

**Representation of
Women Artists in
Britain During 2020**

Dr Kate McMillan

This report, commissioned annually by Freeland's Foundation, evidences the sixth consecutive year of data on the representation of women artists in Britain. This year, it also includes additional evidences that help to further understand the way that gender, ethnicity and socio-economic factors intersect and impact on the career outcomes for artists.



Contents

Introduction

Understanding the Intersecting Inequalities for
Women Artists in Britain
Dr Kate McMillan. 6

Essays

Knowing the Rules, Knowing the Risks
Beth Hughes 12

Who Belongs at Art School?
Dr Sylvia Theuri. 16

Evidences 21

About 84



Understanding the Intersecting Inequalities for Women Artists in Britain

Dr Kate McMillan

This report marks the sixth year that Freelands Foundation has recorded data on the representation of women visual artists in Britain. Additions to this year's report aim to reflect and underline the way that race and class in Britain form additional barriers to women's inclusion in the visual arts. Where possible, alongside gender data, we have also mapped socio-economic and ethnicity data. Our goal is to further the exploration and analysis of women's shared experiences, to identify differences among women and to provide space for more inclusive and intersectional conversations. In this report we recognise that we are not *only* women, but that being a woman is often the first obstacle we face, regardless of the community we come from.

The term 'intersectionality' was first coined in 1989 by the American professor of law Kimberlé Crenshaw, who highlighted how different inequalities intersect, compound, and in doing so, reflect on interlocking systems of privilege and oppression.¹ By using a more expansive lens, it is possible to better understand how the multiple aspects of individual identities shape life outcomes. This is particularly important since intersecting experiences are often invisible to, unknown or minimised by, those with more privilege.

To explore the data we collected on ethnicity and class, and how it intersects with gender, we have commissioned two essays. Beth Hughes, Curator at the Art Council Collection and founder of The Working Class British Art network, has contributed an essay entitled 'Knowing the Rules, Knowing the Risks'. In this text she explores the invisible codes that make the art world impenetrable for those without social and cultural capital, and how, as a consequence, our collections are only

ever a partial record of our communities. Hughes asks, what is lost when the stories and perspectives of the working class are eliminated from the visual archive of our nation? She draws particular attention to working-class women artists whose lives are shaped by communities of care and reciprocity, but also by the working-class codes of what constitutes 'women's work'.

Dr Sylvia Theuri, Lecturer at Wolverhampton School of Art and Research Lead on racial inequality in art education at the Runnymede Trust, writes about the various ways art education in Britain fails Black and Brown women. Despite the recent (but overdue) success of artists such as Lubaina Himid (Turner Prize winner, 2017) and Sonia Boyce (MBE and Royal Academician), the creative lives of young Black and Brown women, those of African, Caribbean and Asian heritage, continue to be neglected. Theuri asks 'Who belongs in art school?', highlighting how the 'whiteness' of education structures and curricula can marginalise and exclude Black and Brown women students, even when they have overcome obstacles to enrol on higher education courses. What then, are the obstacles in shifting secondary and higher education provision towards a framework of inclusivity that can create pathways into the future for all women?

The insights of Hughes and Theuri are particularly important this year, since this report has been written against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, a situation that has heightened the experience of inequality for so many. The impact of the climate crisis, the Black Lives Matter movement, the enormous shifts in our working habits and rising global inequalities, do not distract

from our important research into gender inequality, but instead reinforce how central resolving discrimination in all its forms is to answering many of the nation's, and indeed the world's, urgent problems. It is in fact, women, and people from under-represented groups who proffer many of the solutions required for a creative, compassionate and just society.

Since the middle of the twentieth century, there have been multiple international instruments developed to measure gender equality. They include, for example, the 'Convention on the Political Rights of Women' (1953) and the 'Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women' (1979). In 1993, at the World Conference on Human Rights, it was declared that eliminating all forms of discrimination on the grounds of sex and gender should be the priority objective of the international community. Many of these declarations, to which the UK is signatory, have subsequently become law – and research shows that these mechanisms do work – albeit slowly. In April 2020, the UK gender pay gap for those in full-time work was 7.4%, down from 9% in the previous year. Among all employees it was 15.5%, down from 17.4% in 2019.² Yet the 2021 report 'Bridging the Gap?', a joint research project between the Fawcett Society and the Global Institute for Women's Leadership, found that the UK had some of the poorest frameworks for mandated action and company reportage in the developed world.³

In the visual arts, Britain lags even further behind. We do not see the transparency, mandatory policing and reportage used in other sectors, and unsurprisingly, the career trajectories for women in the arts reflect this. The stubborn myth of meritocracy (as if creative work should not be held to account in the same way as other disciplinary fields), continues to shape whose work is curated,

funded, purchased, sold, collected, commissioned and written about.

We see how this oversight translates into the statistics we gather each year. There are always discrete examples of individuals and organisations who implement their own processes of accountability, and this year is no exception. Private organisations and businesses set their own agendas, and while they may scrutinise gender inequality in relation to salaried staff, it almost never translates to the artists they work with. The public sector also continues to fail to hold recipients of public funds to account. The 'Equality Action Objectives and Plans for NPOs' put in place by Arts Council England in 2016 asks organisations to 'be ambitious about what you want to achieve, but don't set yourself up to fail by writing objectives that you know you can never meet.'⁴

These rather unambitious expectations, which are seen widely in organisations attempting institutional change that do not include expectations for quotas, or best practice for supporting diverse artists, contribute to the slowness of change we see every year. Even in large organisations that monitor inequalities, we find that the career trajectories of women doing cultural work differ from other sectors. Academic Dr Bridget Conor writes in the 2021 UNESCO report 'Gender & Creativity: Progress on the Precipice' that 'in the United Kingdom's culture sectors, only 15% of women under the age of 35 are in senior roles, compared with 31% of men'.⁵

The visual arts operate in what is coined a 'risk economy'. Those who are most able to take risks for the longest period (read: operate in conditions of precarity), are the most likely to reap the benefits. In recent decades artists have often been hailed as the 'model entrepreneurs' – innovators, risk-takers, changemakers – the posterchildren of the new precariat.⁶ It is not surprising that those who best



symbolise and thrive under late capitalism are white, middle class and male.

The following summary of the 2020 evidences highlights just how important it is to take an intersectional approach to understand the barriers that women face to ensure long-term success in the art world.

The evidence

As we continue to build a picture of how the data is changing each year, we have been able to recognise increasingly clear trends. While the gender makeup of students studying Art & Design at GCSE and A Level has changed very little, the number of women on undergraduate and postgraduate courses has increased. In 2019–20, 73% of students on postgraduate courses were women, a 3% increase since we started tabulating this data in 2014–15.

Why are women increasingly drawn to Art & Design programmes given such poor career outcomes? While 54% of solo exhibitions in non-commercial galleries in London were by women artists in 2020 (see evidence 7), this is still almost 20% less than those on postgraduate programmes. Similarly, while the number of women artists represented by major London galleries (see evidence 11) has seen incremental improvements since 2017, the number of estates of deceased women artists has declined each year. This is reflected in Sotheby's Contemporary Art Evening Sales (see evidence 23), which saw a 2% decrease in women from the previous year, even though there was a 1% increase in the number of lots for sale by women. Auction house Christie's (see evidence 24) recorded a 1.5% decline from the previous year to just 11%. In their autumn sale, just 4% of the artists were women.

It is hard to read this data just three years after the #MeToo movement. Progress is not inevitable. In 2020, one year after they made headlines for purchasing Artemisia Gentileschi's *Self Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria* (c.1615–17), the

National Gallery purchased no works by women artists.

Fortunately, there are other collecting institutions championing the work of women. Of the work acquired by the Government Art Collection, the Arts Council Collection and the British Council Collection in 2019–20, the majority was by women artists. The Tate lagged behind at just 39%, but this was a 6% improvement on the previous year. There are other moments of optimism in this year's data: Arts Council England grants awarded to women continued to go up, albeit marginally, from 54% in 2019 to 55% in 2020, solo exhibitions at Frieze Art Fair almost reached gender parity this year at 45% and completed public art commissions were predominantly by women artists at 59%.

However, the statistics we have collated this year tell us that it is often particular kinds of women whose careers are improving. The additional data sets included in this year's report help us to build a picture of where class and race intersect. We can see that of the students selecting GCSE Art & Design subjects, 40% of those students are Black and Brown. Yet recent research by the Runnymede Trust showed that school curricula often fail to reflect this diversity,⁷ and in addition, 92% of staff in secondary schools in 2018 were white and only 3% of headteachers were Black and Brown. Are Black and Brown women able to see themselves in the curriculum or at the front of the class? What obstacles prevent them from pursuing careers as artists?

Despite making up to close to 20% of the population in the UK, the racial barriers for non-white people in the art world are substantial. Our research reveals that there are no Black and Brown people running major institutions in or outside London (see evidences 29.1 and 30.1). Britain has never been represented by a Black and Brown woman at the Venice Biennale, although in 2022, Sonia Boyce has been selected (see evidence 15.1). Very few collections in our report were able to report

on the ethnicity of the artists whose work they acquired. As part of our own research, we counted the number of Black and Brown women whose work was acquired by the Tate in 2019–20 (see evidence 16.1). Of the 180 artists collected, 20 (11%) were Black and Brown women: though this figure appears to be high, only six – Maud Sulter, Sonia Boyce, Jadé Fadojutimi, Claudette Johnson, Rosalind Nashashibi and Ingrid Pollard – were British.

This year's report evidenced that some Black and Brown women leaders in the visual arts are doing transformative things. In non-commercial institutions in London (see evidence 27.1), Black and Brown women Directors constituted 13% (four out of thirty), all working at institutions receiving less than £1million in Arts Council England funding. These women were often championing the work of non-white artists – 57% of solo exhibitions in those institutions were by Black and Brown artists (see evidence 7.3). Yet without mandatory reporting and accountability, these statistics are as fragile as those on gender.

Elsewhere we note that only 16% of public art commissions went to Black and Brown artists, and none of those completed in 2020 (see evidence 10). The auction house records were also stark. Of the 136 artists whose work was sold at Sotheby's Contemporary Art Evening Sales in 2020 (see evidence 23.1) only two were by Black and Brown women, none of whom were in the top 30 sales by value. At Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sales, just 3.7% of the lots were by Black and Brown women (see evidence 24.1).

Our data on class unfortunately does not continue beyond the university stage. From this point on, however, existing research underlines how difficult it is to obtain and sustain the capital needed to persist as an artist in Britain. Hidden behind the average annual income of just £16,150 for artists in Britain in 2018,⁸ are the intersecting privileges of cultural and social capital that cushion day-to-day poverty and

provide a safety net if all else fails. Essentially, being poor doesn't mean that you don't have access to other forms of capital.

But for the working classes, the class barriers in Britain are arguably unlike those anywhere in the world. The 2013 'Great British Class Survey' revealed seven classes – a wealthy elite (6%), the established middle class (25%), a class of technical experts (6%), new affluent workers (15%), and in addition to the traditional working class (14%), an 'emergent service sector' class (19%) was identified, as well as a new 'precariat class' (15%).⁹ The poor in Britain represent almost 50% of the population, and eight years on from this survey, the figure is likely to be higher. Artists did not feature in this report, but the lives of artists often exist within that identified as the new emergent service sector, which has an average household income of £21K. They are described as 'a youthful grouping with high amounts of emergent cultural capital (often educated in) well-known universities specialising in arts and humanities such as Goldsmiths... and "making their way" in a range of relatively insecure occupations.'¹⁰

This new class of workers is unlikely to have grown up in a middle-class family, and for artists in this situation, the ability to interact, engage and benefit from those running the art world is likely to be profoundly affected. In the essay by Beth Hughes, she makes it clear that the rules required to access the visual arts are opaque to many. Most importantly perhaps, the ability to weather precarity is an even greater obstacle to success. Our data reinforces this – at GCSE level, almost 20% of students are eligible for free school meals, while at A Level this drops to less than 5%. Secondary school students selecting Art & Design subjects largely reflect these broader figures (see evidence 2.1). While income is not always the best measure of class, the experience of poverty increasingly reflects a substantial section of society. 23% of the students on Art & Design undergraduate programmes came from areas identified as being the most deprived



(see evidence 3.2). Roughly 6% of undergraduates come from private schools – again, a figure that corresponds with the equivalent percentage of those characterised as ‘elite’ in Britain. It is quite clear from this data that the desire for a creative life is represented equally across all class categories.

However, if you are part of the 48% of the population that fall into the low income categories above, sustaining yourself through potentially decades of poorly paid work, tokenistic artist fees and unreliable art sales, your journey in the visual arts will probably be short. If you are also a Black or Brown woman, the statistics that serve as markers of success towards the end of a career in the visual arts (i.e. numbers in senior roles and auction statistics) are chilling (see evidences 23.1, 24.1, 28.1, 29.1 and 30.1). The enthusiasm for the arts that is shared by young people is not echoed in equitable opportunities for success in the higher echelons of the sector.

What can be done?

As ever, collecting the data is an important starting point. But without implementable, quantifiable and measurable policy initiatives that don't only address those on salaries, the lives of women artists will not reach gender parity in our lifetime. Crucially, without addressing this through an intersectional lens, progress will not reach those who need it the most. For Black and Brown working-class women, a creative life is too often out of reach.

Universal basic income (UBI), compulsory artist fees equivalent to salaries, university fee reductions for those in areas facing multiple indices of deprivation, curriculum quotas that tackle underrepresentation, subsidised studios, economic models that map the invisible labour of women across society and a national revaluing of the role of arts are just some of the ambitious ideas researchers and those working in the sector have been calling for, for decades. For too long, the arts have been used and championed as an instrument of change, yet unless the lives of

women artists improve, our instrument is a hollow rod. We need to look at where women are thriving and ask why this is the case. We need to challenge the British discomfort around discussions of gender, race and class.

We hope that this year's report is the beginning of a wider conversation that leads to a better understanding of, and ability to, address the intersecting inequalities experienced by women visual artists in Britain.

Notes about terminology and methodology

This year we have updated the title of the report, to reflect more accurately all people who identify as women. Encouragingly, the organisations that we collect data from are also enabling people to self-identify and are also collecting more data on gender. This has also enabled us to include in some of our evidences information on artists who are non-binary and 'other'.

We have also reviewed our language for ethnicity. In consultation with Freelands Foundation Diversity Action Group,* we use 'Black and Brown' in reference to those of African, Caribbean and Asian descent. The term 'non-white' is used to highlight collective exclusion.

*The Diversity Action Group is an advisory group of cultural sector experts, chaired by Sonita Alleyne, who assist the Foundation to initiate long-term, impactful transformation of the experiences of Black and Brown people across the breadth of the visual arts.

There are other instances in the report where institutional bodies such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) (who use over 19 specific characteristics to identify protected characteristics related to ethnicity), have used different terminology. Where we are using data collected in this way, we have adopted their terminology, if appropriate. Where we have formulated our own data sets, for example on artworks acquired, we have used a framework set by the Office for National Statistics in conjunction with the Commission for Racial Equality, which identifies almost 50 ethnic groups that respondents can use to self-identify. We found that without speaking personally to the thousands of people this report captures, these guidelines were the most exhaustive available. More information on this can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/54zdw9dd>

We note, however, that all terms are limited and often fail to encompass the nuance of individual experiences.

