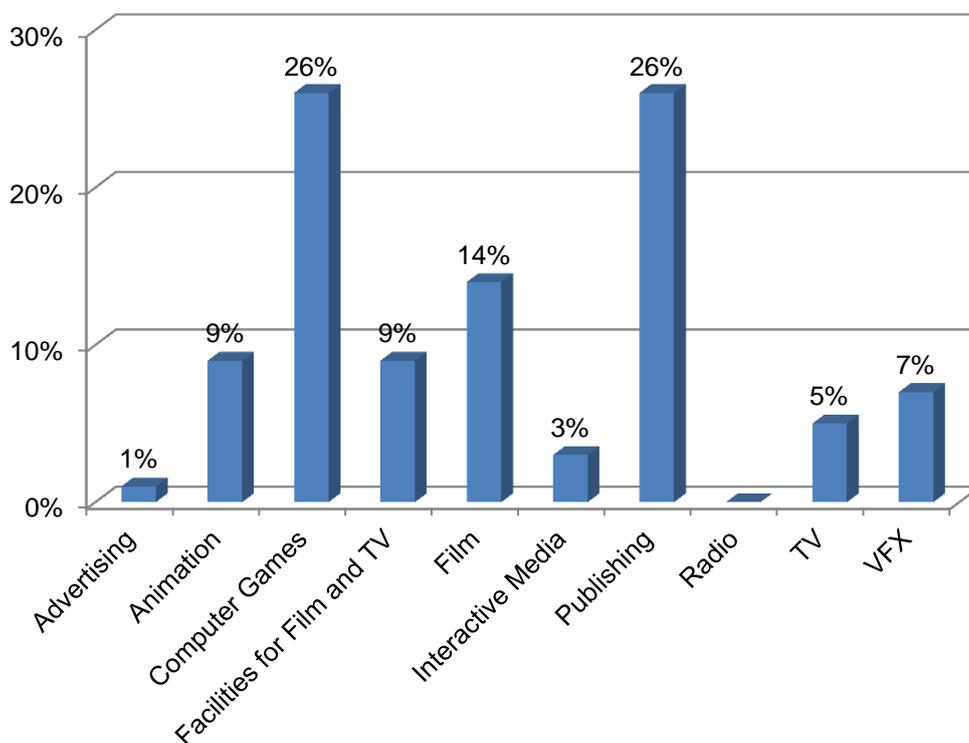
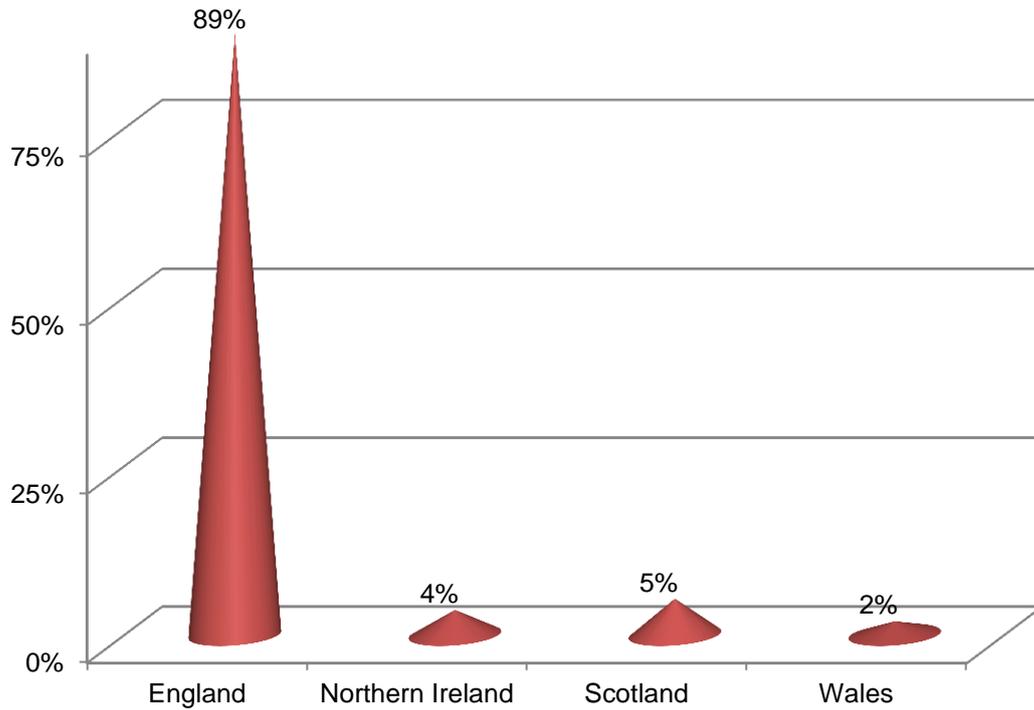


Figure 2: Survey respondents by sector



Responses: 299

Figure 3: Survey respondents by nation



Responses: 299

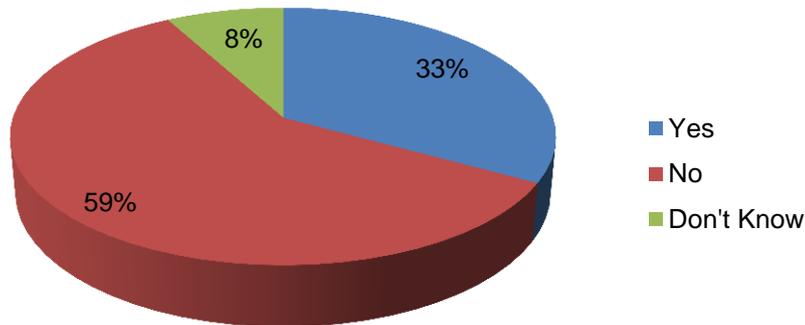
Thank you to those who took the time to complete the panel survey. Your views will help to shape our strategy and will impact upon the future of the UK Creative Industries.

The date of the next survey is yet to be finalised though it is likely to be in June 2014

Your colleagues and employees can register at:
www.creativeskillset.org/research/panels.

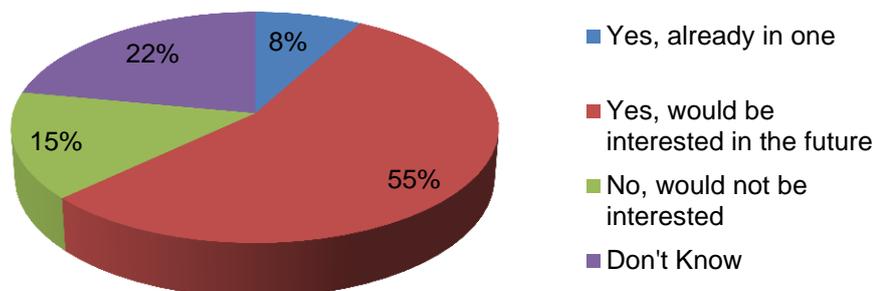
2. Training

2a. Does your company have a plan that specifies the level and type of training that the company will invest in over the coming year?



Responses: 299

2b. Would your company be potentially interested in strategic training partnerships with other businesses i.e. sharing training schemes/resources with other companies in your industry?



Responses: 299

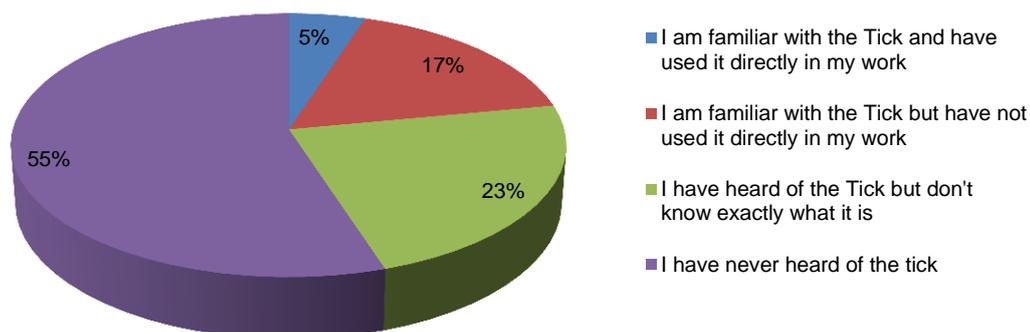
2c. If not, what are the main concerns that would prevent your partaking in a training partnership of this nature?