Footnotes

1. Kimberlé Crenshaw, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics', *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, vol. 1989, issue 1, article 8, 1989.
2. See the latest figures on the gender pay gap in the UK here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2020>
3. 'Bridging the gap? An analysis of gender pay gap reporting in six countries' produced in partnership with The Fawcett Society, The Global Institute for Women's Leadership, The Thomson Reuters Foundation and Bowmans funded by the United Nations Foundation, October 2021.
4. See the ACE *Guide to Producing Equality Action Objectives and Plans for NPOs* here: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Equality%20Action%20Guide%20-%20Putting%20equality%20and%20diversity%20into%20action.pdf>
5. Bridget Conor, 'Gender & Creativity: Progress on the Precipice', United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Special Edition, 2021.
6. Rosalind Gill and Andy Pratt, 'In the Social Factory?: Immaterial Labour, Precariousness and Cultural Work', *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 25, issue 7–8, 2008.
7. See the Runnymede Trust's publication 'Race and Racism in English Secondary Schools', 2020, here: <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Runnymede%20Secondary%20Schools%20report%20FINAL.pdf>
8. Mike Savage, 'A New Model of Social Class? Findings from the BBC's Great British Class Survey Experiment', *Sociology*, vol. 47, issue 2, 2013. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0038038513481128>
9. 'Livelihood of Visual Artists Report', Arts Council England, 19 December 2018, <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/livelihoods-visual-artists-report>
10. Mike Savage, *op cit*.



Knowing the Rules, Knowing the Risks

Beth Hughes

My first assignment at university was to go to the local art gallery in pairs to choose an artwork, which we'd later present on to the group.

My study partner and I chose a large, gilt-framed, oil painting by the Flemish painter Frans Snyders (1579–1657) entitled, *A Game Stall* (1625–35). It is a chaotic still life overrun with slaughtered game animals, the central figure a once elegant swan that has been unceremoniously dumped upside-down on a market stall. Though I was revulsed by the work, I probably thought I was being a bit clever by choosing something more brutal than beautiful.

As there was no physical barrier in front of the painting, and with little experience of visiting galleries, I reasoned that you could touch this one; until an invigilator swiftly and sharply instructed me otherwise. I was mortified, everyone stared at me and I was knocked off my stride. I didn't know the rules.

The ability to navigate the unwritten codes of conduct that saturate our society helps you to get on. This is what the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) referred to as 'cultural capital', which together with social capital (the help and advice you have access to through your social circles) and economic capital (your financial assets), form a matrix by which we can identify the power structures that either facilitate or stymie social mobility.¹ In short, it is one of the advantages of social class.

A full understanding of how cultural capital is distributed is particularly pertinent to the arts; as arts workers we are, after all, the gatekeepers to a sizeable chunk of cultural currency, access to which can bolster someone's cultural capital.

Another way of thinking about class is your proximity to risk.² Those who can insulate

themselves from risk have a greater capacity to take chances, while those who find themselves in perpetual proximity to risk have far more to lose. Risk is endemic to the career trajectory of an artist. Financial risk is always present, as the current trickle-down funding models, whereby arts organisations are given the cash to create opportunities for artists, rely on the ability of those organisations to distribute it fairly.

What would the art world look like if the flow of this model was reversed and the money was given to artists before it trickled down to the institution?

In a conversation between artists Tai Shani and Helen Cammock, Shani spelt out the financial realities of being an artist, both in and out of a global pandemic, as she asked, 'why are artists left to fight for grants?' and why are they perpetually held in competition with each other when, as Cammock replied, 'there would be no art world without artists. It needs to be fed, this world that we inhabit.'³ Their conversation made clear the need for art institutions to seek ways to reduce the risk element in an artist's career, not enhance it with meritocratic funding models.

Public art collections are powerful. Choosing to acquire a certain artist's work demonstrates a tangible commitment to safeguarding the perspective of that artist. When an artist's work is brought into a collection, to be held in perpetuity for the nation, this act of 'belief' and recognition provides a boost to that artist's career. Year on year, as art collections acquire new works and curate new exhibitions, they construct a continuing picture of contemporary culture, which adds to complex and contested notions of national identity. These are a quantifiable display of the collection's core values, as they illustrate whose stories the institution deems worthy of historicising. Research shows that the

decision-makers, those in higher positions in arts organisations, are likely to believe in a meritocracy, reasoning that pure talent will always rise to the top of the pile.⁴

Culture has a class crisis. Working-class people are woefully under-represented and further understanding is urgently needed to build a picture of how our art collections represent working-class identities to ensure that the stories told through British collections include the perspectives of working-class artists.⁵

In real terms, what does being middle-class look like in day-to-day life?

A middle-class person is likely to have grown up consistently having their basic needs met; it means they were insulated from the anxieties that a lack of money brings about, that they have the freedom to plan ahead, to build, to invest. It means access to space, to peace and quiet, and to privacy. There are, of course, other issues at play, but on the whole, it means they live in a relatively certain world with a range of choices available to them. They can be independent.

Being working-class means a greater reliance on an interdependent community; neo-liberalism's focus on the individual underestimated the pride in working-class neighbourhoods. When the roof leaks who might have the skills and tools to help? Who is around when the kids need watching for half an hour? Hand-me-down clothes tipped out on the front room floor, your school PE kit having the trace of someone else's name in faded biro on the label, sharing what you have because we look after each other round here. The possibility of moving area to seize opportunities, leaving these networks behind, is fraught with anxiety and for most, simply isn't a viable option; without a financial safety net, social circles are key to your survival.

In my role as a mentor for working-class artists I am often asked about how someone can crack into public art collections. Mentees ask me, 'what should

I write?' 'Who should I talk to?' 'Which organisations do you recommend I approach?'

What they are asking me for is to share the unwritten codes of conduct that mean they will be taken seriously. For some this is obvious. They will already have the contacts, the language and the resources to place themselves where they need to be to get ahead, but so many working-class artists feel like outsiders, unable to play the game. Since turning my focus towards supporting these artists, I regularly encounter the message that when someone becomes an arts worker they become part of the middle classes, a perception that erases working-class artists. Working-class artists exist, they always have.

Jo Spence (1934–92) didn't call herself an artist as she was ambivalent about the title. Her preference for the term 'cultural sniper' instead, was an indication of her sense of being on the outside looking in. Born in Essex to a working-class family, Spence's parents were factory workers who wanted more for their daughter and sent her to secretarial college, which led to her working as a secretary in a photographer's studio. She then began her working life as a commercial photographer, until she discovered that she found the process of making money by taking idealised images of a largely powerless subject distasteful. She developed a socially conscious documentary photography practice, in which she rigorously explored the ways gender is constructed, particularly through photography used in advertising.

Spence's razor-sharp discourse shows how acceptable womanhood equated to middle-class femininity, pure and pristine, and that anything else was deemed simply grotesque. In contrast, there are many phrases in common parlance that equate working-class people with dirt, such as 'common as muck,' and 'salt of the earth', phrases that constitute an underlying social judgement against working-class people.



This is a concern that is acutely observed in the work of socially engaged artist, Shonagh Short. Short's project, *Care Instructions* (2018), explores 'the language of dirt as used in relation to "other" people and places, particularly working-class women and the council estate, and its relationship to the politics of care.'⁶ Working with eight women on the Johnson Fold estate in Bolton, Short instigated an exchange where the women provided care instructions for their most precious items in return for Short doing a bag of their washing. Short swaps the language of dirt for the language of cleaning as an attempt to subvert these ingrained prejudices.

Class is central to Short's work, as it was for Spence, yet until recently, despite clearly stating her artistic intention, the majority of scholarship around Spence's work focused on the theory of photo-therapy that she developed towards the end of her life and her documentation of her cancer treatment, while largely omitting her extensive work around social class:⁷ 'Given my belief that class is a dominant feature in our lives,' she wrote, 'that is where I choose to put the bulk of my work.'⁸

In my role at the Arts Council Collection, I care for two works by Spence; one created as part of the all-female photography collective The Hackney Flashers called *Who's Holding the Baby?* (1978), and one called *Beyond the Family Album* (1979), which was made by Spence exclusively. Both are montage works that juxtapose 'naturalistic photographs with media images to point to the contradictions between women's experience and how it is represented in the media.'⁹ In these works, the hidden labour shouldered by working-class women through childcare, homemaking and generally existing in a patriarchal society is laid bare.

Both works were produced cheaply. *Beyond the Family Album* was photocopied an unknown number of times, laminated, affixed to community centre walls with gaffer tape or with drawing pins

jabbed through the corners, and probably binned at the end. In rejecting the mainstream art world and its restrictive expectations, Spence also rejected its conventional polished display methods. Creating a 'beautiful' object wasn't the point, what was paramount was that the work reached the communities it was intended for.

The Arts Council Collection must adapt to execute the central function of the piece to avoid dampening the work's potency. In her final letter to her long-time collaborator, Terry Dennett, referred to here as 'little treasure', she wrote, 'I don't want to end up as an "Art Gallery Hack" my work will be sterilized if shown out of context, so "little treasure" keep it polemical and socially useful.'¹⁰

Alongside the material considerations of care, the collection must also employ a strategy to care for and protect the essence of the work – its rigid structures must not be allowed to sanitise the work that it is responsible for. When the working-class artist enters a collection, they must find a space that is ready, on all grounds, for them and their work.

There are many works nestling in our public collections that have been subject to a middle-class wash on entering the institution. A quick scan of the object descriptions on my own collection's website reveals notable omissions. However limiting it may sometimes feel for those of us who are decision-makers in positions of power, we need to examine the environment our collections create. Are we contributing to the erasure of working-class voices in the arts? Where class is central to the work, is it mentioned, or is it shrouded in coded terminology? Where class is not central, are reductionist narratives employed?

Neo-liberal discourse dictates that we should all strive to 'better ourselves', that if you are working-class you should aspire to be middle-class. We are rising with our class, not escaping it. Given the state of the arts as it stands, we can only conclude that progress will mean our arts organisations take on a

greater working-class identity in order to more fully represent the society they claim to serve.

Footnotes

1. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique on the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice, Harvard University Press, 1984.
2. Ulrich Beck, *A Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, trans. Mark Ritter, Sage Publications, 1992.
3. Helen Cammock and Tai Shani, *TALKING LOUD*, a conversation for Towner Eastbourne, 18 February 2021.
4. Orian Brook, Dave O'Brien and Mark Taylor, *Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries*, Create London, 2018.
5. Heather Carey, Olivia Gable and Dave O'Brien, *Social Mobility in the Creative Economy: Rebuilding and Levelling Up?*, Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre Report, September 2021.
6. <https://www.shonaghshort.com/>
7. Frances Hatherley, *The Labour of Class Discourse: Jo Spence and the Unmentionableness of Class*, Parse Journal, spring 2019.
8. Jo Spence, *Putting Myself in the Picture: A Political, Personal and Photographic Autobiography*, Camden Press, 1986.
9. *Three Perspectives on Photography*, Hayward Gallery exhibition catalogue, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1979, p.80.
10. Jo Spence, letter written in June 1992, held in the Jo Spence Memorial Archive, Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada.



Who Belongs at Art School?

Dr Sylvia Theuri

Education in Britain is a social institution, and reflects the ways in which power and privilege are held by dominant groups in society.¹ Thus, inequalities and discriminatory practices based on race, ethnicity and gender are at play within educational structures, which negatively affect Black and Brown women art students. I have traced these practices through my research, as well as my own experiences as a student, teacher and academic in the British educational system.

Critical Race Theory (CRT), a framework of academic analysis, started in the US in the 1970s to understand the intersections of race and law and to advance racial justice, highlights that, '...the various theories of positivism, post positivism, and constructivism have faced criticism for being derived from European-based perspectives and rarely addressing other-race viewpoints'.² CRT stresses the importance of including experiential knowledge of Black and Brown groups, as a way to counteract research that predominantly focuses on European-based perspectives.

Storytelling as a means of sharing one's lived experience is a central tenet of CRT and is a methodology that I employ here to discuss racial inequalities in art education and their impact on Black students and Black women in particular. This is my experience of art education as a Black African woman.

I came to the UK as an immigrant; I was born in Kenya and moved to England as a child. My mother is a medical doctor and I grew up in a single parent family. My childhood years were spent in inner-city London. I attended a local comprehensive secondary school, followed by FE College and I then studied for my undergraduate degree in art history at a post-92 university – one of the 'new' or

'modern' universities that had been granted university status through the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992. After graduating from my degree in 2005, I went on to do a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and then spent two years as a secondary school art and design teacher. These personal experiences, including my art and design educational journey, place me as coming from a particular social and cultural context. I think it's important to clarify this before I move on to talk about racial inequalities in art education and their effect on Black women.

Throughout my childhood and adolescent years, my mother was incredibly supportive of my interests in art and design. She encouraged me to express myself creatively, to draw, paint, make and write. And so, at home, I was at times a painter, at times an illustrator, at other times a writer and on many occasions, all three at once. In my mother's home, I belonged.

When, a few years after completing my undergraduate degree in art history (where I graduated with a first), I arrived at the PGCE open day, I approached the desk with information about the art and design course I was interested in applying for. The two white members of staff at the desk were deep in conversation as I walked towards them. I'm not sure if they noticed me standing there, but they continued talking for several minutes before one of them finally turned to me and introduced themselves as the course leader. I explained that I had come to the open day to find out more about the course and what it entailed in terms of its structure. The course leader looked at me and asked me whether I realised that the minimum requirement for entry

was a 2:2 degree classification.³ As a young, recent graduate with limited experience of the arts and art education sector, I was extremely surprised by this comment. I hadn't asked about the course requirements as these were readily available on the university website. I asked for a brochure and quickly left the room, holding back my tears. Once outside I began to think about the course leader's comments, and became increasingly upset. To me, it was clear that she had looked at me and had decided from my physical appearance that I would not be aware of, or have achieved, the entry requirements for the course. This experience left me feeling that as a young, Black woman, I did not belong in that space. I made up my mind that I would not apply for that course.

My experience highlights the admissions and applications process of higher education (HE) as one that is fraught with exclusions, misrecognitions, inequalities and injustices.⁴ It also brings to the forefront issues in relation to who is 'allowed to belong' in the spaces of art education. In their report, 'Art for a few: exclusions and misrecognitions in higher education admissions practices', researchers Penny Jane Burke and Jackie McManus identified the HE art and design space as one that inscribes a worthy and 'typical' art student as a person whose characteristics are 'historically associated with white euro-centric forms of masculinity'.⁵ The result of this is that students who do not fit this profile are 'othered' or considered 'problematic' within the academy. The HE art and design space is white, 'Euro-centric' and one in which Black and Brown students are often only given space at the margins. The story I have shared highlights the intersectionality of being Black and female in a space designed only to accommodate white, male and middle-class bodies, a space in which Black women 'are almost always at odds with the existing structure...a body in a system that has

not become accustomed to (our) presence or (our) physicality'.⁶

Research by Dr Nicola Rollock, Professor of Social Policy & Race at King's College London, has explored the ways in which Black people navigate a 'white world',⁷ a process that involves the separation of oneself from characteristics typically considered 'Black', and carries with it an expectation that Black people change the way they dress, speak and behave. This forces Black women into the impossible position of having to perform white masculinity in order to be successful. Yet even with this forced performance and re-embodiment, our position in the White world is still 'fragile and subject to interrogation'.⁸ Research shows that Black women in particular are subjected to unique forms of surveillance because of our race and gender, and we are significantly more likely to be scrutinised, marginalised and mistreated in white spaces.⁹ My own experience shows that while I could have been considered as having met certain 'requirements' expected for entry into postgraduate art and design study – a parent in a 'middle-class profession', a 'good' degree in the arts – my body was still considered out of place and as a result I was scrutinised and then excluded from the space of art education.¹⁰

The experience of Black and Brown students being 'othered' in educational spaces is at odds with the idea of education as a meritocracy, where hard work is seen as equating with success and there are equal opportunities for all.¹¹ This notion of education as 'meritocracy' is significantly disrupted through the articulation of experiences of racism and discrimination by Black and Brown students.

A diverse student body brings with them ideas that require a decolonised educational space: a decentring of European norms is necessary in order to give equal room and weighting to non-European knowledge systems and ways of being.



The students challenge the spaces where white teachers have ‘traditionally occupied positions of authority and privilege’.¹² The experience I have shared, highlighted repeatedly in my own research and others, concludes that education is an institution in which the racial inequalities of society are replicated.¹³ It also brings to the forefront the limitations that exist as a result of a historically Eurocentric education system, the gatekeeping that is inherent within educational institutions and the general climate of disempowerment and discouragement that ensue for Black and Brown students as a result of the socio-political climate in which all these issues operate.

In the late 1990s the pedagogical theorist Gloria Ladson-Billings wrote an article entitled ‘Just what is critical race theory doing in a nice field like education?’¹⁴ Ladson-Billings identified the ways in which CRT could be fully utilised in education, calling educators to action, not only to expose racism in education but also to propose radical solutions for change. She highlighted that at its core, CRT pushes for more than diversifying the curriculum. Rather, it insists on speaking truth to power, an action that runs the risk of discomfort, vilification and the permanent status of outsider for those who speak out. In sharing my experience here and through my work as a researcher I engage in storytelling as a way of speaking out and exposing racism in education, highlighting the ways in which art education excludes Black and Brown women art students.

Footnotes

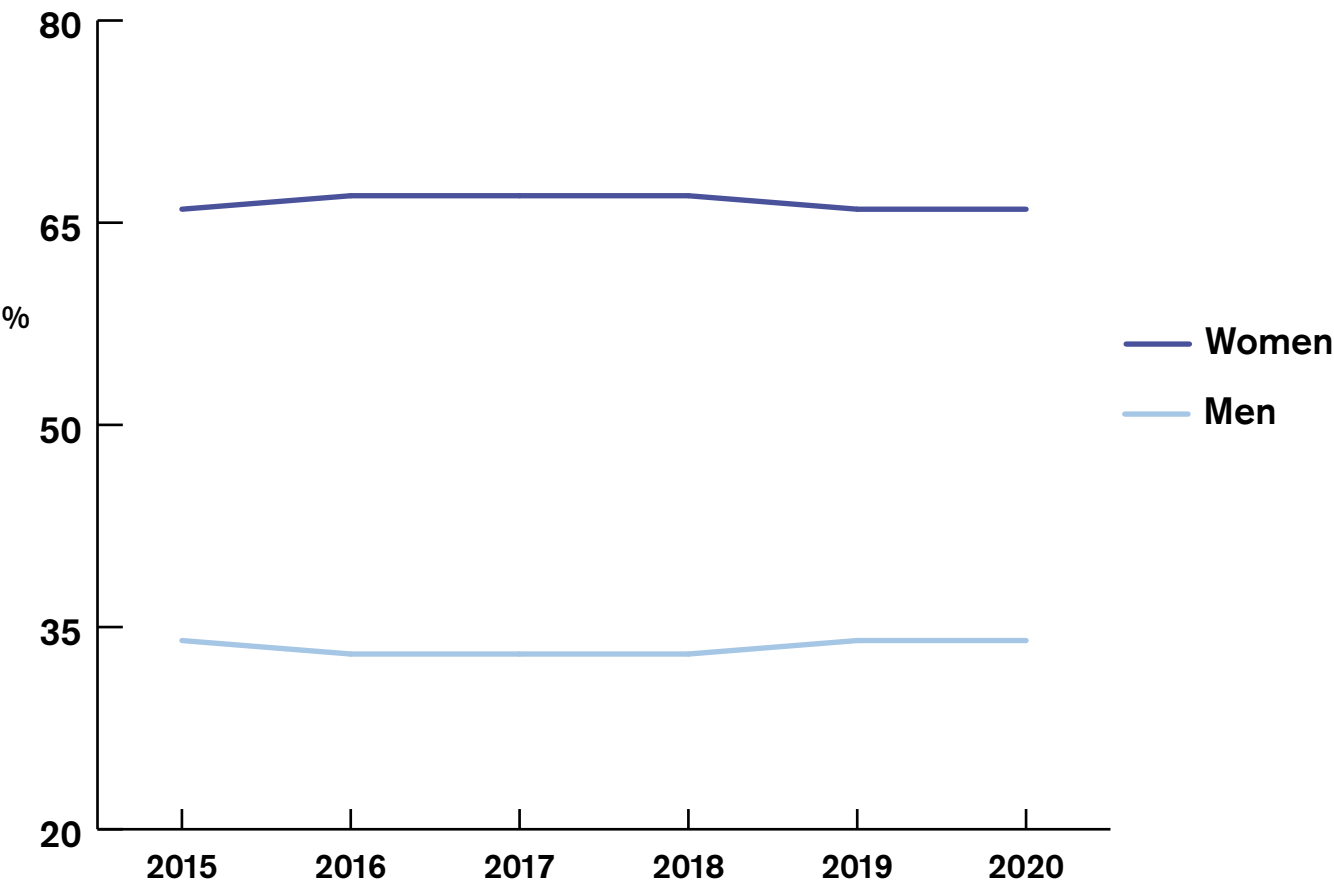
1. David Gillborn, *Racism and Education, Coincidence or Conspiracy?*, Routledge, 2008.
2. Edward Taylor, ‘Critical Race Theory and Interest Convergence in the Desegregation of Higher Education’ in Laurence Parker, Donna Deyhle and Sofia Villenas (eds) *Race Is...Race Isn’t, Critical Race Theory and Qualitative Studies in Education*, Westview Press, 1999, p.181.
3. I share my degree classification here as it is relevant to the experience I discuss.
4. Penny Jane Burke and Jackie McManus, ‘Art for a few: exclusions and misrecognitions in higher education admissions practices’, NALN Research Report, 2009.
5. Penny Jane Burke and Jackie McManus, ‘Art for a few: exclusions and misrecognitions in higher education admissions practices’, *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, vol. 32, issue 5, 2011.
6. bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, Routledge, 1994, p.135.
7. ‘White world’ is a term used to ‘encapsulate the various normalized layers of White Supremacy as it oscillates, without warning, between named, explicit and aggressive acts and those which are more subtle and hidden’. See Nicola Rollock, David Gillborn, Carol Vincent and Stephen Ball, ‘The Public Identities of the Black Middle Classes: Managing Race in Public’, *Sociology*, 2011, p.1091.
8. Rollock et al., *op cit.*, p.1085.
9. Verónica Caridad Rabelo, Kathrina J Robotham, and Courtney L McCluney, “Against a sharp white background”: How Black women experience the white gaze at work’, *Gender, Work & Organization*, vol. 28, issue 5, 2021.
10. A good degree has been defined as first or upper second-class honours. See John TE Richardson, ‘The attainment of ethnic minority students in UK higher education’, *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 33, issue 1, 2008.
11. Andrew Pilkington, *Institutional racism in the academy, a case study*, Trentham Books Limited, 2011.
12. Dennis Atkinson and Paul Dash, ‘Introduction: Art in Education, Critical and Social Practice’ in Dennis Atkinson and Paul Dash (eds), *Social and Critical Practices in Art Education*, Institute of Education Press, 2005, p.xiv.
13. Gloria Ladson-Billings, ‘Just What Is Critical Race Theory and What’s It Doing in a Nice Field Like Education?’ in Laurence Parker, Donna Deyhle and Sofia Villenas (eds), *Race Is... Race Isn’t, Critical Race Theory and Qualitative Studies in Education*, Westview Press, 1999.
14. Gloria Ladson-Billings, *op cit.*



Evidences

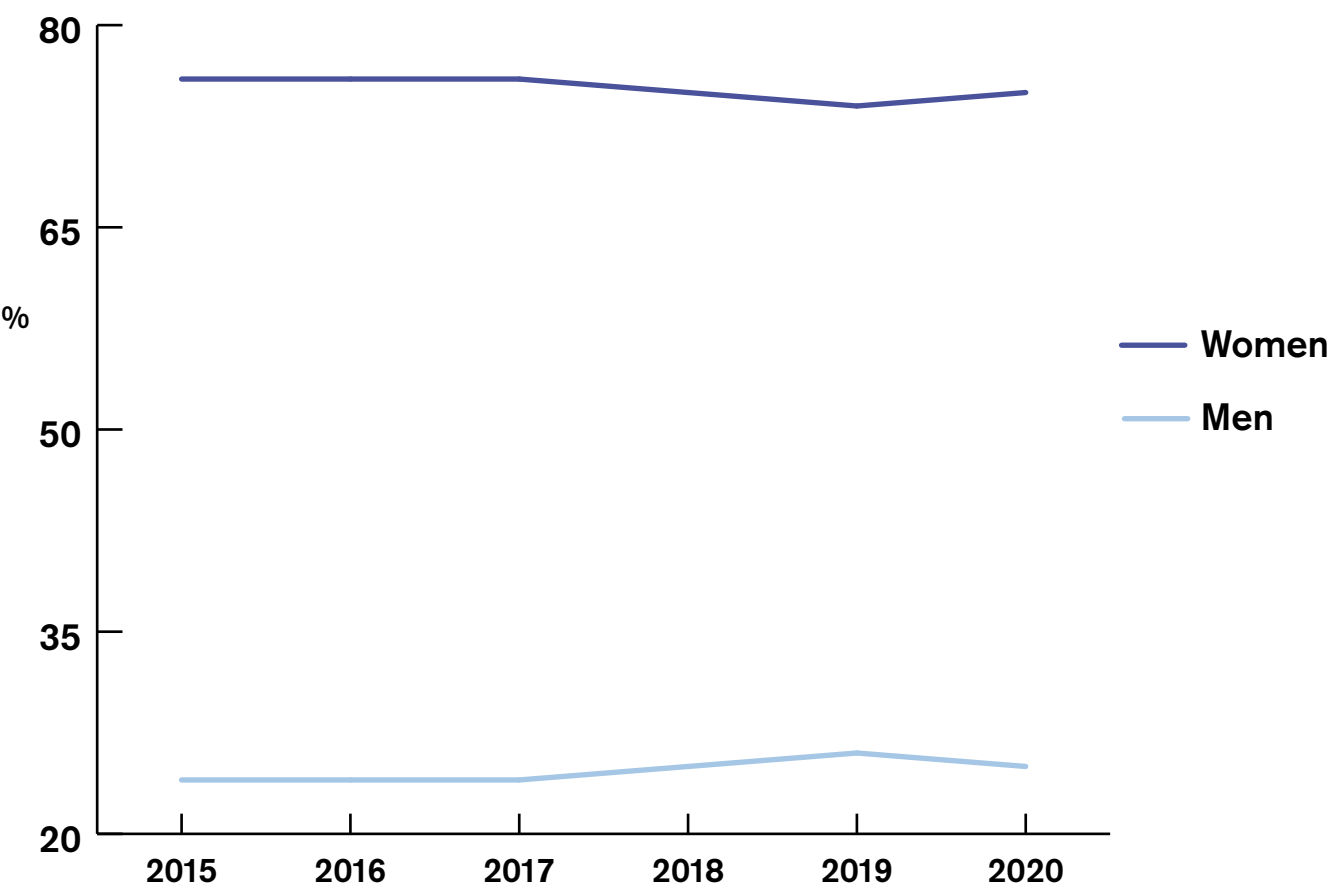


Evidence 1
Art & Design Subjects at GCSE
Gender



In the 2019–20 academic year, the number of students in England studying Art & Design subjects for their GCSEs rose by almost 10,000 from the previous year to 190,725. The percentage of students who are recorded as women remained stable at 66%. Since 2015, when we began collecting this data, there has been very little change.

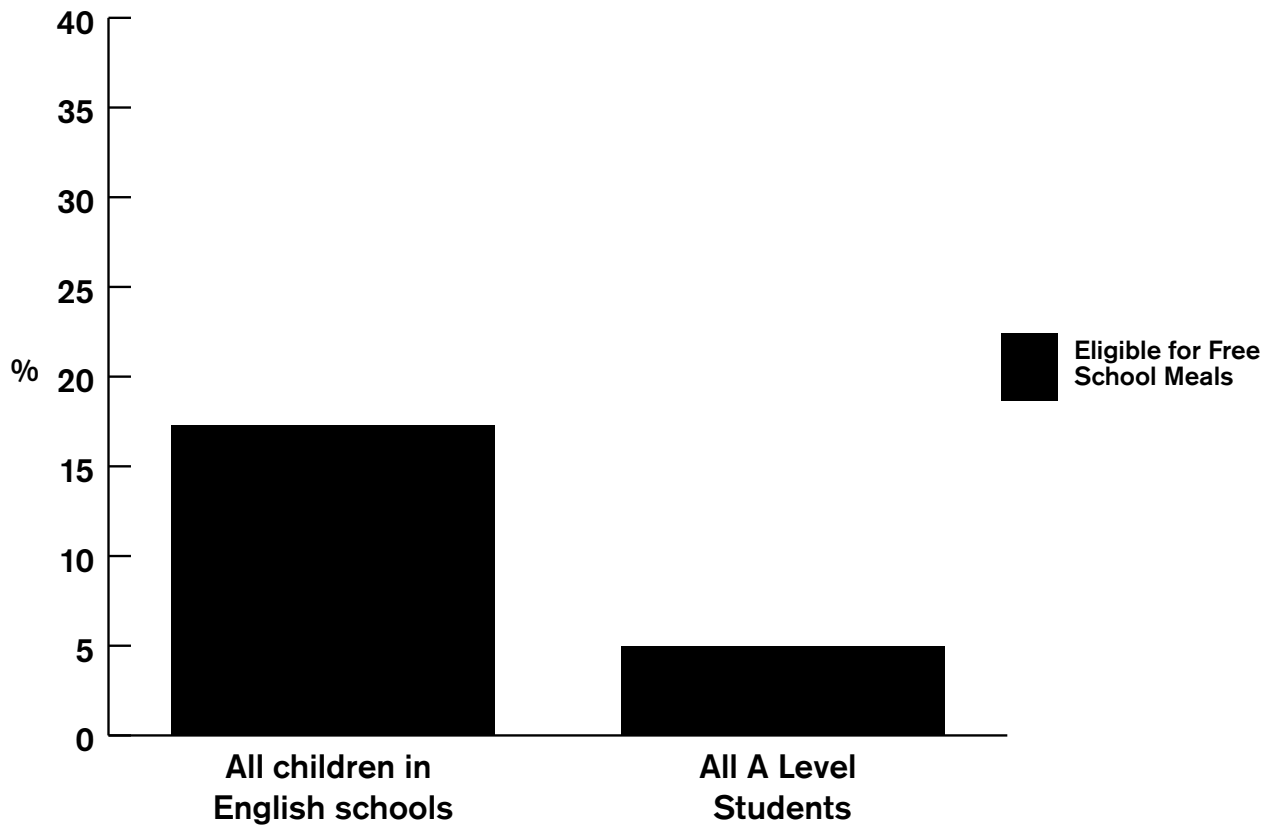
Evidence 2
Art & Design Subjects at A Level
Gender



In 2020 the total number of students studying Art & Design subjects in England dropped from 39,220 in 2019 to 38,915. Of these, the number of students recorded as women increased by 1% to 75%. Since 2015 there have been incremental changes, but no evidence of significant trends over time.