Concerns raised by respondents included cost, the size of their organisation and the specificity of their training needs, methods and approaches. For full results see [Appendix A](#).

3. Creative Skillset Tick

The following questions were asked to each sector with the exception of publishing, as the development of 'Ticked' courses for publishing is still in its early phases.

3a. How familiar are you with the Creative Skillset Tick?

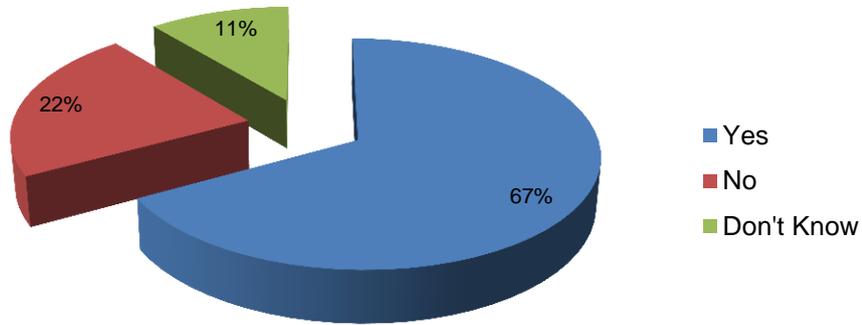


Responses: 197

Respondents indicated that the most common interaction with the Creative Skillset Tick was via working with courses that have the Tick. In addition, respondents stated that they had attended Creative Skillset tick events; hired graduates/apprentices from accredited Creative Skillset Ticked courses or worked as an industry representative in the accreditation process. One respondent also stated that they had used the Creative Skillset Tick to determine which degree courses are the most industry relevant and therefore worth their while working with/hiring from.

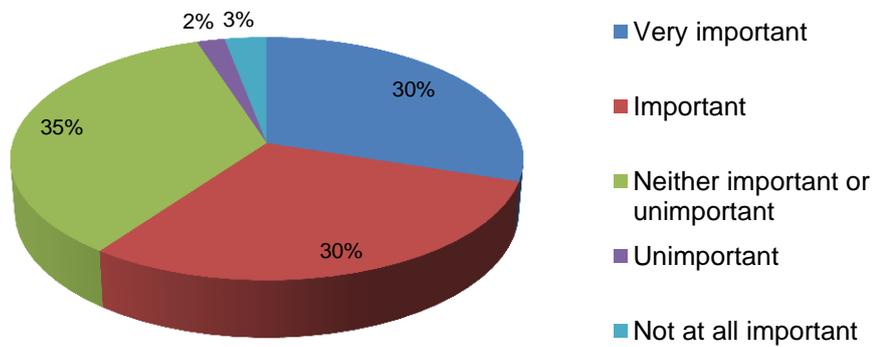
4. Diversity

4a. Does your company currently have a Diversity/Equality/Inclusion/Equal Opportunities Policy?



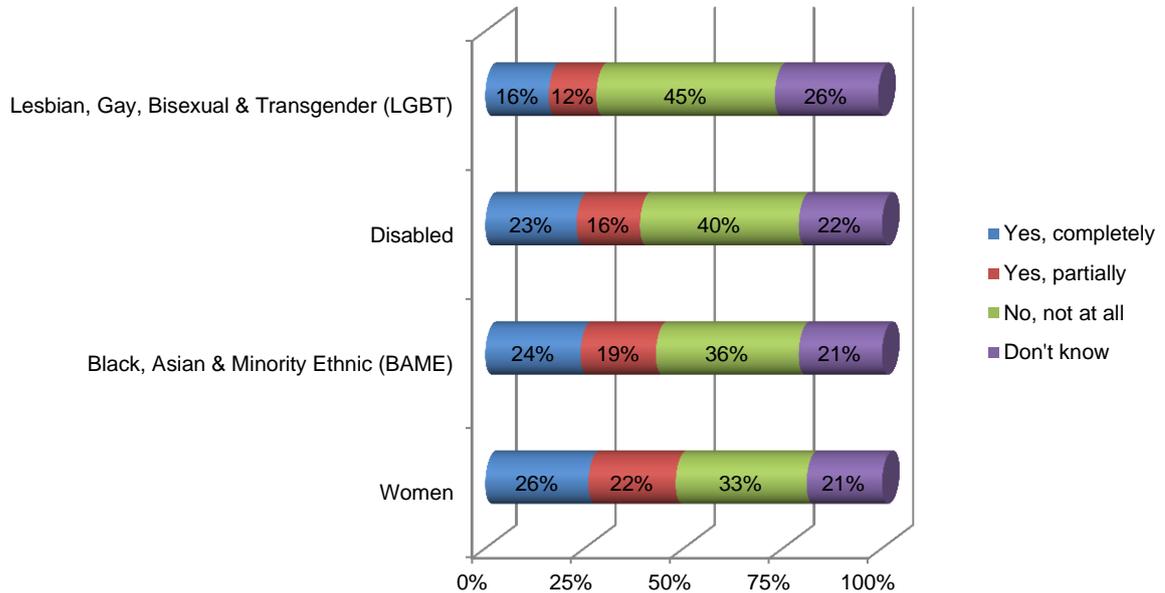
Responses: 260

4b. How important is having a diverse workforce (that reflects the UK working population) to your company?



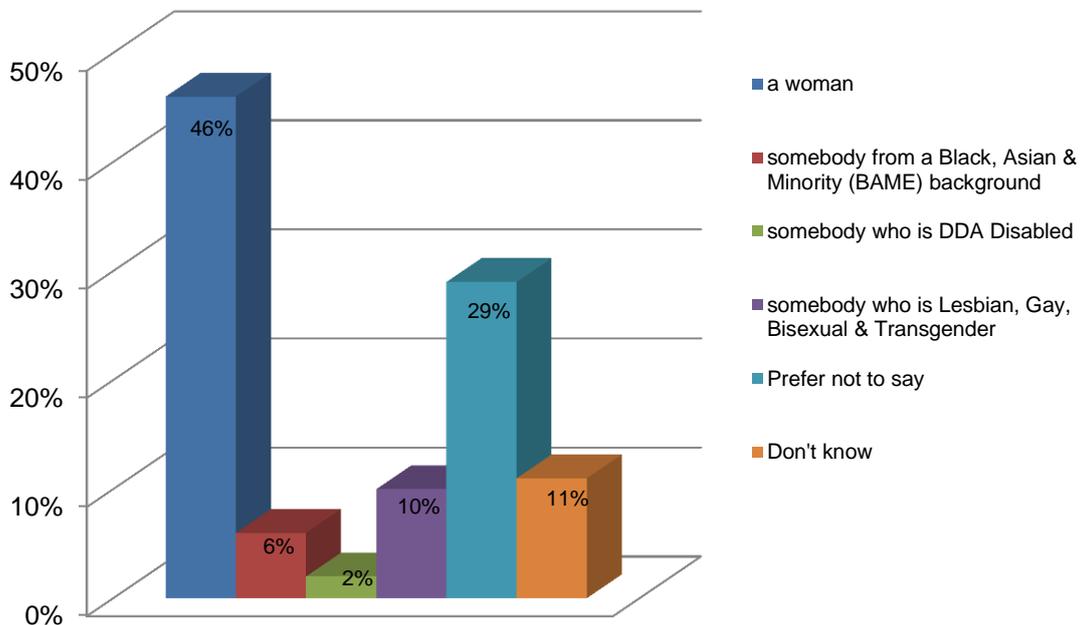
Responses: 254

4c. Does your company monitor the levels of employment within your workforce of the following groups?