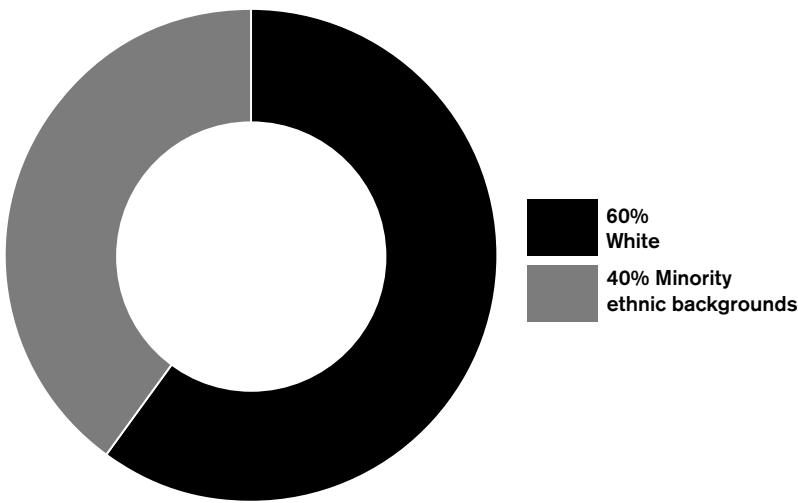
Evidence 2.1
Art & Design Subjects at A Level
Socio-economic



In 2020, 17.3% of all children in English schools were eligible for ‘free school meals’ (FSM), which means that their total family income was less than £16,190 (notably, this percentage increased to almost 21% in 2021). In sixth form, the percentage of children eligible for FSM falls to 4.97% across all subject areas. The percentage of students studying Art & Design subjects who were eligible for FSM was the same as the percentage of students across all subjects, which was 4.97%. Surprisingly, this was a higher percentage than students undertaking Mathematics, which was 4.48%. This challenges the perceived logic of poorer students selecting more traditional subject choices due to their links with vocational or educational pathways, and reinforces the popularity of Art & Design subjects for students from poorer backgrounds. However, there is still a substantial drop-off of students from poorer backgrounds who go on to take A Levels. Since the normal pathway to a career as an artist is via a university programme, it is important to recognise that poverty affects A Level participation, and ultimately inhibits creative careers.



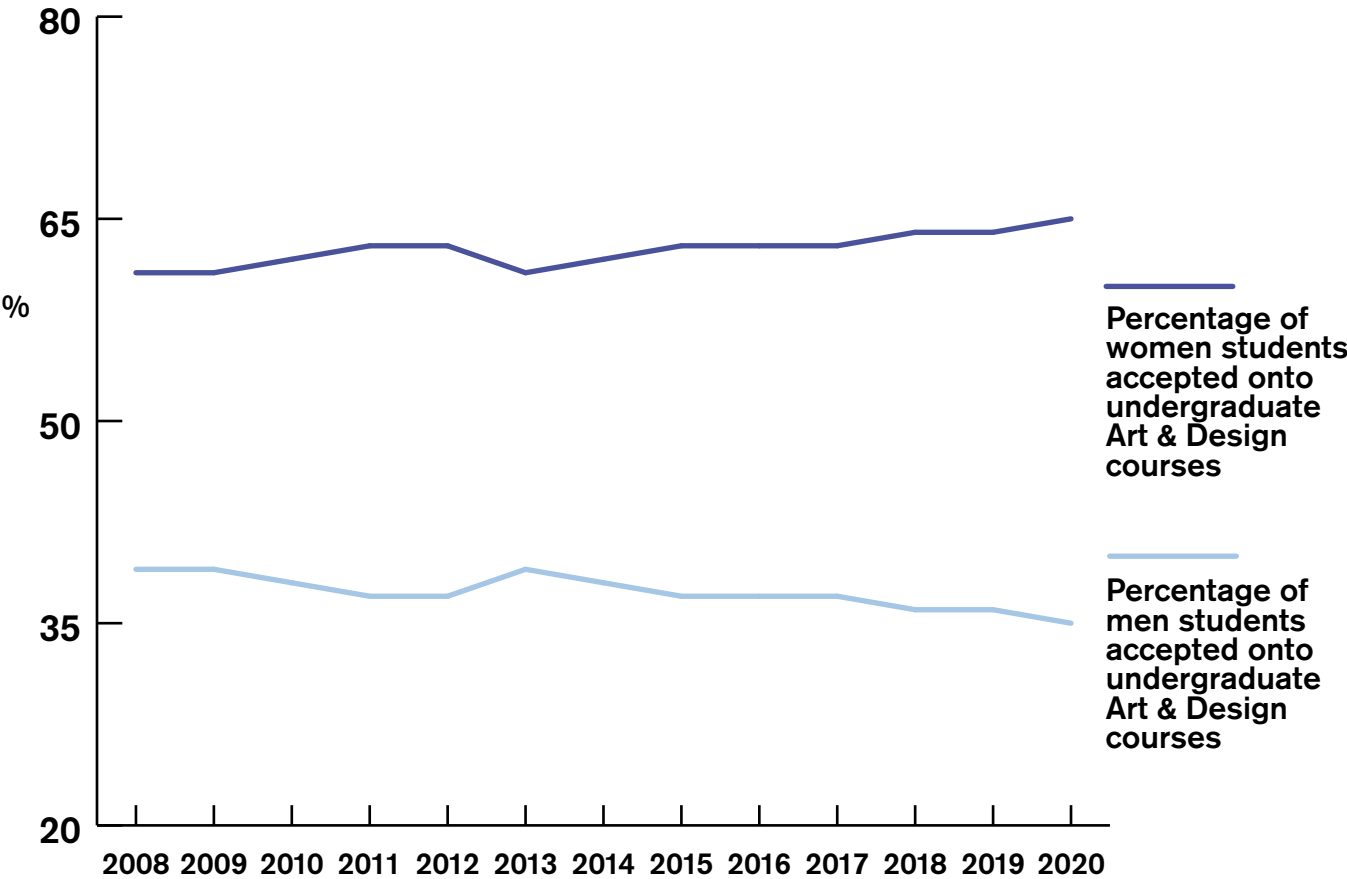
Evidence 2.2
Art & Design Subjects at A Level
Ethnicity



Just over 60% of the children and young adults studying Art & Design A Levels in the 2019–20 academic year were white. Slightly less than 40% of children came from ‘minority ethnic backgrounds’. This was higher than students across all subjects recorded as being from ‘minority ethnic backgrounds’, which was 32.2% in English secondary schools in the same period. It is notable that such a high number of non-white children are selecting creative subjects. The question of how this is reflected in curriculum content, and how these students are supported in post-secondary pathways requires further research. More research is required into Black and Brown women studying Art & Design subjects at A Level.



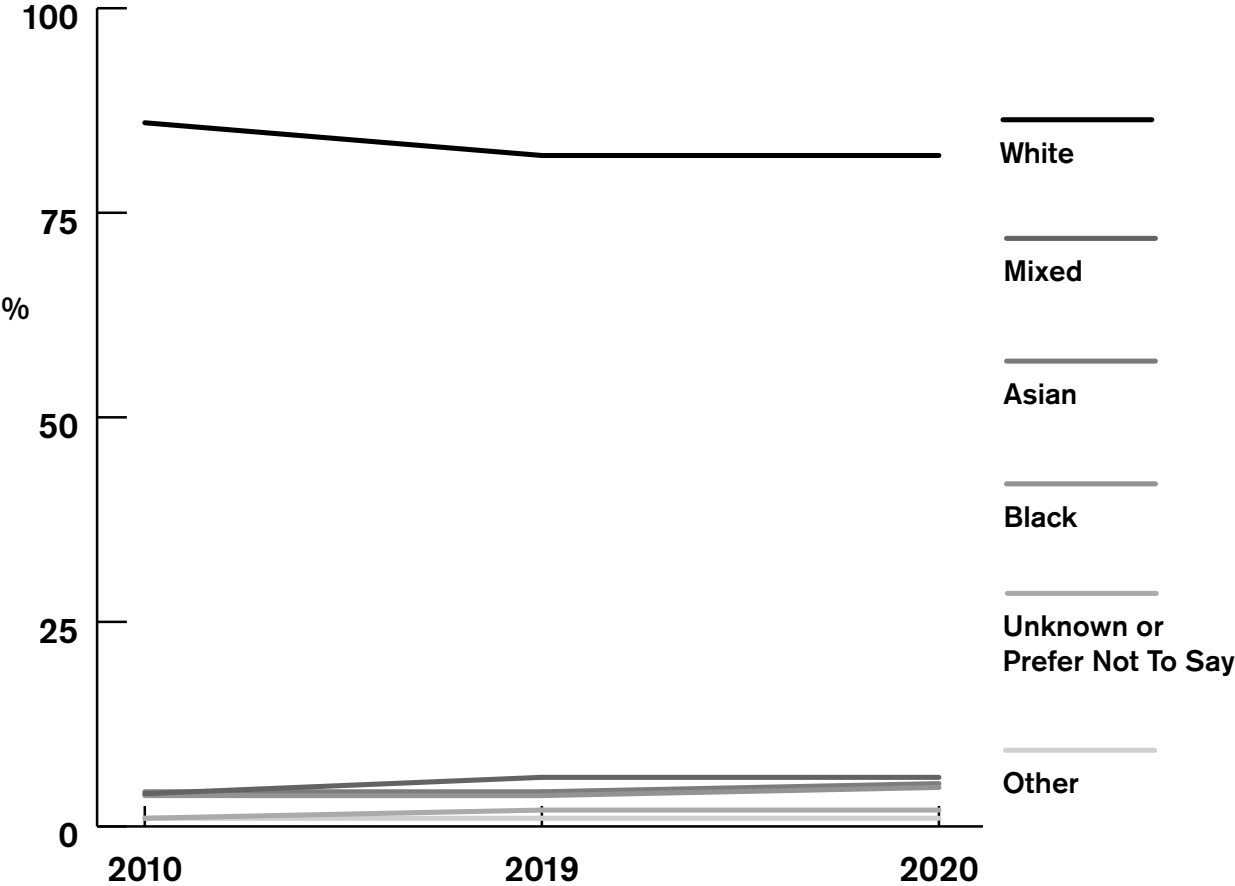
Evidence 3
Undergraduate Art & Design students
Gender



In 2020, 65% of students undertaking undergraduate Art & Design courses in England were women. This was a 1% increase from the previous year. There has been an incremental shift towards more women students studying Art & Design subjects, from just over 60% in 2008.



Evidence 3.1
Undergraduate Art & Design students
Ethnicity

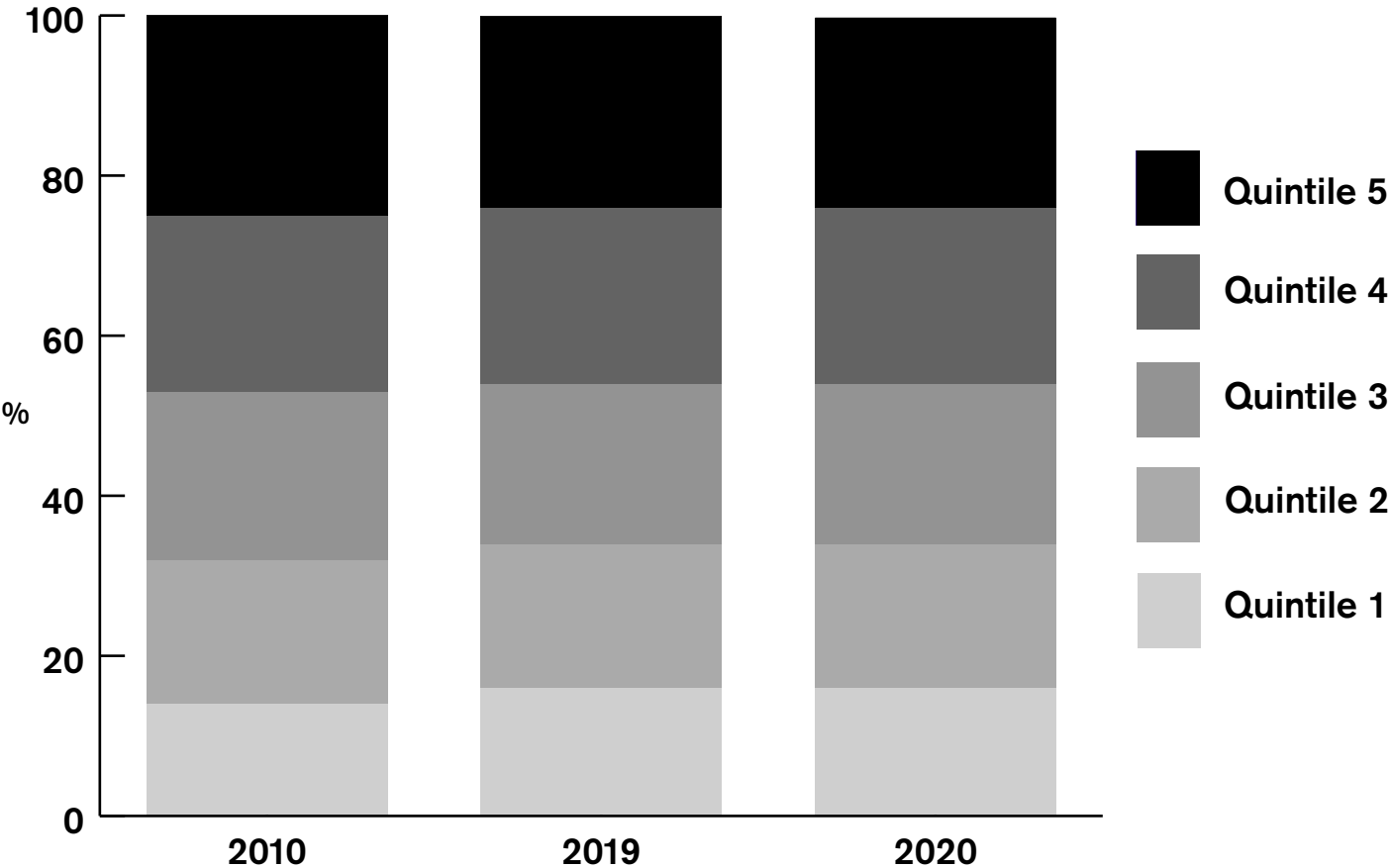


In 2020, almost 18% of all students in undergraduate Art & Design courses identified as Black, Asian, Mixed race or 'Other'. Since 2010, the percentage of undergraduate students on Art & Design programmes in England who identify as white has fallen from 86% to 82%. This is close to the most recent available data from the 2011 census, which showed that 85.3% of the English population identified as white (the results from the 2021 census will be published in spring 2022).

While to some extent, this reflects a longstanding trend towards a more ethnically diverse population – in 1991, the percentage of people identifying as white was 94.1% – we know that younger populations are more diverse. It is therefore notable that there is a halving of Black and Brown people in the three years between studying Art & Design at GCSE, and on undergraduate programmes. More research is required into Black and Brown women studying Art & Design subjects at undergraduate level.

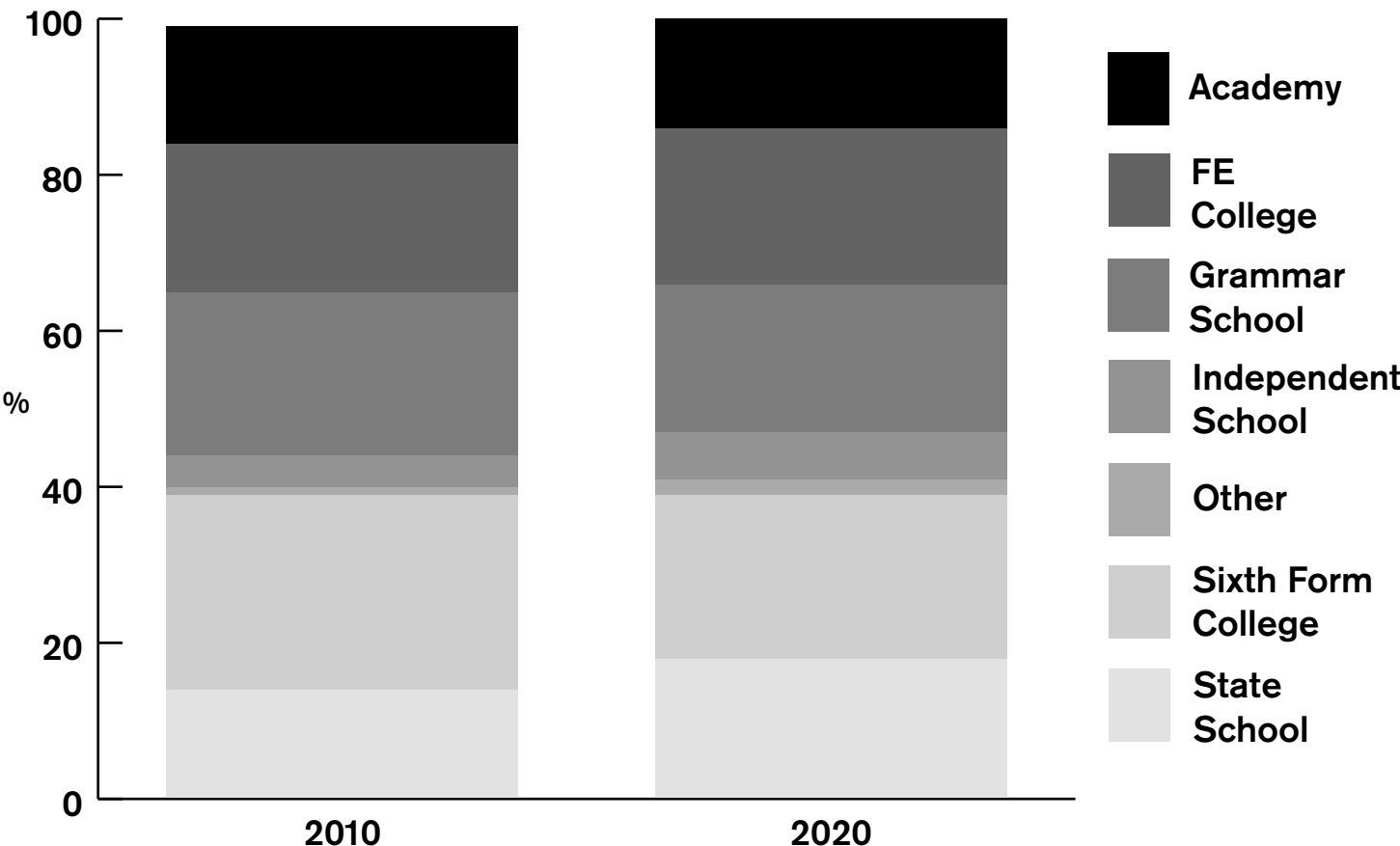


Evidence 3.2
Undergraduate Art & Design students
Socio-economic



This chart reflects data collected on entry to Art & Design undergraduate programmes, associated with relative deprivation collected using postcode data. Quintile 5 are students who come from the least deprived areas, and Quintile 1, from the most deprived. In 2020, 16% of accepted applicants onto Art & Design undergraduate courses were identified as coming from the highest indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) – a 2% increase in the last decade. 23% of students came from areas with the least deprivation – though this has fallen by 2% in the last ten years.

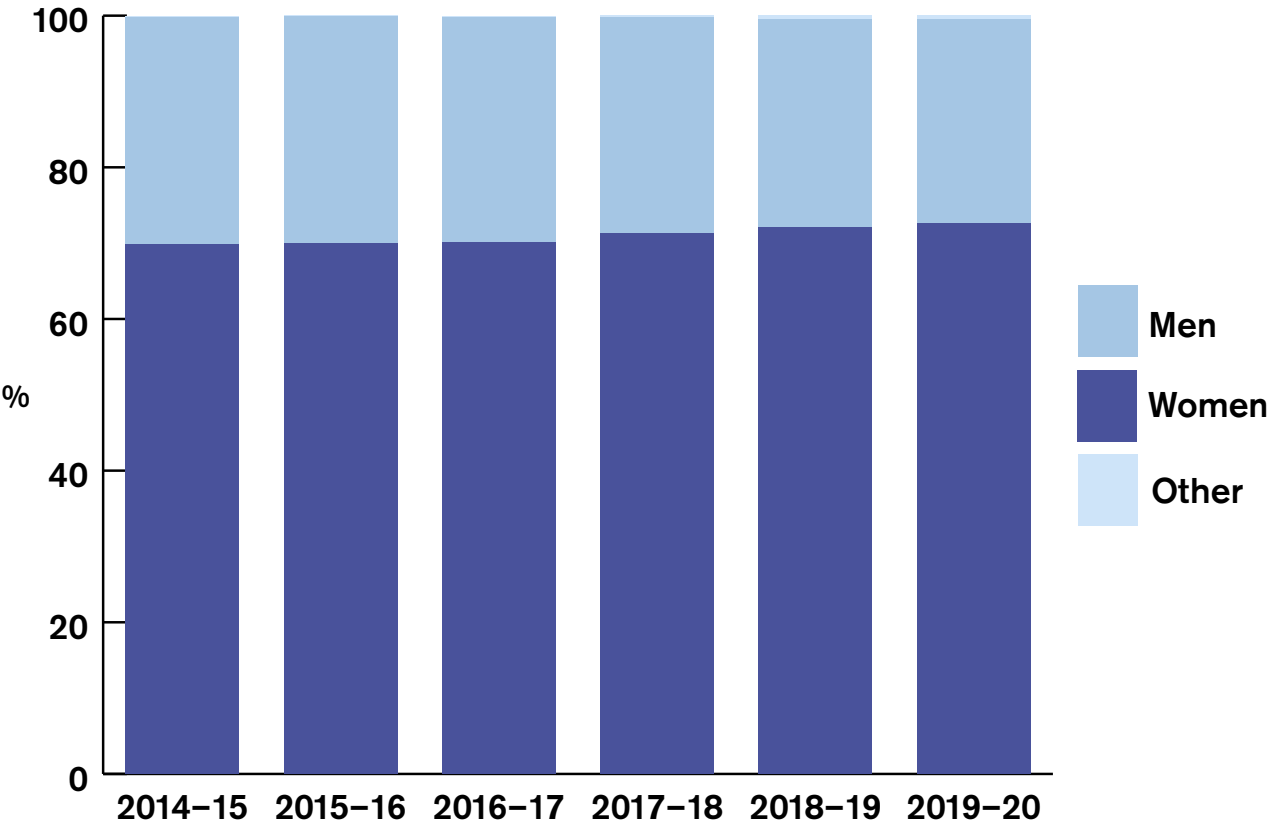
Evidence 3.3
Undergraduate Art & Design students
School Type



About 6% of all accepted applications to undergraduate Art & Design programmes came from students who underwent their secondary education at independent (private) schools, a figure that is similar to the national average of 6.5%, and that has increased from 4% in 2010. The remaining six school types are variously free education programmes that are overseen either by local governments or by the Department for Education.



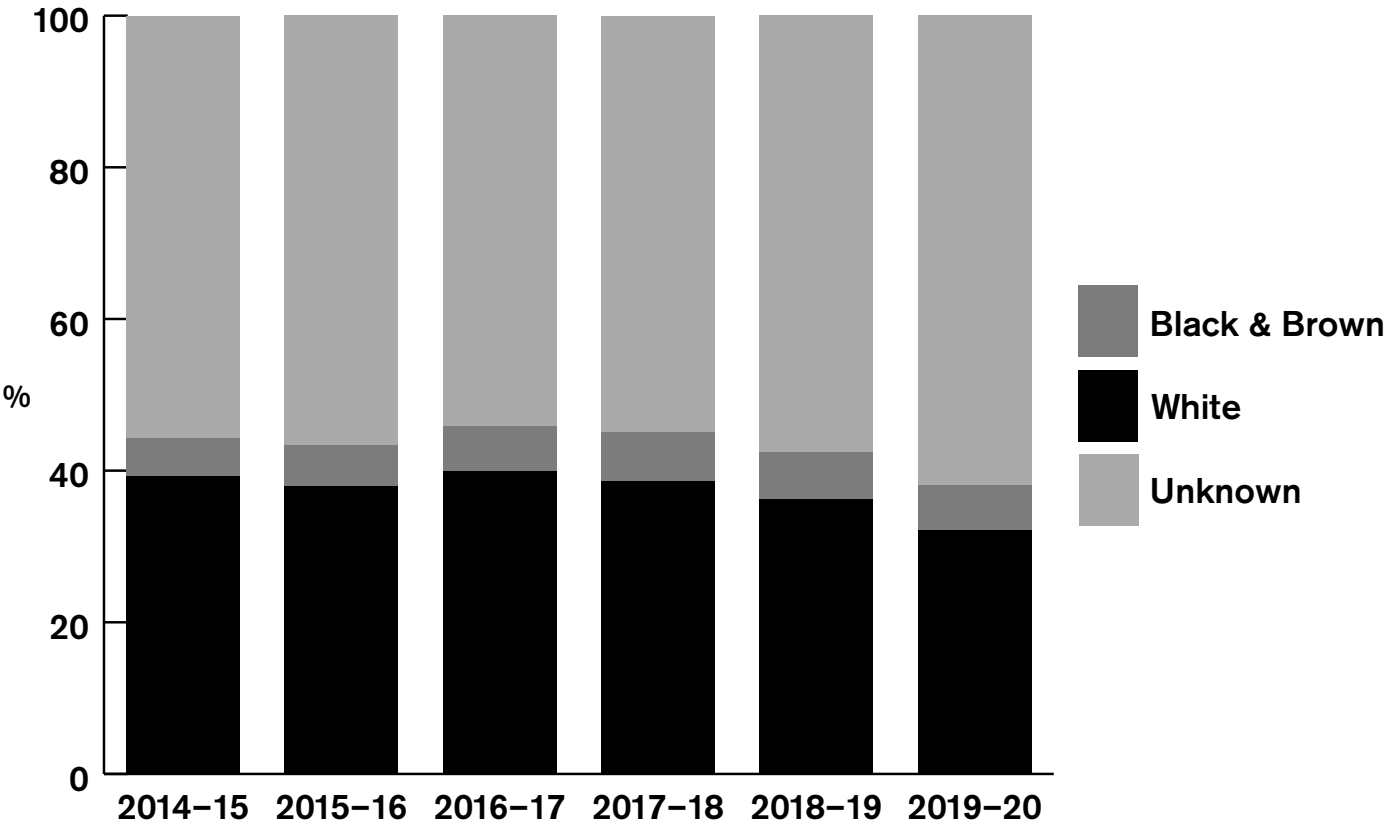
Evidence 4
Graduates Studying Postgraduate Courses
in Art & Design
Gender



73% of graduates were women in the 2019–20 academic year, an increase of 1% from the previous year. The percentage of men remained the same and almost 5% of people identify their gender as 'other'. This has continued to increase since we first began mapping data in 2014–15, when the percentage of women studying postgraduate Art & Design courses was 70%.



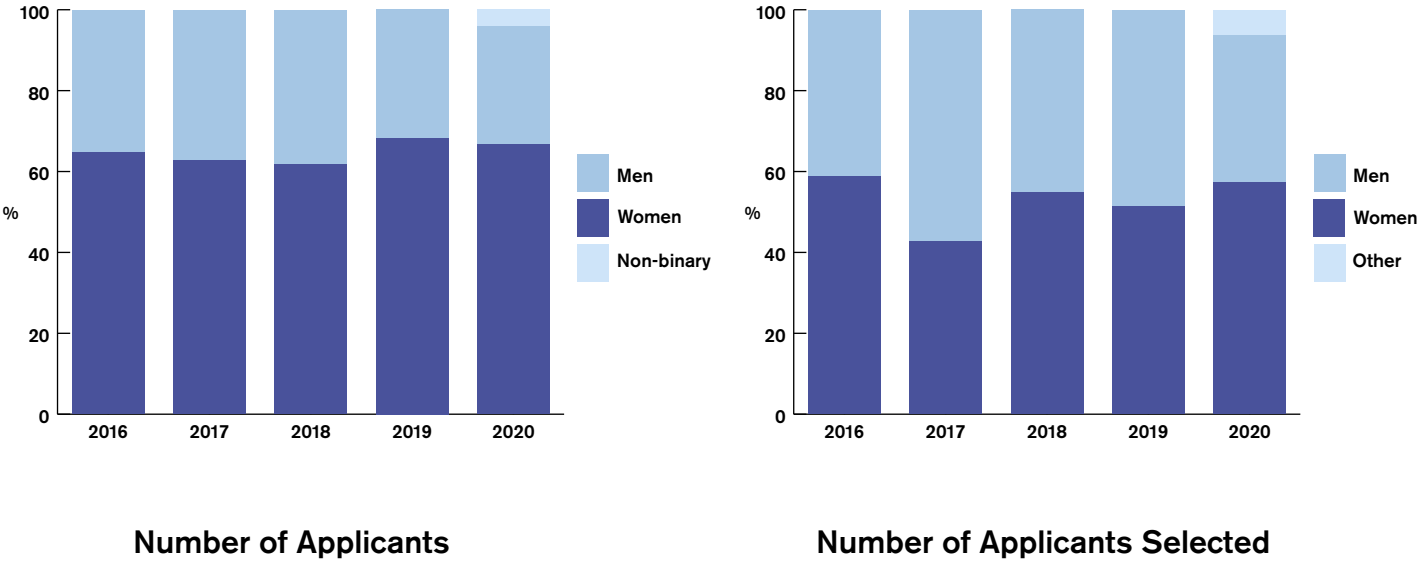
Evidence 4.1
Graduates Studying Postgraduate Courses
in Art & Design
Ethnicity



Of the data that is known, 32% of graduates studying postgraduate courses in Art & Design are white and 6% are Black and Brown. However, as 62% of students have not had data collected on ethnicity, we were not able to adequately reflect on the ethnicity of postgraduate students in Art & Design programmes. The 'unknown' component of this data has increased from 56% in 2014–15. The percentage of Black and Brown people has slightly increased from 5% in 2014–15.