Responses: 246

4d. Is the CEO or equivalent position within your company filled by:



Responses: 156

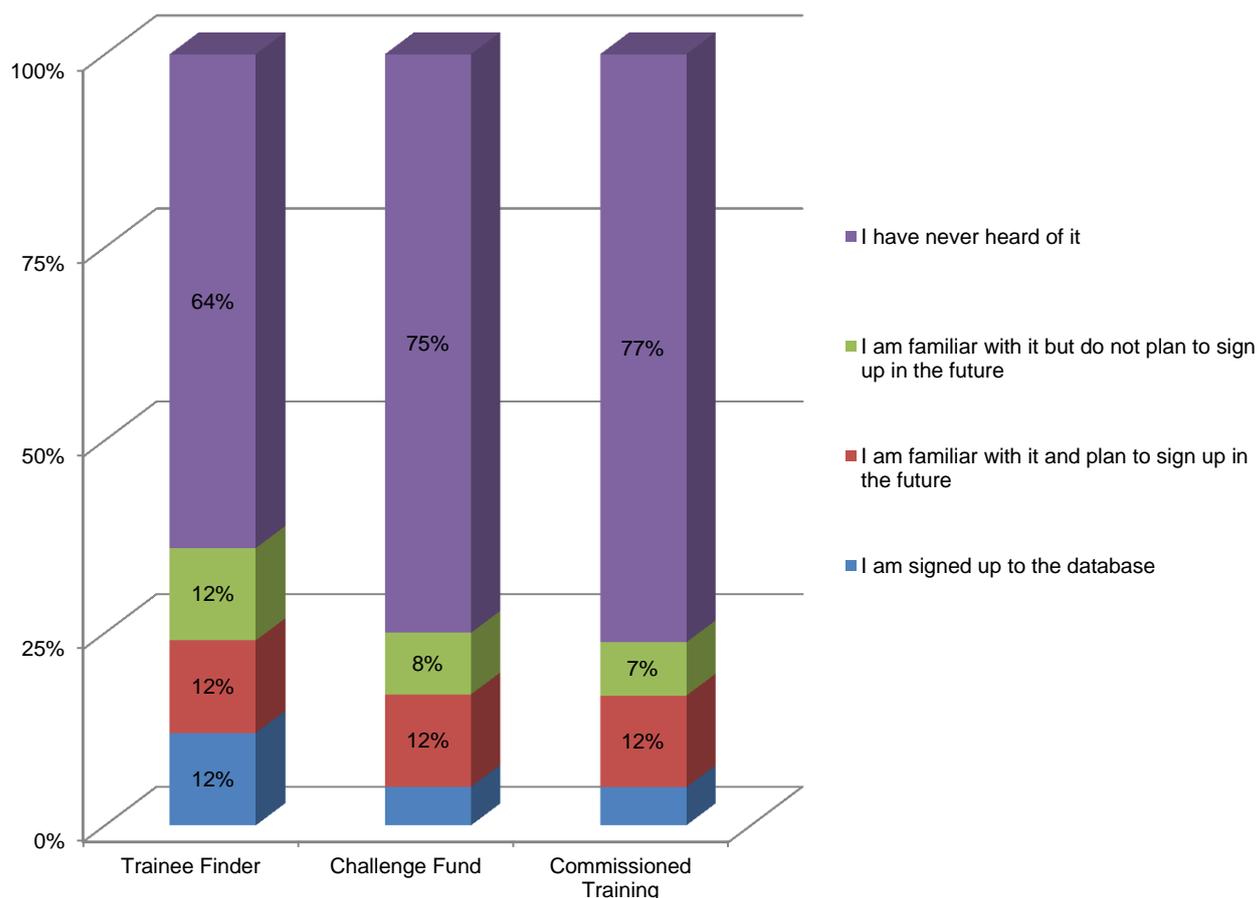
When asked whether their company would find more information or support with diversity, equality or inclusion issues useful, 61% of respondents stated no, 19% stated yes and 20% did not know.

5. Sector Specific Questions

5.1 Skills Investment Fund (SIF)

The following charts reflect responses given by individuals who identified **Animation, Computer Games, Film** or **VFX** as their 'main' industry.

5.1a Which of the following Creative Skillset services are you familiar with?



Responses: 146

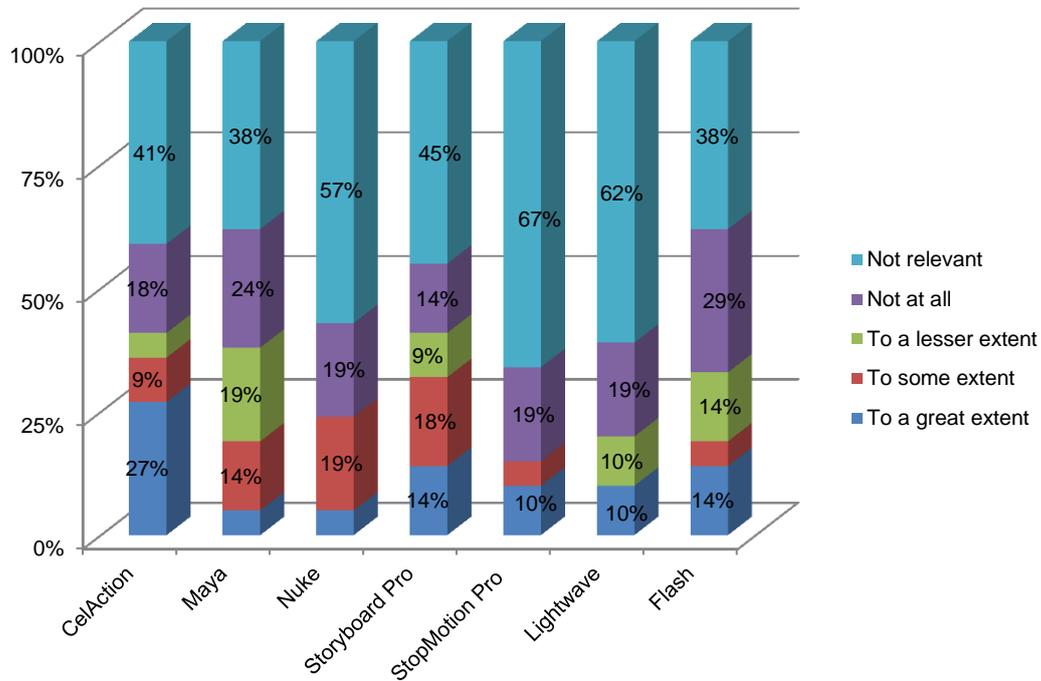
5.1b. Why do you not plan to sign up to Trainee Finder/Challenge Fund/Commissioned Training?

Respondents cited organisation size and the fact that they had no plans to hire staff as reasons for not signing up to Trainee Finder. A number of respondents cited cost as a reason for not signing up to the Challenge Fund, whilst a lack of requirement was amongst the reasons given to not signing up to commissioned training.

For full results see [Appendix A](#).

5.2 Animation

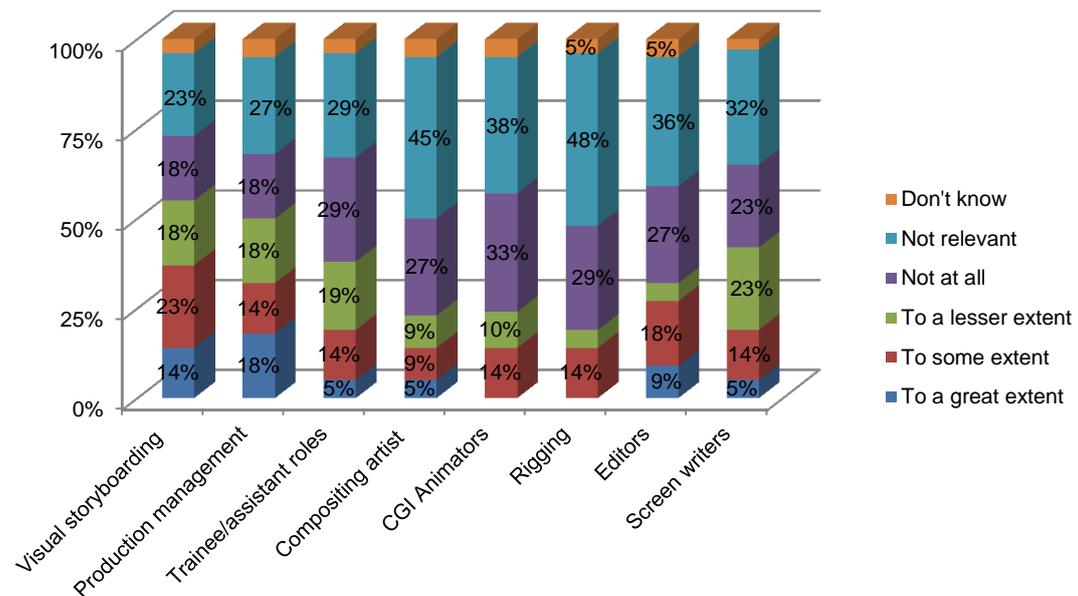
5.2a. To what extent is your company experiencing the following skills gaps within your current workforce?