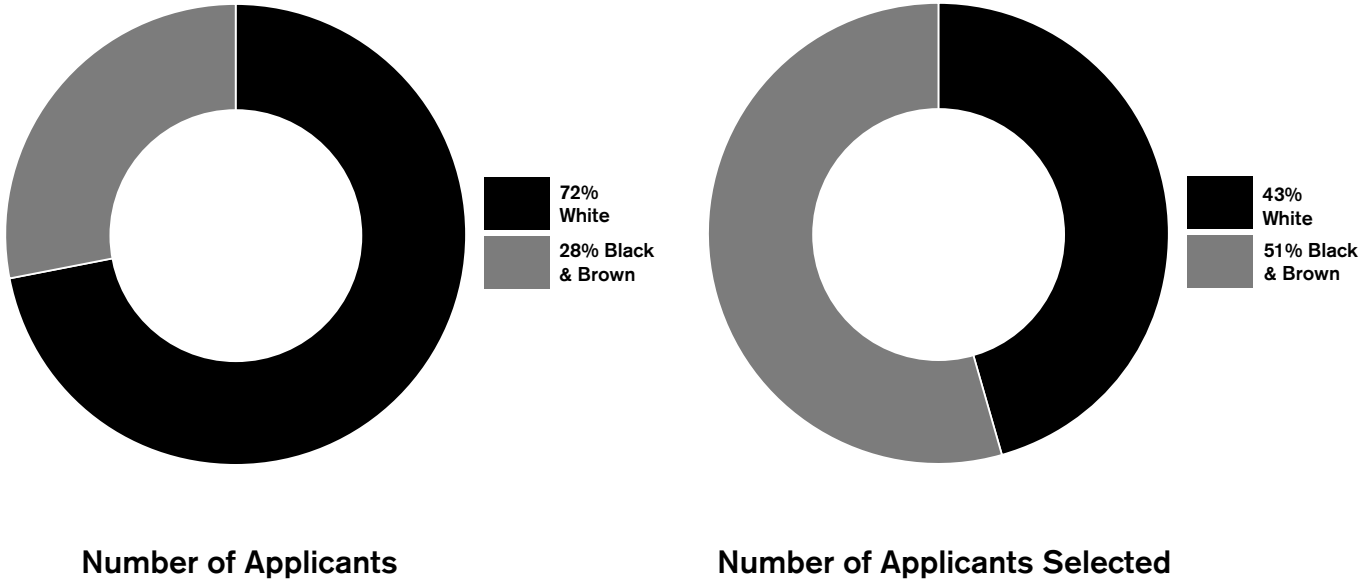
Evidence 5
New Contemporaries
Gender



There were almost 1,600 applications to New Contemporaries. Around one third of applicants did not specify a gender or ethnicity. Of the remaining two thirds, 67% were women (1% less from 2019, but higher than the ten-year average of 63%), 29% were men and 4% were non-binary. Of the 33 selected artists, 58% were women (higher than the ten-year average of 51%), 36% were men, and 12% were either non-binary or did not state a gender identity.



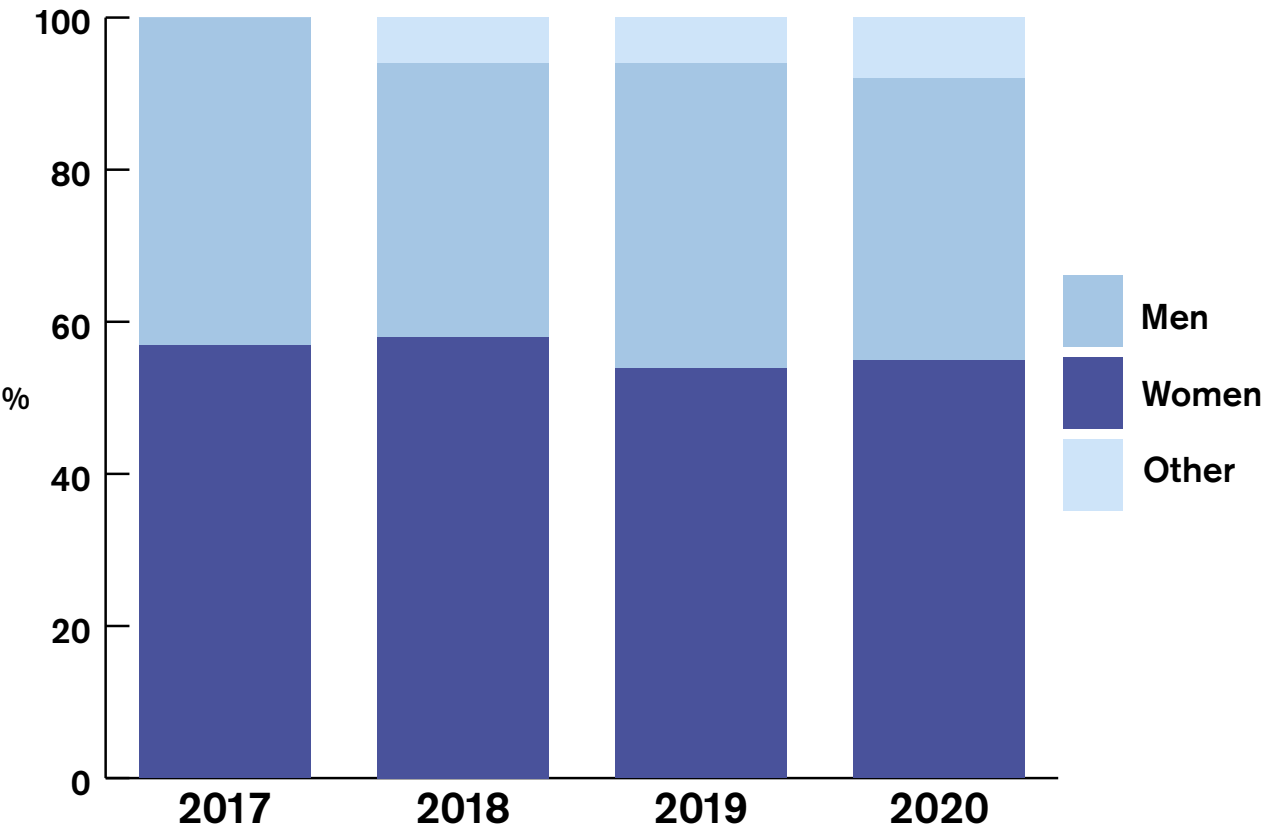
Evidence 5.1
New Contemporaries
Ethnicity



Of the two thirds of applicants who specified their ethnicity, 72% stated their ethnicity as white, and 28% identified as Black and Brown. Of the selected artists, 43% identified as white, 6% did not declare their ethnicity and 51% were Black and Brown artists. We were only able to report on data from the most recent year.



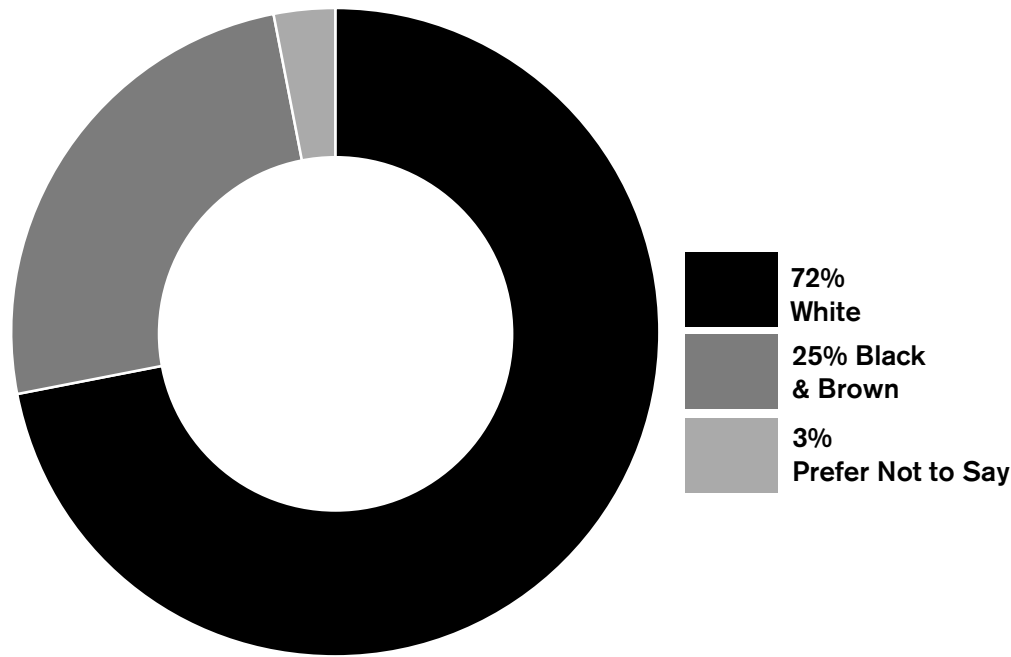
Evidence 6
Artists Awarded Grants by the Arts Council
Gender



Funding to artists increased to £22,905,021, up from £6,044,069 in 2019, for a total of 1,662 projects (462 in the previous year). This substantial increase in artists' grants is due to the Access Support Fund provided by Arts Council England (ACE) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. 55% of these grants went to women artists (up from 54% the previous year, slightly reversing a downward trend since 2017), and 4% to non-binary artists (3% in 2019). 4% of applicants did not share their gender identity (also 3% in 2019). 37% of these grants went to men, a decrease from 40% in 2019.



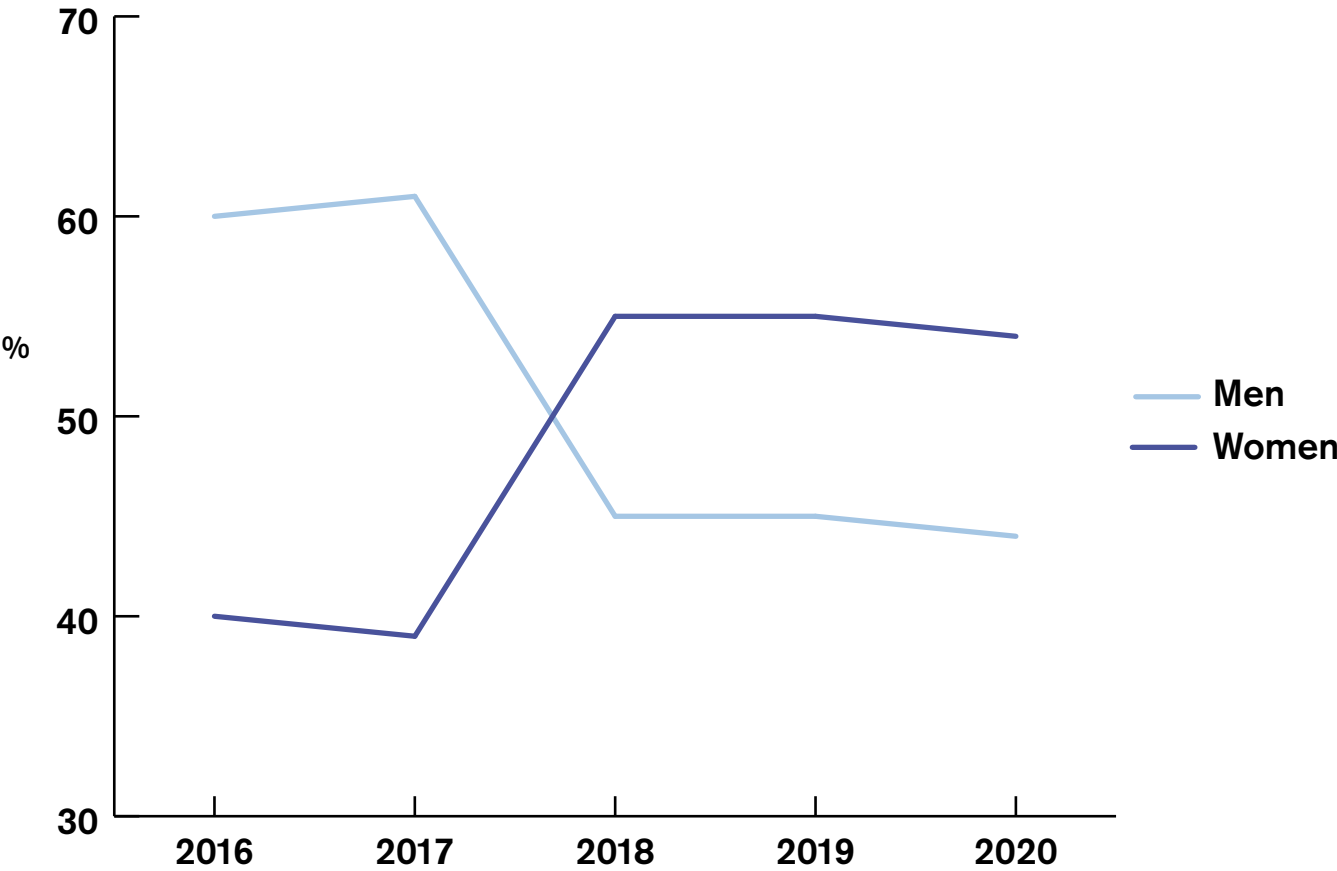
Evidence 6.1
Artists Awarded Grants by the Arts Council
Ethnicity



72% of funds went to white artists, 3% did not share their ethnicity and 25% went to Black and Brown artists.



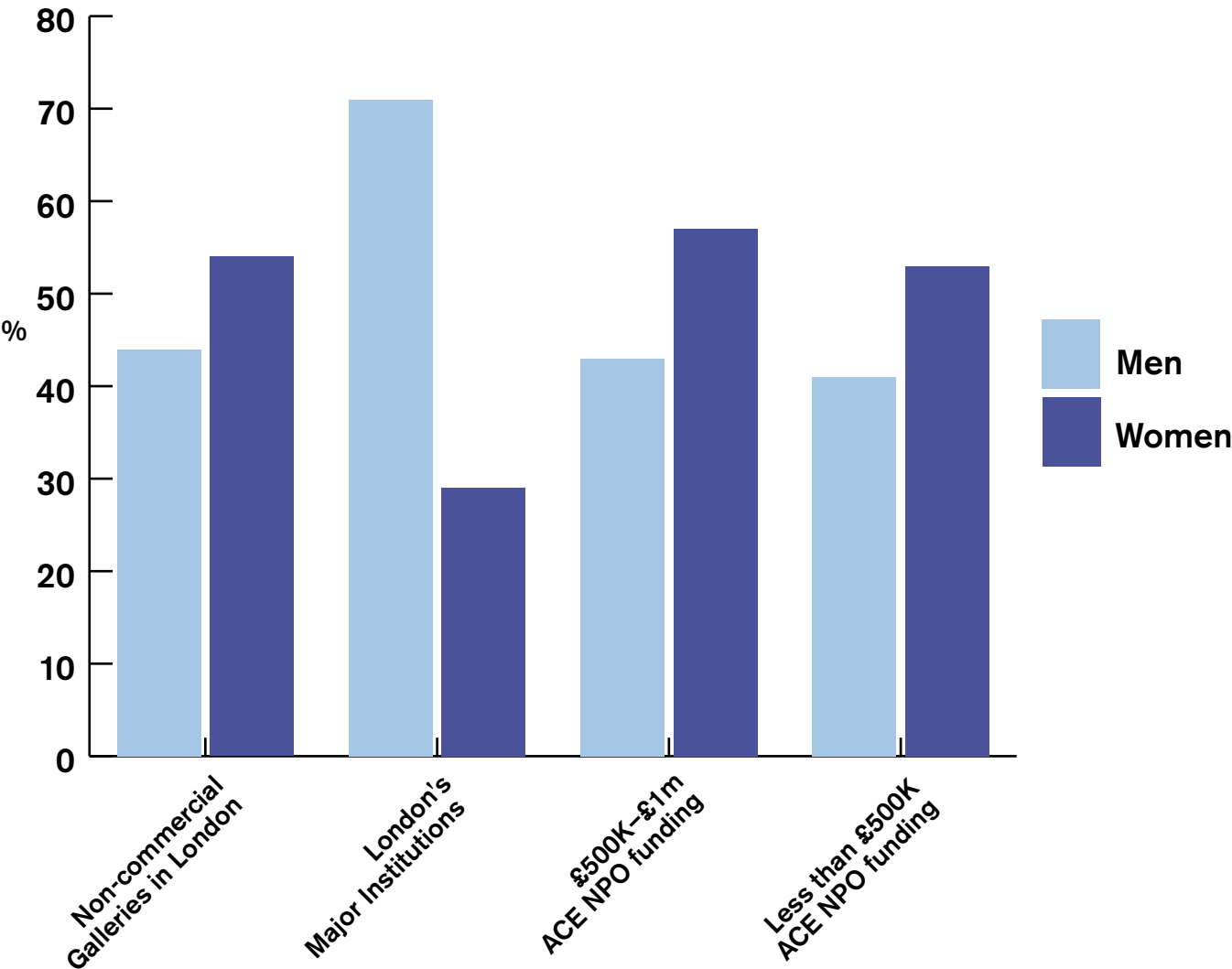
Evidence 7
Solo Exhibitions in Non-commercial
Galleries in London
Gender



54% of solo exhibitions in all non-commercial galleries in London were by women in 2020, a 1% decrease from the previous two years (and 16% lower than the percentage of women on postgraduate programmes).



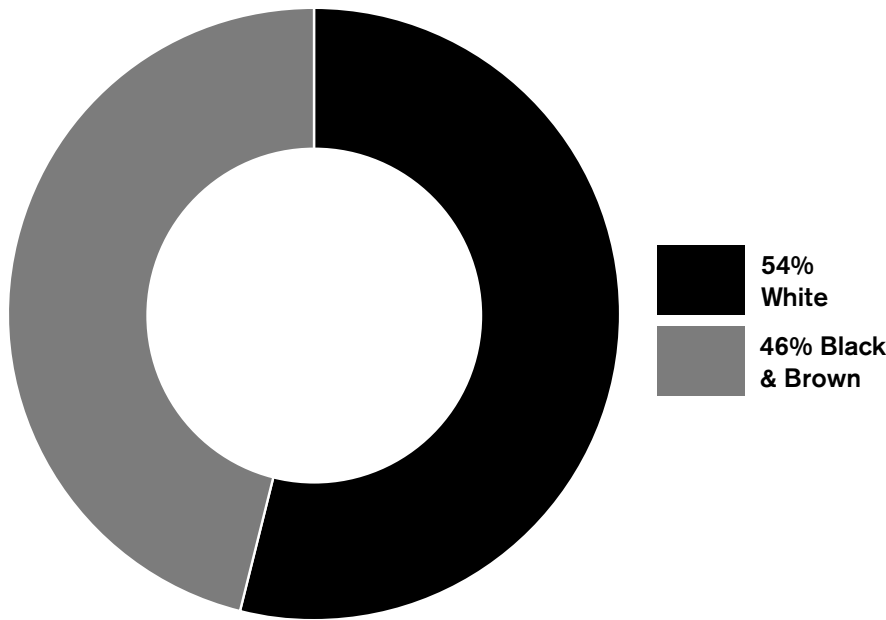
Evidence 7.1
Solo Exhibitions in Non-commercial
Galleries in London
Gender



In the same 12-month period, 71% of solo exhibitions at London's major institutions (defined as those receiving more than £1 million in funding) were by male artists, which marked a substantial increase in solo shows by male artists, corresponding to a decrease in exhibitions by women artists (29%) as compared to the previous year, during which the percentage was 44%. Institutions receiving between £500,000 and £1 million hosted seven solo exhibitions, 57% of which were by women artists, an increase from 53% in the previous year. Non-commercial organisations receiving less than £500,000 from ACE presented 17 solo exhibitions, 52% of which were by women artists, a significant decrease from 67% in 2019.



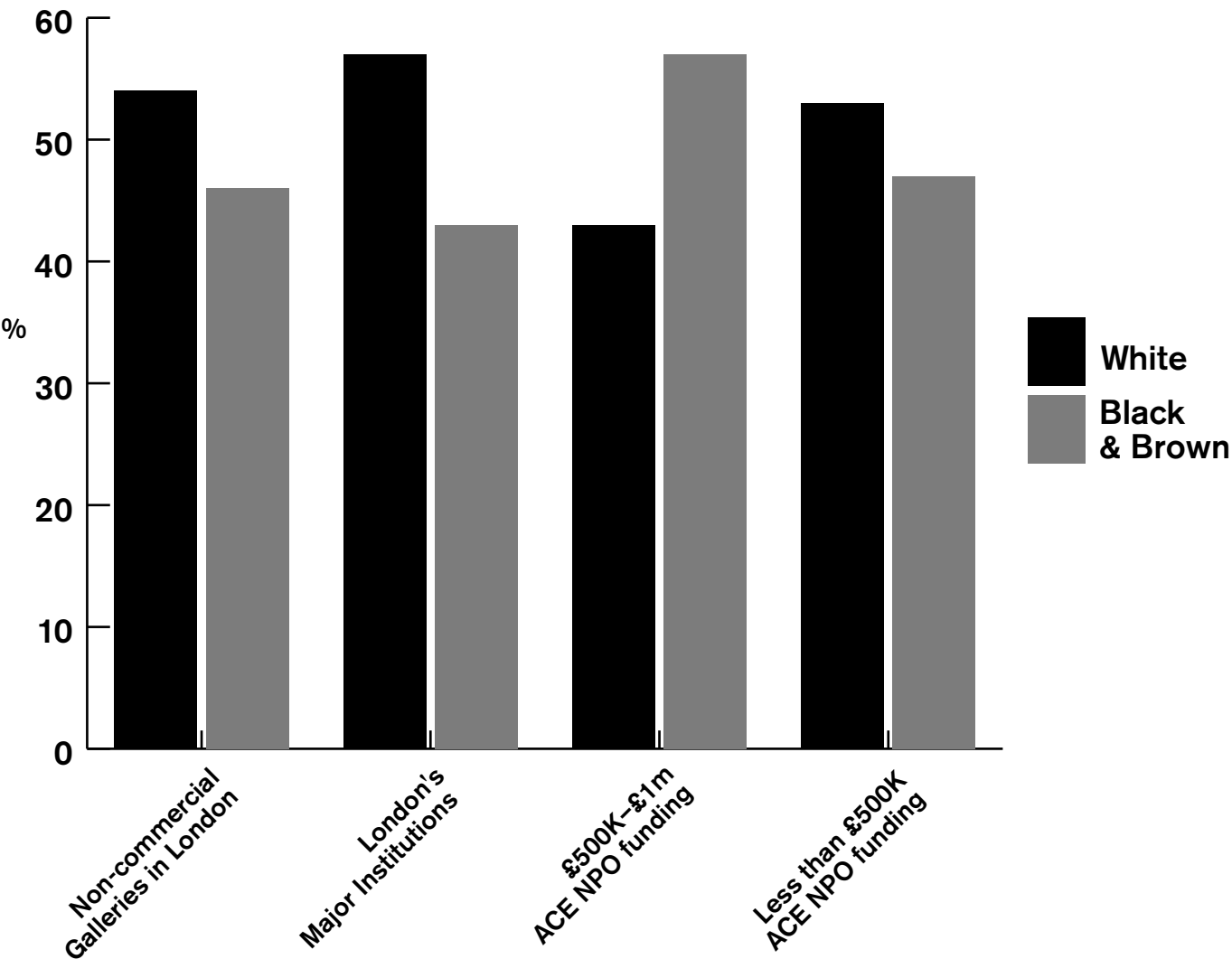
Evidence 7.2
Solo Exhibitions in Non-commercial
Galleries in London
Ethnicity



46% of the exhibitions from the same group of non-commercial galleries were by Black and Brown artists.



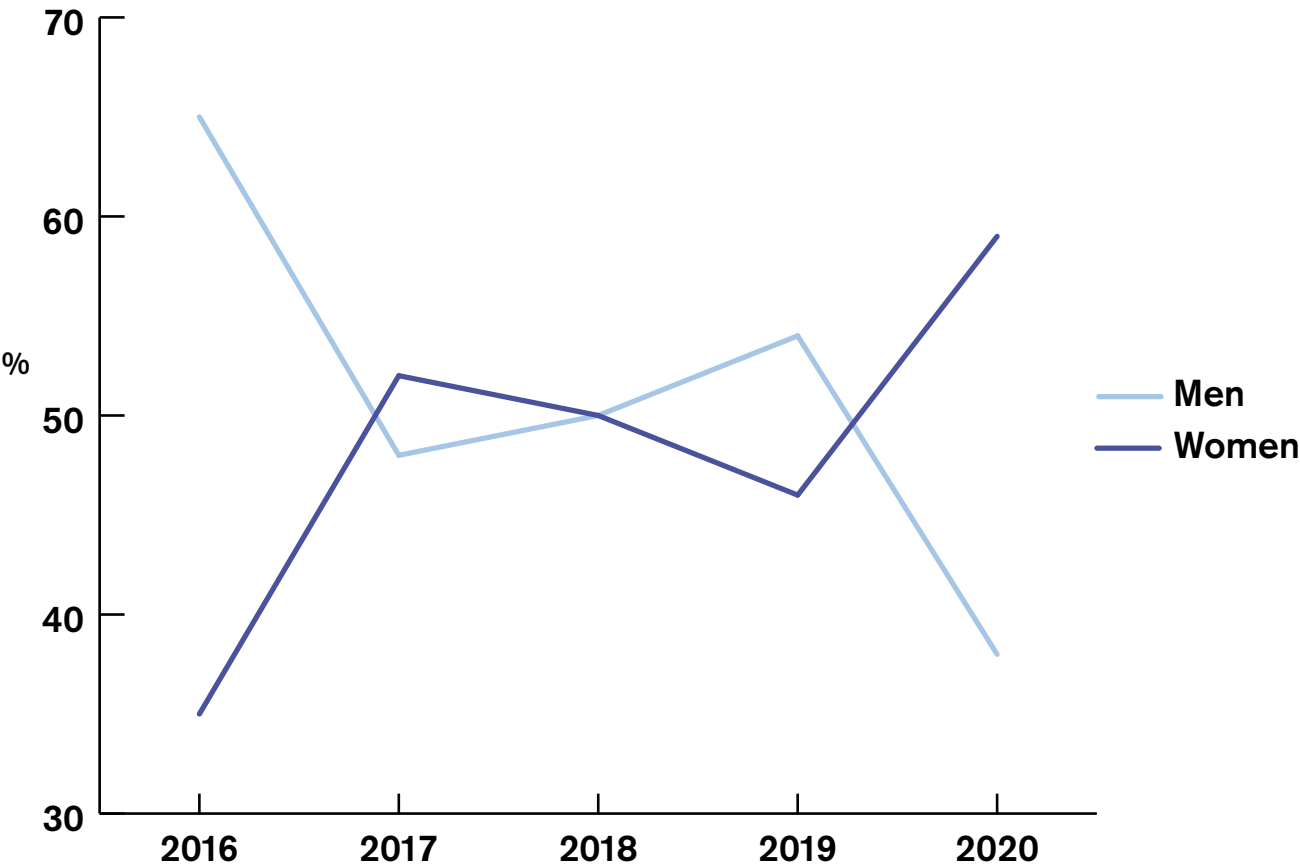
Evidence 7.3
Solo Exhibitions in Non-commercial
Galleries in London
Ethnicity



In the same period, 43% of the solo exhibitions at London's major institutions (those receiving more than £1 million in funding) were by Black and Brown artists. Institutions receiving between £500,000 and £1 million held seven solo exhibitions, 57% of which were by Black and Brown artists. Non-commercial organisations receiving less than £500,000 from ACE presented 17 solo exhibitions, 47% of which were by Black and Brown artists.