Responses: 22

For a full list of skills gaps identified see [Appendix A](#).

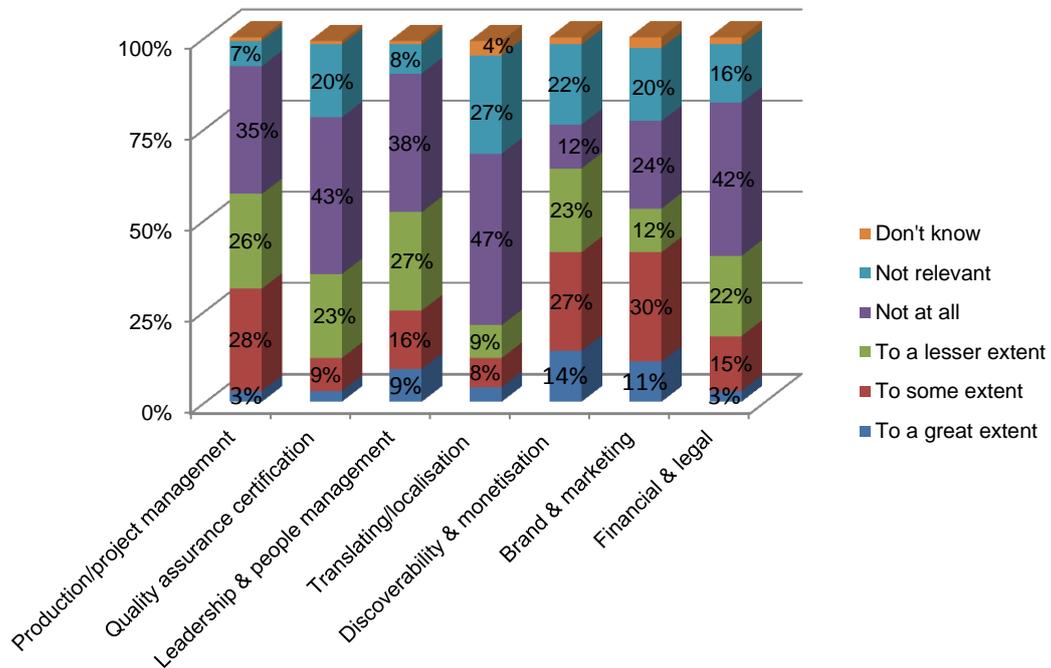
5.2b. To what extent does your company have vacancies that are proving hard to fill in the following areas?



Responses: 22

5.3 Computer Games

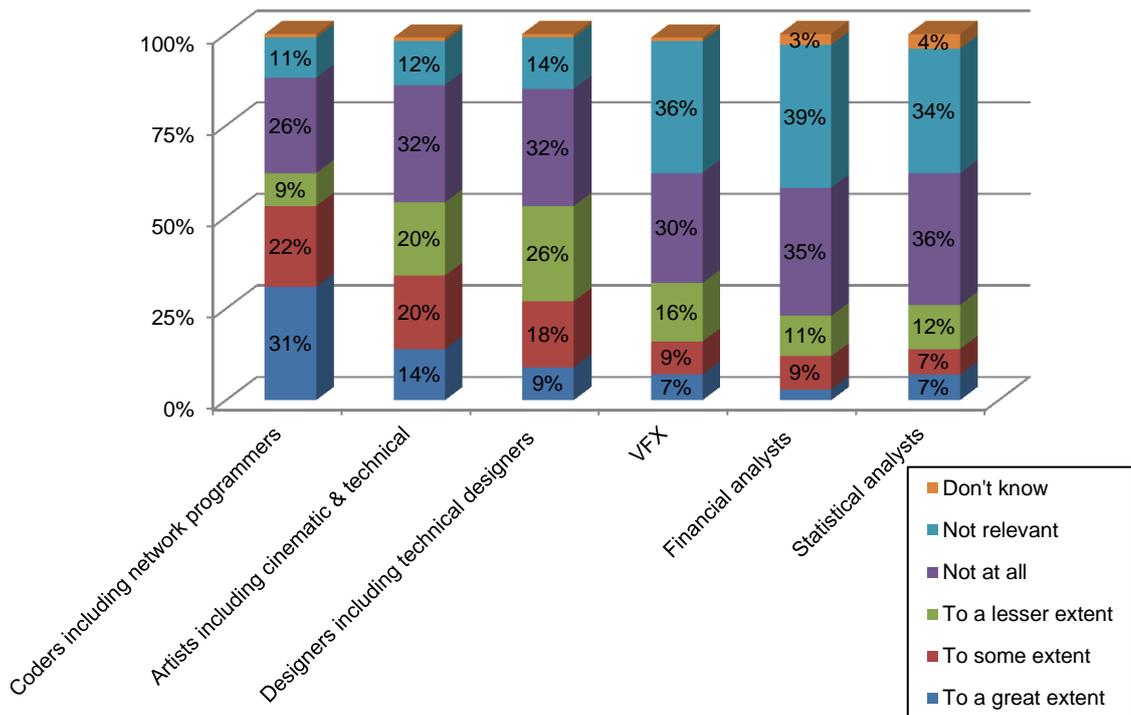
5.3a. To what extent is your company experiencing the following skills gaps within your current workforce?



Responses: 74

For a full list of skills gaps identified see [Appendix A](#).

5.3b. To what extent does your company have vacancies that are proving hard to fill in the following areas?



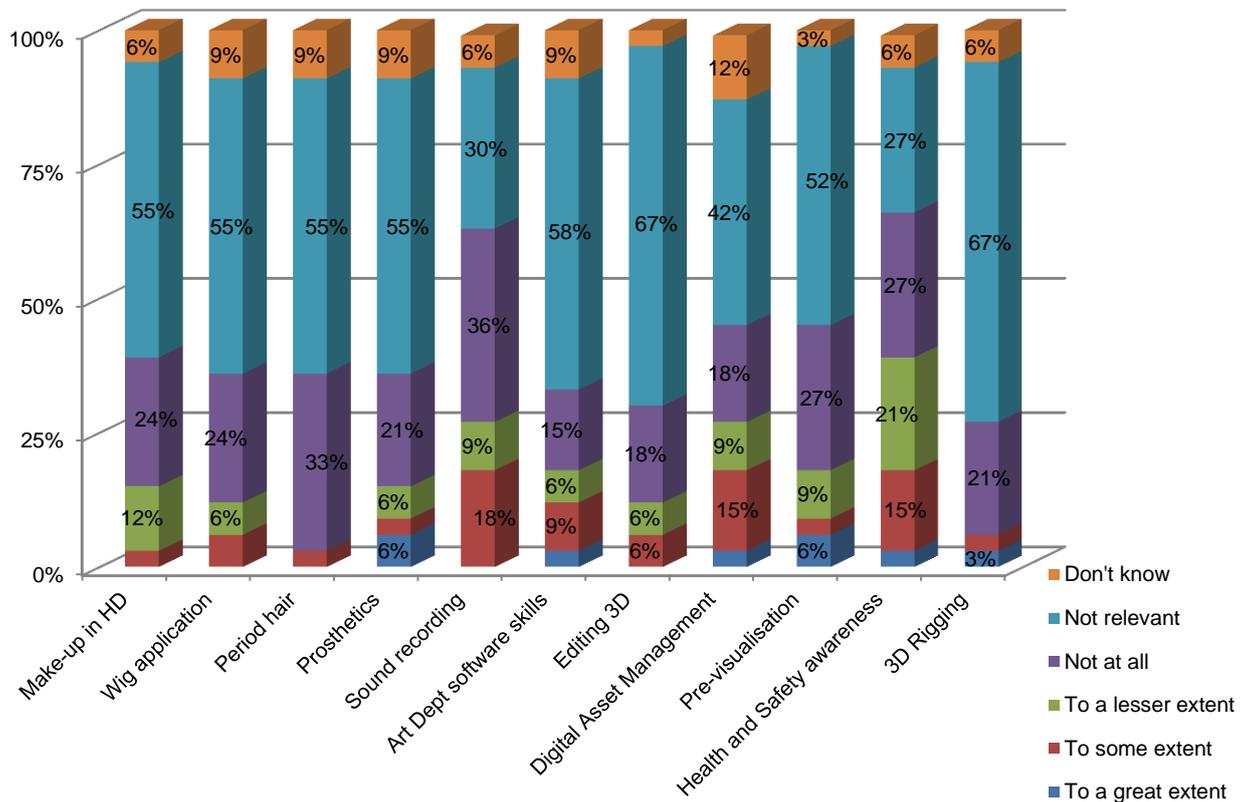
Responses: 74

5.3c. Where has your company tried to or plan to recruit financial and/or statistical analysts from?

Agencies, advertising and universities were amongst those answers given by respondents. For a full list of responses please see [Appendix A](#).

5.4 Film

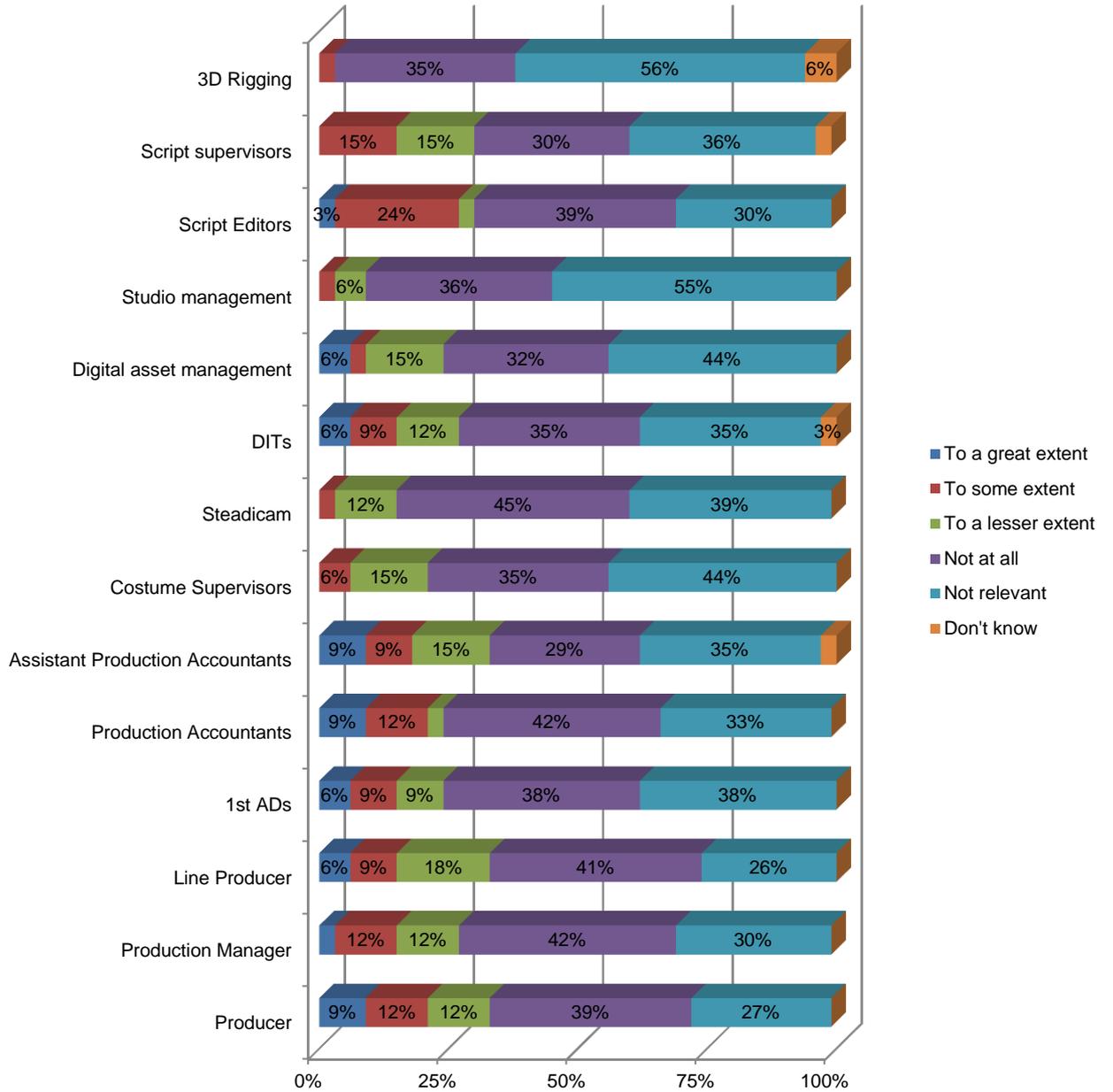
5.4a. To what extent is your company experiencing the following skills gaps within your current workforce?



Responses: 33

For a full list of skills gaps identified see [Appendix A](#).

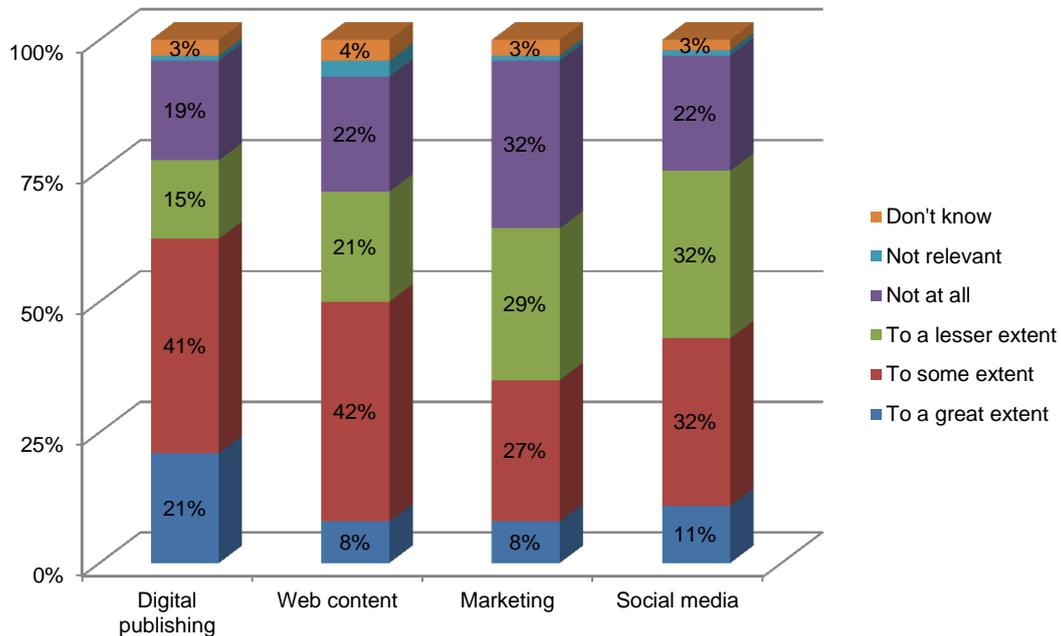
5.4b. To what extent does your company have vacancies that are proving hard to fill in the following areas?



Responses: 34

5.5 Publishing

5.5a. To what extent is your company experiencing skills gaps in the following areas within your current workforce?



Responses: 73

5.6 Television

5.6a. Is your company experiencing skills gaps within your current workforce?

Respondents identified skills gaps related to Spark, Boom and CGI. For a full list of skills gaps identified see [Appendix A](#).

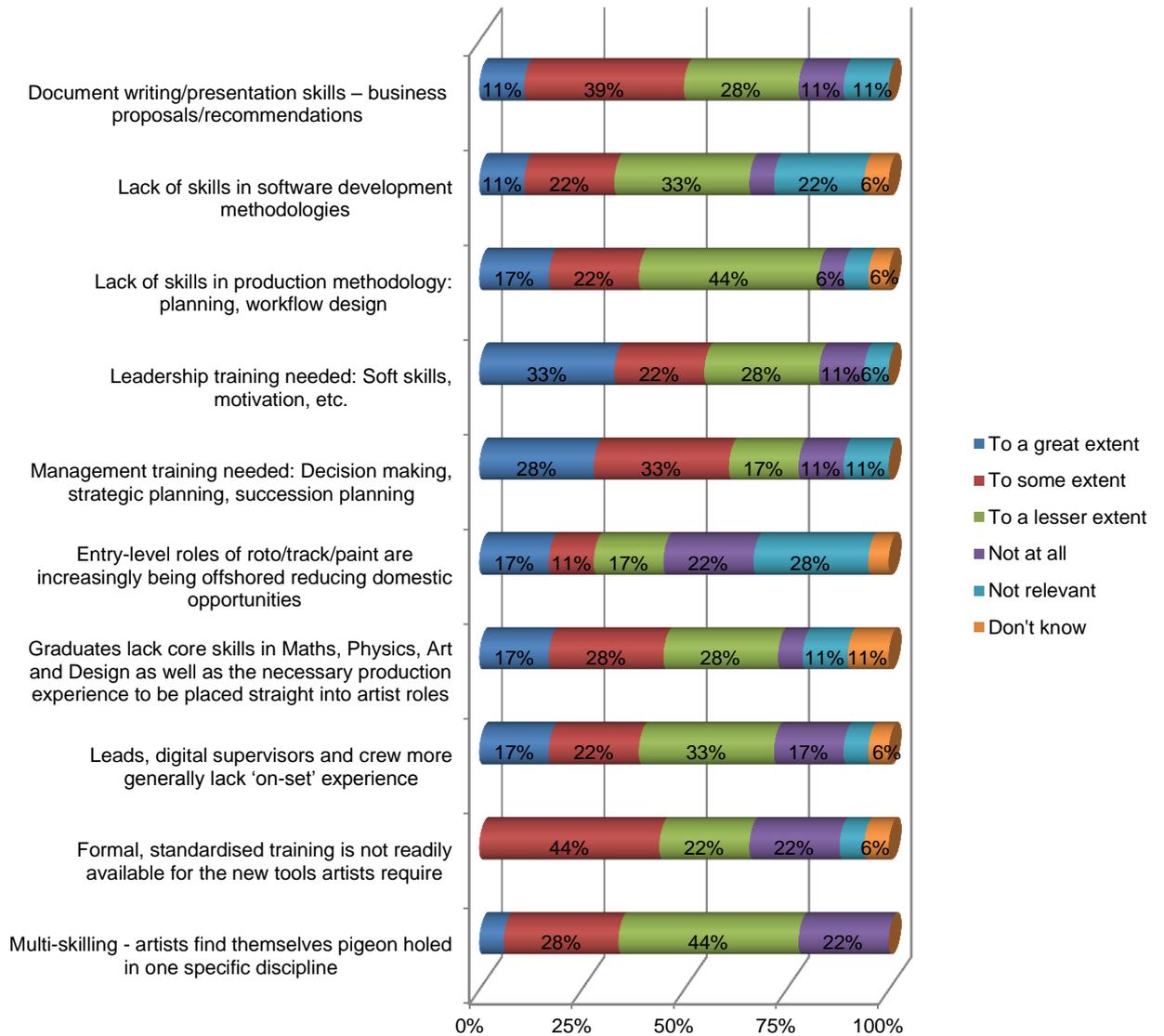
5.6b. Does your company have vacancies that are proving hard to fill?

A number of respondents indicated that above the line: directors and writers and production accountants are proving hard to fill to a great extent. Roles identified as proving hard to fill to some extent include production manager, editors, producers, DITs, script supervisors and script editors.

Responses: 11

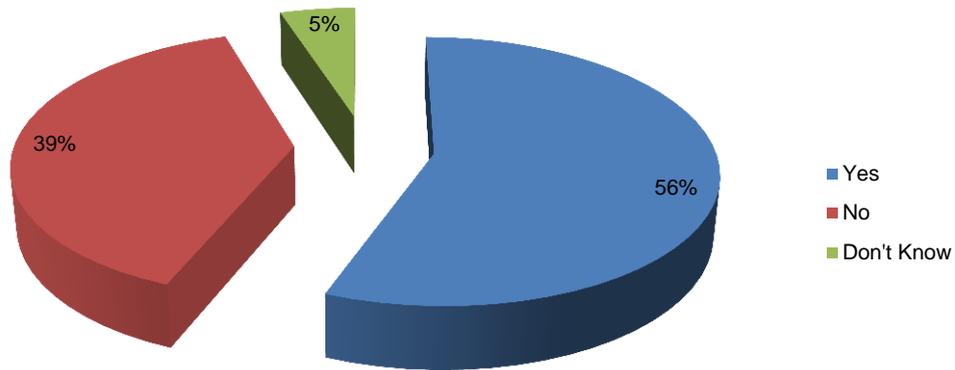
5.7 VFX

5.7a. To what extent is your company experiencing the following skills issues?



Responses: 18

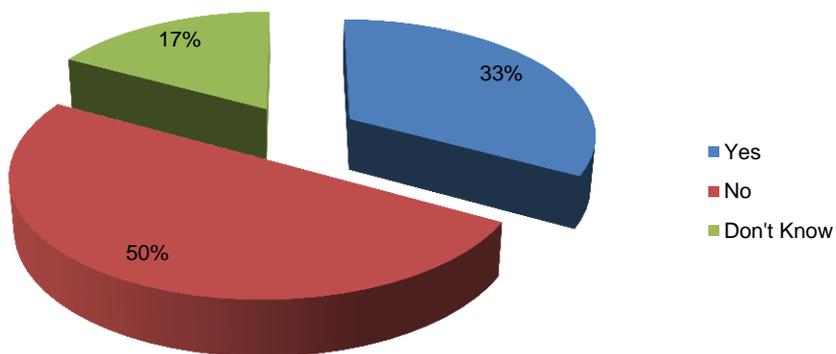
5.7b. Does your company currently have any vacancies that are proving hard to fill?



Responses: 18

For a list of specific vacancies that respondents identified as proving hard to fill see [Appendix A](#).

5.7c. Thinking about your current workforce, would you say that there is a gap between existing skills and those that your company needs to meet its business objectives?



Responses: 18

For a list of specific skills gaps identified by respondents see [Appendix A](#).

Appendix A: Open-ended responses to the Employer Panel Survey – March 2014

2c. What are the main concerns that would prevent your partaking in a training partnership of this nature?

“We're large enough to do it by ourselves, across our various studios.”

“Cost.”

“Cost and time.”

“Nothing appropriate in the locality.”

“Dilution - our training is specific to the subject matter as well as the workflow.”

“I'm just a one man band, and the organisation required would probably be too intensive.”

“I work on a mobile basis and am a sole employee.”

“There is no other company like ours for miles around and we would be worried about losing staff.”

“Financial.”

“We like to train all our testers internally and wouldn't want to pass on our processes.”

“I am a one man indie dev.”

“Specialised training in-house.”

“We look for specific freelance crew dependant on the job requirements, we sometimes take trainees via CV applications but specific to the short term needs of the particular job. It would be almost impossible for us to manage this as a partnership with another company.”

“Solicitation of staff.”

“Limited time/resources.”

“We do a lot of training inside the group.”

“This is a virtual business with no employees.”

“Global company: organisational alignment.”

“Cost, office space.”

“There are only two of us - we outsource anything where we don't have in-house skills.”

“We are a very small company, and very specialized. At the moment we'd have no time to invest in a training partnership.”

"We're too small, too niche, too focused, too broke and too understaffed."

"Wouldn't feel we could reciprocate."

"Cost."

"Size and turnover."

"We are a prohibitively small company."

"We train on the job and have very specific working methods and approaches. I'm speaking for art here, but we find what we are doing already works well."

"We're a 2 man operation and that works for us."

"Company is very small and does not employ any one at the moment."

"Bureaucracy."

"Company very small -- three people."

"Finance."

"Dedicating the time from a small and overstretched team."

"Size of company."

"Size of our organisation."

"We have our own training schemes."

"Time."

"We train people both to work with us, and to increase their skills whilst in the workplace. We're not interested in doing this over 1 month periods and then people moving on, but long term to ensure that the people we hire are with us for careers, not just jobs."

"Cost and specialism of our organisation."

5.1b. Why do you not plan to sign up to Trainee Finder?

"No Plans to hire."

"Not sure it would help us recruit."

"Not looking to hire."

"I have referred young trainees to you but because I run a micro-business am unable to pay trainees."

"No actual requirement within the company."

"Trainee Finder is great but you should work more closely with us to find the raw material!"

“As far as I understand it, it doesn't apply to distribution.”

“We don't have any vacancies.”

“We do not hire trainees.”

“Not needing more employees currently.”

“Depends on the production.”

“Not relevant to our organisation.”

“We always work with disabled trainees.”

Why do you not plan to sign up to the Challenge Fund?

“IIRC it's 50% funded student place? Just not worth the hassle, cheaper to hire 1 person we know is good.”

“Can't afford 50% match funding.”

“Doesn't fit within other funding we use.”

“Because my company and my turnover is too small.”

“I think Challenge fund is the Internship scheme (?). If it is this is a great idea but has major flaws - happy to help get this right - and again we can help promote and reach the raw material that's needed to make the scheme really effective.”

“We're not a production facility: we're a software developer, so our needs are not directly served by skillset.”

Why do you not plan to sign up to Commissioned Training?

“As above.”

“No actual requirement within the company.”

“Not sure what this is.”

“We're not a production facility: we're a software developer, so our needs are not directly served by skillset.”

“Busy - it sounds complex.”

5.2a. Animation: 'Other' skills gaps within current workforce.

“After Effects - to a great extent.”

“Cinema 4D.”

“We outsource the animation work so the above isn't relevant at this moment.”

“Strong story and storyboard experience!”

“After Effects, Spine.”

“Would recommend adding Max to this list - used alot in games animation. We're not experiencing any skills gap in Max.”

“After effects.”

“3ds Max: but these are highly specialised product specialist roles as we're a software developer.”

“TV Paint.”

5.3a. Computer Games: ‘Other’ skills gaps within current workforce.

“To be honest, our problem is finance - if we had investment, we could employ a larger team.”

“Programmers and Unity people.”

“Performance Marketing.”

“Game designers with skills in modern delivery platforms, digital culture and monetization models are hard to find.”

“Programming and Art.”

“Programming, animation.”

“Proper business analysis & programmers, particularly low level/GUI ones.”

5.3c. Where have you tried to or plan to recruit financial and/or statistical analysts from?

“Agencies, Advertising.”

“Generally the analysts we're looking at come from outside of the industry. We're also working with some universities and their graduates.”

“Agencies, adverts in various magazines, universities, our own website.”

“Direct, Agency, Escape the City, Graduates with in house training.”

“Answering as a recruitment agency - we try EVERYTHING! ads, networking, social media, Linked In (direct headhunting).”

“Financial, Insurance.”

“Generic recruitment channels.”

“Many job boards, many games websites, direct from social media. Lots of applicants, lots of people who can do the maths, very few who can analyse.”

5.4a. Film: 'Other' skills gaps within current workforce.

"Script Development."

"3D modelling."

"Business skills including financing know-how, financial planning and business modelling for film and TV."

"As a freelance script supervisor I am not that aware of what the individual productions companies are doing although I am sure that all of the larger studio pictures are fully versed in 3D."

"Changes in financing, crowd-funding, soc media & film."

"Production accountants."

"Business development."

5.6a. Television: 'Other' skills gaps within current workforce.

"Editors and VFX."

"Maturity and common sense in any candidates!"

"Production Management for TV."

5.7b. Does your company currently have any vacancies that are proving hard to fill?

Occupation

FX Technical Director
Senior CG Production Manager
CG Supervisor
Software Developer
Senior Level Flame Artist
3D Artists
Pipeline Support
Senior producer
Software development
Senior Compositor
Lighting Technical Director
Studio Manager
Systems Support
Senior CG Lighting/TD operator
Senior production coordinator
Crewing/Resourcing Manager
VFX Artists
Senior Lighting TD

5.7c. Thinking about your current workforce, would you say that there is a gap between existing skills and those that your company needs to meet its business objectives?

Skill Gap

Basic art skills

We desperately need experienced high end VFX Artists. These are typically to be found in Soho whereas we are based in the North West.

Management

Production Experience

Sales

True generalists

Management/leadership skills

Negotiation

VFX Culture

Problem solving

Common sense and initiative

Project management skills

Initiative

Appendix B: Any additional comments relating to the issues raised in this questionnaire or skills in the Creative Industries more generally.

“As stated, we are really limited by a lack of investment! So our team (mostly female) cannot grow and we cannot take on more ambitious projects. If we could, we would employ many more people diversely.”

“There is a big need to tie up investing funds with improving diversity. This is not included as an option in the types of training that companies may seek. You need to move on from asking questions about this as if it were a separate subject and treat this as integral to the success of a business, just as much as branding and marketing and other business subjects.”

“The skill sets missing are in basic editorial skills: editing, copy-editing, proofreading.”

"This questionnaire looks unfinished :) E.G. the question about the CEO didn't have a white-cis-straight option. TBH WRT diversity, what matters to society is that people are judged for their skills and experience and how they interact with other humans during the interview. We do have a 0 tolerance policy on discrimination and would hope that a person's outward appearance, physical ability, gender, or sexuality wouldn't enter into it. Anyone applying for any job we advertise will be considered purely on the terms stated above - though we would like to have a diverse workplace, we wouldn't employ someone from a specific demographic group purely for the purposes of ensuring diversity."

“Biggest problem is with basic skills; even many graduates have poor writing skills and numeracy.”

“Our company is only small (7 people) so a lot of the equality issues are not particularly important/prevalent at the moment. If we were to become bigger I'm sure this is something we may take into consideration further. However, from a personal viewpoint I don't believe these things should be monitored and people should be based on their skills & ability to do the job, not on whether they tick the 'right' equality box; it is positive discrimination which is still discrimination regardless.”

"In publishing, hiring women is not a problem - but with the increasing pressure on jobs, the scope for flexible hours, reduced working days post-children and general confidence in taking maternity leaves is reduced. In terms of general equal opportunities, my company has always hired a mix of ethnicities and those with disabilities."

"We are a very small company 2 directors (employees) and anything between 0 and 15 freelancers. We have worked with a mixture of genders and ethnicities but in our experience socio-economic background is the greatest barrier to employment elsewhere for some of the young people we have worked with."

"Previous question about CEO doesn't have what I expect the default is of a white male! Generally we have a very open approach to these things, but I believe that is down the attitude of the making the board aware of the issues. I would be happy to work with guidelines but not have such policies imposed on the company."

"We employ individuals based on their appropriate skills. That said our team of 30 with diverse, with 9 women including the COO, artists, scripters, community mgt, and production mgt., In addition we have 2 individuals from an ethnic minority group."

"We are a small owner-managed publisher in a very specialist field, with one full-time members of staff and 2 freelancers. It's tough making a living at all, so worrying about the diversity of our workforce would be nothing but a distraction."

"The problem of promoting potentially disenfranchised young creatives is persuading them that positive are attainable outcomes are realistic and not just advertorial rhetoric."

"It is very difficult to find a young apprentice with the skills to become a top journalist. It is even more difficult to find a suitable course locally for journalist training to back up apprenticeships."

"We just need help and support in growing our business www.realtimeuk.com. We can compete on quality and price with the world's leading CG/VFX houses but can't compete on attracting talent to the North West where we have recently opened a second studio."

"Thanks for taking the time to seek our viewpoints. Some questions such as shared training opportunities would be very interesting, although 'unity' between competing companies mightn't always lend itself to such a scheme. On one point in the survey – the question "Is the CEO... position filled by:" doesn't offer the answer "Male" other field. In other words I DO know who fills the position and I have no problem telling you but it is not one of the 4 answers above...! Thanks."

"I run a not profit media production and training company in Bedfordshire. We have close links with Bedfordshire Uni. As part of our training we run graduate mentoring and internship projects that are funded by the uni. We also link with Apprenticeship trainee schemes in the county and refer younger people in search of apprenticeships to others including Skillset."

"The answers I've filled out on this questionnaire will give the picture that we have no problems with recruiting for animation at the moment, which is the case. The current state of the industry means there are plenty of skilled experienced professionals out there in the field of video games animation. What I would say is that in my experience

of meeting with students at open days and reviewing student show reels, a large amount were leaving university without what I would consider to be entry level skills. Whilst I appreciate that not all students are as able as others, I do have specific concerns about the focus of teaching in animation at university level. I have spoken to students who even in their third year are being forced to look into rigging / lighting / modelling to satisfy their assessments when what they want to be doing is animation. My experience is that animation is hard and the training is slow. If you put off specialising and try to learn everything, you're unlikely to excel."

"We hire people according to skill range and suitability to the job role. Crew are hired on a self employed temporary basis as the nature of our business (which is a modelmaking and production facility) is based on short term contract work. We cannot afford to have many permanent staff as each job can require differently skilled crew, so hire on a job by job basis. The person's ethnicity, sex, or sexual orientation does not come into play and we hire the correctly skilled person for the job irrelevant of these categories. Crew who would be considered in a minority group are given the same consideration (and pay) for the job role as those who are in a 'majority' bracket. I would believe this to be the case for many companies who are in a similar area to us, as most self employed freelancers go between a number of companies during the course of a typical year and those companies have similar set ups to ours in regards to the hiring of crew. The way many companies operate in the sector of Film, TV and Commercials production is not perhaps the typical way most companies would operate in other sectors, so often we do not fit into the neat tick boxes for surveys and data gathering such as this. A large portion of our industry is built on the back of the self employed freelancer and many companies operate this way, very small skeleton crew when work is quiet and then short bursts of a larger crew for a specific project. I would say that the questions regarding training and staffing are perhaps a little more complex in our industry and data gathered may not be a true reflection of how the industry really works behind the scenes."

"We have no difficulty in identifying appropriately skilled freelancers and contractors to conduct the business."

"We are very, very active in the area of Graduate recruitment and have several initiatives that could help Creative Skillset achieve it's aims. Please speak to me if you have any interest in how we could work together. On a related issue - It does seem from the outside that Creative Skillset, TIGA, UKIE, Creative England and other local funding bodies are all targeted with the same/similar aims - but there's little co-operation? I have no idea if the politics can be overcome. But, if it could I think with some joined up thinking and funding and resources the results could be improved dramatically. Regarding CS - The funding needs to be targeted at the right schemes and into the right activities. The activities/schemes also need to be well thought out. To do this, the opinions of people at the coal face should be sought. I'm afraid not all the MD's and senior management of development studios/publishers are at the coal face. Worse still I read the nonsense being spouted in trade press by "internal recruiters" at games studios dismissing UK graduates. These opinions are unhelpful and they have no visibility on what's going on in UK Academia and have no idea of the potential that's out there - if we just reach out and help them in!. The CS Internship scheme is an example of a good idea that could be executed better. However, its a great initiative! and if it can be tweaked is exactly the sort of thing the industry needs! Happy to help any time...."

"right skillsets, availability, realistic expectation of wages."

“Our company, while not having any specific policies to cover any of the issues raised, operates an open door policy. We will employ anyone who is reliable and has the skills set necessary.”

“We are a small company that employs people for their talents, colour or country of origin is not a factor. We work with a wide range of people from varied backgrounds.”

“Just to be clear, while we don't actively 'monitor' when hiring whether a particular candidate might fit some kind of 'diversity' description, we do have a diverse workforce in this small office (5 people)not least because it's better for our business.”

“As a freelance script supervisor starting out 15 years ago I definitely benefited from a Skill set training course. I work with various and diverse production companies and am employed by different directors and line producers on each film. I am never that aware of an active focus on equal employment and fear film still favours those best equipped to do the job regardless of ethnicity. I know the UK film industry is on the cutting edge of technology and advances in the latest make up prosthetics and 3D techniques and production design and we only have to cite 'Gravity' to offer an example of latest and innovatory ways post production has been used as well as in camera sfx and the use of special rigs. The industry could definitely use more on set training and mentoring and is most definitely not a racially integrated industry. If Skill set could help improve this aspect of the industry it would be important and relevant to the 21st century.”

“Answering these questions has been enlightening, I have discussed my answers with our HR dept.For example, I'm not aware of any VFX colleagues with mobility requirements even though a number of roles would not pose barriers to such.”

“As an publisher of books on Islam and Muslims we employ individuals from numerous ethnicities.”

“We are a small company. We'd employ anyone who could best do an advertised job regardless of race, creed, etc. As a small company though, we are hardly going to achieve many points for equality and diversity. In past companies that we have run, we have employed disabled and transgender folk.”

"Hello, at the current time we're a small office of six people, relying on our Australian parent company for many things, such as digital strategy etc. However, we have just bought Quadrille and plan on merging offices with them in June, so I imagine many of my answers to these questions will differ after we are part of a much bigger company. I hope that makes sense."

“Not 100% sure how to respond on the diversity stuff. We hire the best person for the job, regardless of the factors mentioned. Not sure if that counts as a diversity policy.”

“I think there is a huge opportunity for apprenticeships within the industry. When I inquired via a Government backed scheme, the company never followed up on sending me candidates.”

We hire on a skills basis on the strength of staff applying. In the games industry there is an extremely high male bias that's very difficult for employers to get around.”

“It is not really clear if and how this helps anybody. It seems more like an exercise to be seen to do something, and to put graphs into an annual report, rather than somebody really wanting to make a difference. More than anything the treatment of

skills at the recent BVE shows us what is wrong: '4k', 'Cinematography' and 'Production' get big dedicated and strategically placed, visible 'theatres' with their own sound mixer, whilst 'Skills' gets a tucked away corner without seating opportunities that is hard to find. Did you see it?"

"We work in Physical SFX. There is a shortage of skilled people available and a shortage of new people entering the industry. This seems like an on-going problem if as expected work levels will rise with the TV tax credit taking hold."

"Note sure the relevance of the sex / disability etc questions. We simply hire the best possible person for the job. Everything else is irrelevant. Surely the computer games industry suffers less than most for this? We hire some serious geeks and nerds that would not get a job in any other industry. In fact, we struggle to understand how they survive any form of human interaction like shopping or a bus journey. But they are awesome at their job and make great games. You think we'd not hire someone because they are black or female. This is a hilarious concept to me."

"I believe the creative industries definitely need help in becoming more diversified. No formal training and low starting salaries mean that the only young people coming into the industry are ones who have families that can support them, so are invariably from middle or upper class white backgrounds. I'd like to see more large companies start apprenticeship schemes that target young people from a varied social background to truly reflect society as a whole."

"The reason we don't need help with, or actively monitor, our equal opportunities policy is because we are an equal opportunities organisation and always have been. We hire people based on their skills, not the colour of their skin, ethnic background, gender, or sexuality. That means we have a cross section of people in the studio organically. BAME is also a terrible and (to me) offensive term to use. I am a CEO - white, born Jewish, atheist, first generation English with 2 African parents. I am English and multiple minorities, yet wouldn't qualify is most peoples interpretations of BAME."

"We are committed to making a tectonic difference in the representation of disabled film talent in the UK. 13 % of the UK population are disabled but only 1% of the film industry."

"I think a cohesive approach toward diversity would be much appreciated. For example diversity is often identified separately as gender, race etc."