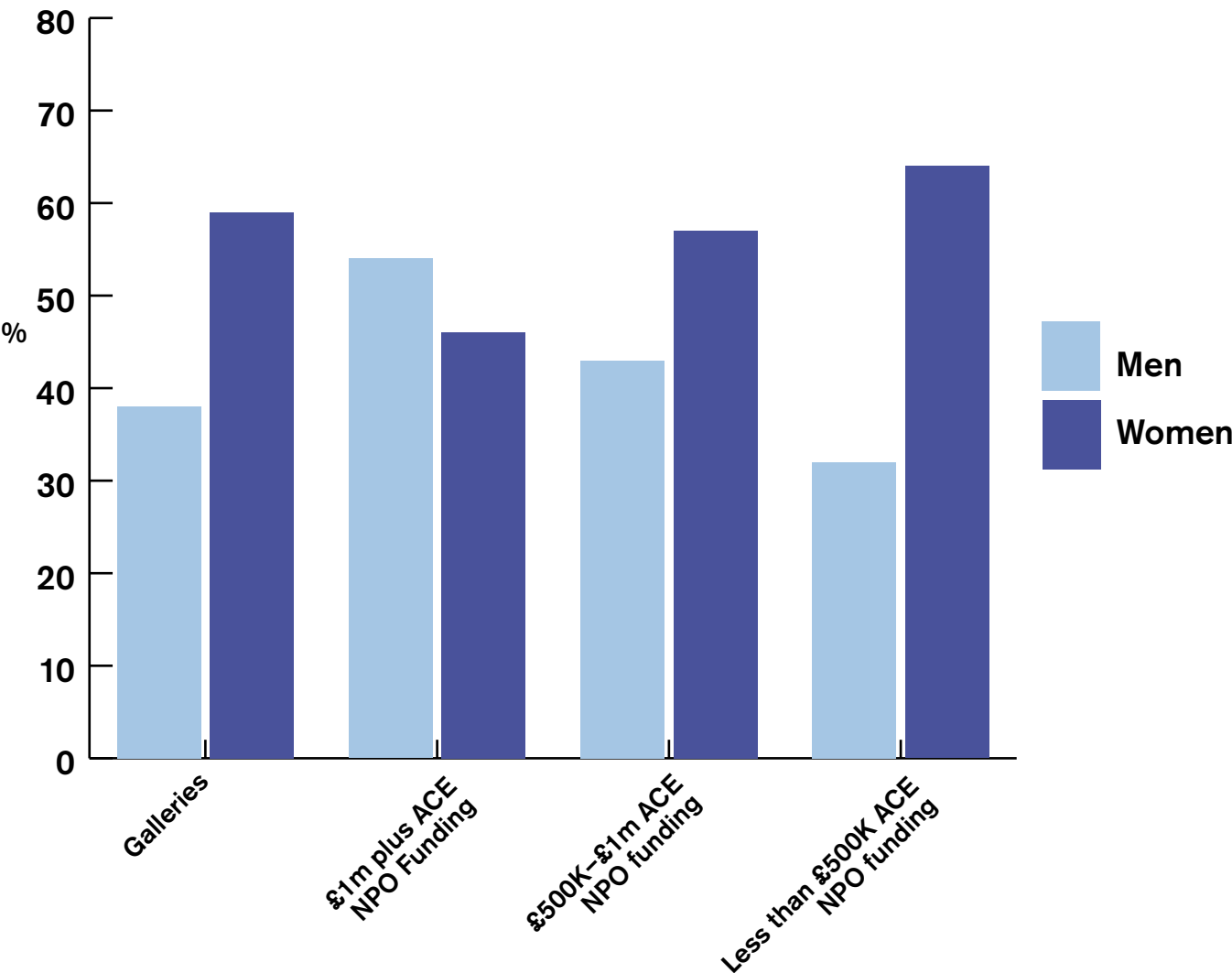
Evidence 8
Solo Exhibitions in Non-commercial
Galleries outside London
Gender



We counted 36 galleries, museums and institutions outside London in England, Wales and Scotland. Twenty-three of these hosted solo exhibitions in 2020, 59% of which were by women artists, a substantial increase from 46% in 2019 and the highest percentage since we began recording this data in 2015.



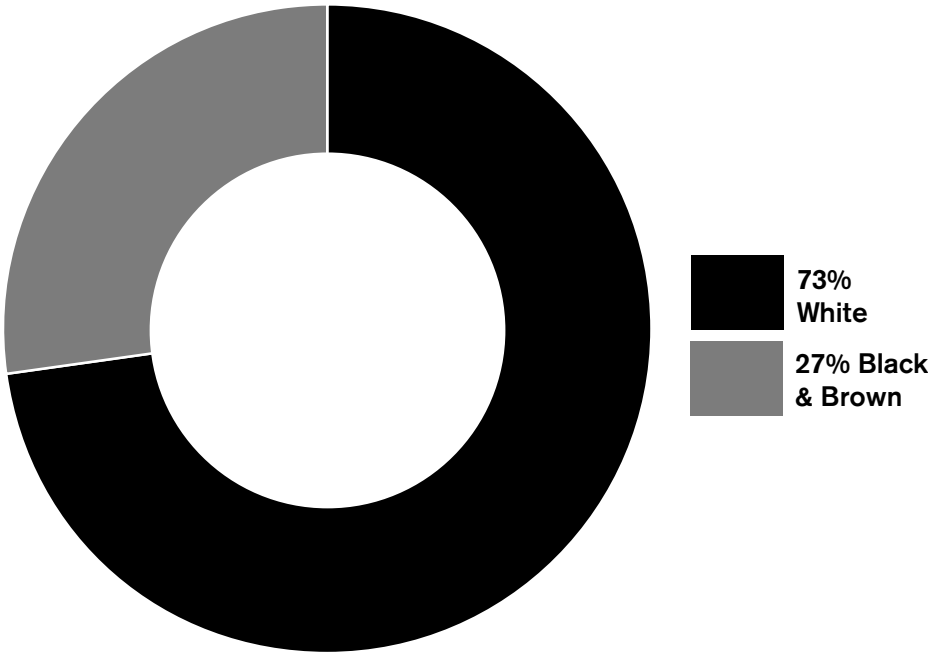
Evidence 8.1
Solo Exhibitions in Non-commercial
Galleries outside London
Gender



Of the organisations receiving less than £500,000 in government funding, 64% of the solo exhibitions were by women – an increase from 48% in the previous year. Institutions that received between £500,000–£1 million in funding included 57% of solo exhibitions by women in their programme, an increase from 43% in 2019. Organisations receiving over £1 million in funding selected women artists for 46% of their solo presentations, an increase of 6% from 2019. Both these figures are far lower than the figures for women who began their careers as artists shown in the undergraduate figures in Evidence 3.



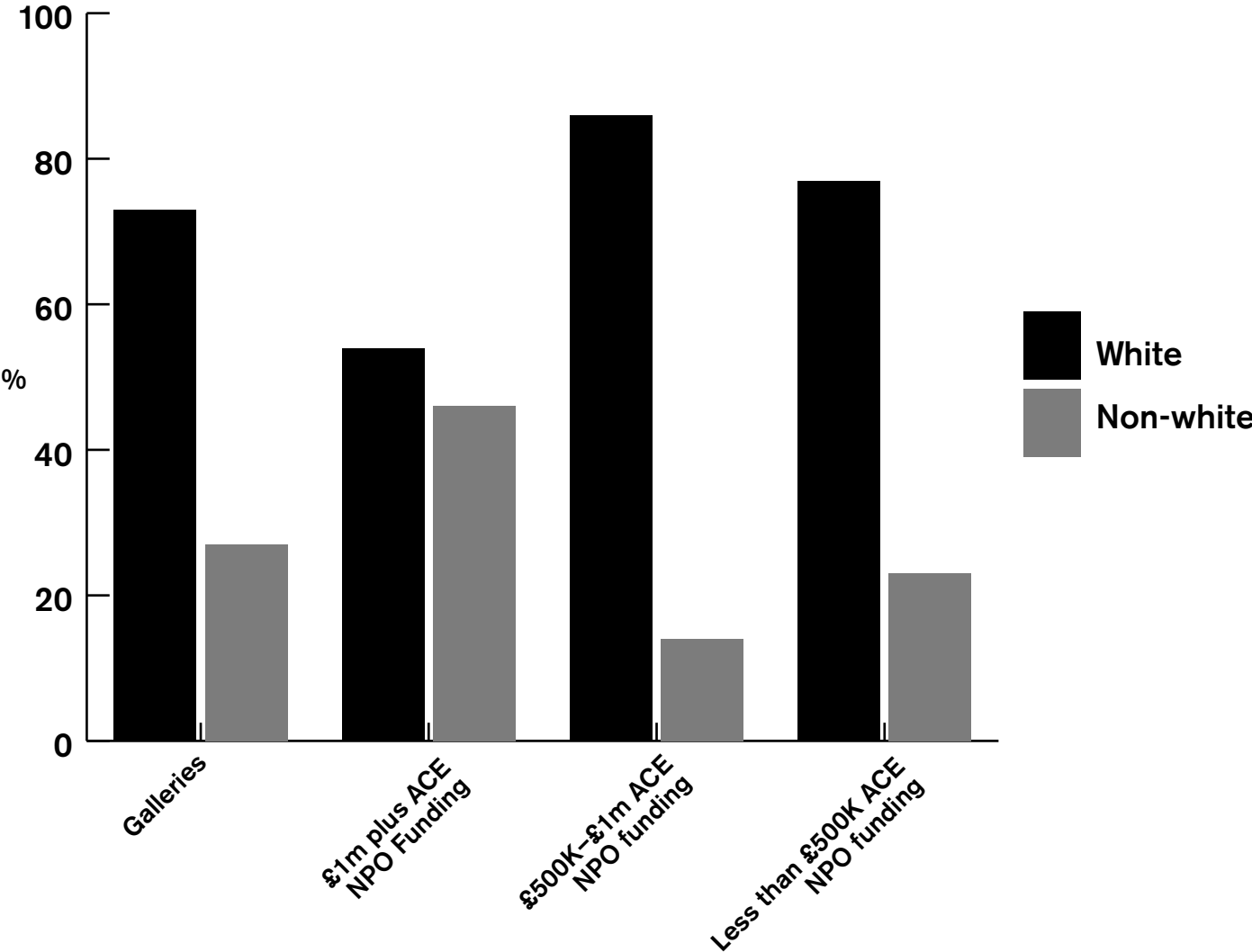
Evidence 8.2
Solo Exhibitions in Non-commercial
Galleries outside London
Ethnicity



Of the 36 galleries we included in our survey, 27% of the solo exhibitions were by Black and Brown artists.



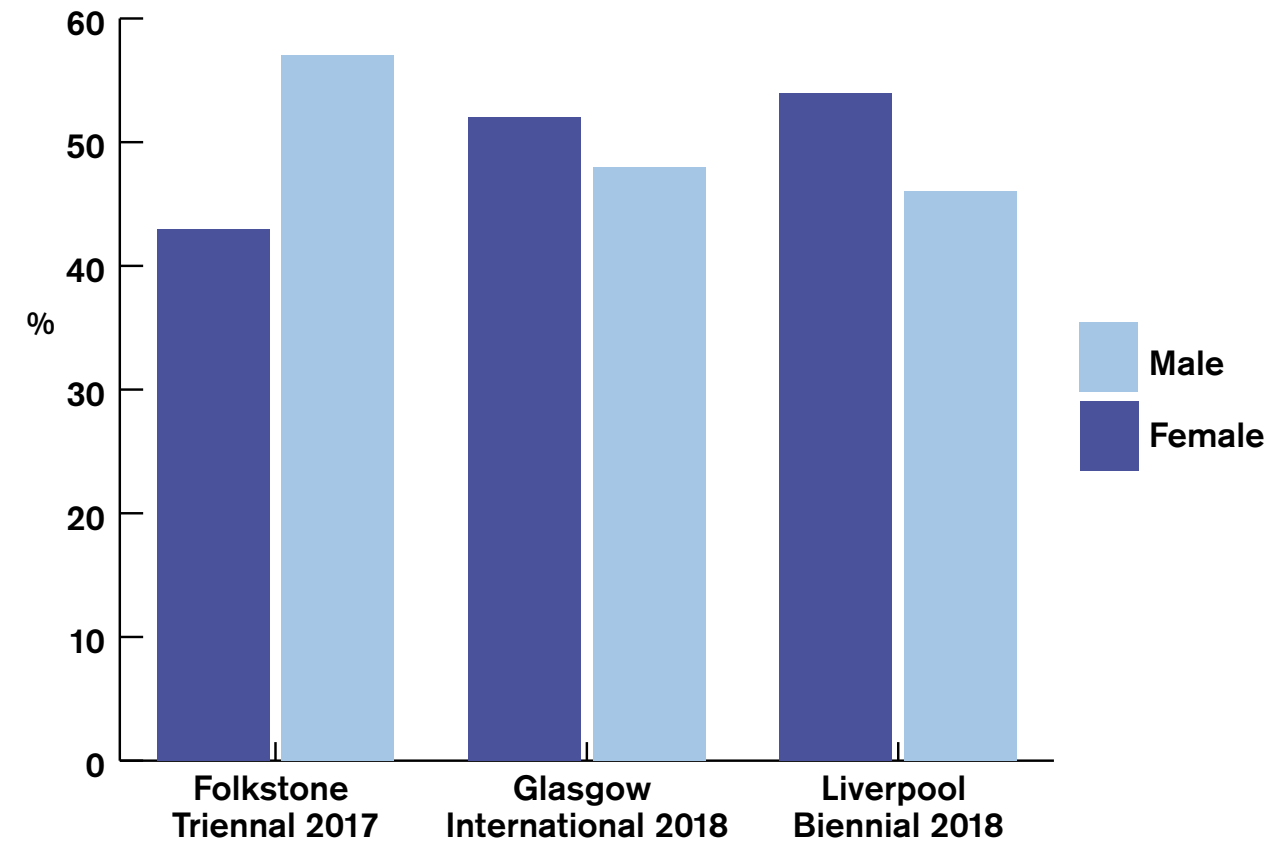
Evidence 8.3
Solo Exhibitions in Non-commercial
Galleries outside London
Ethnicity



23% of the solo exhibitions held by galleries that received less than £500,000 in funding were by Black and Brown artists. 14% of the solo exhibitions held by institutions that received between £500,000-£1 million in funding were by Black and Brown artists. Organisations that received over £1 million in funding presented solo exhibitions totalling 46% of their overall programming to Black and Brown artists.



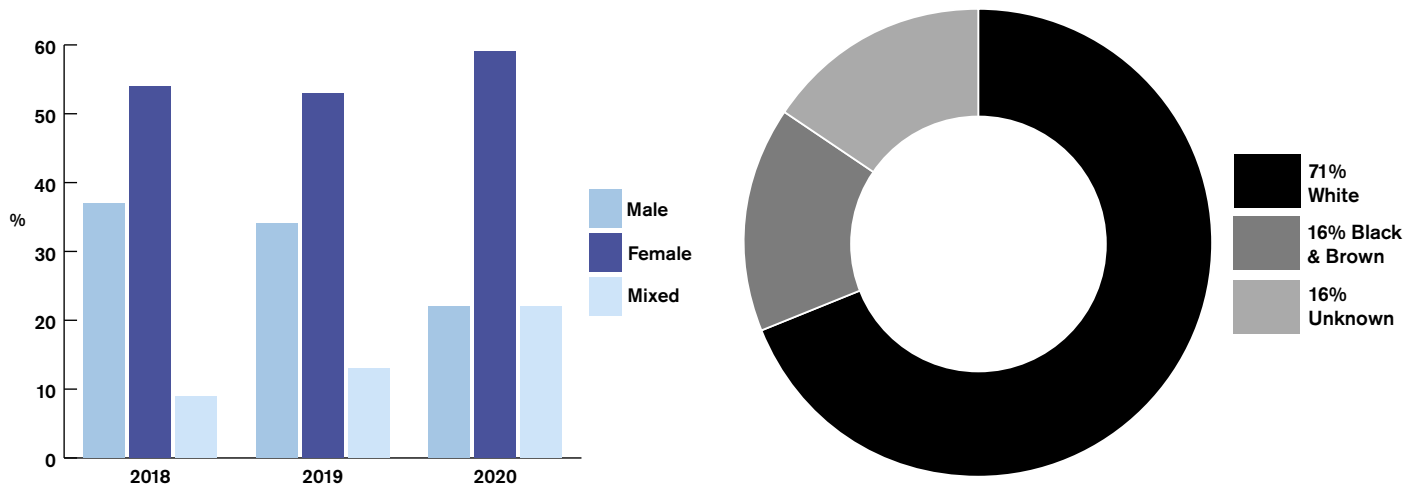
Evidence 9
Artists Selected for UK Triennials and Biennials
Gender



In 2020, all the Triennials and Biennials that would usually be included in this category were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Evidence 10
Artists Commissioned for Public Art Projects
Gender, Ethnicity



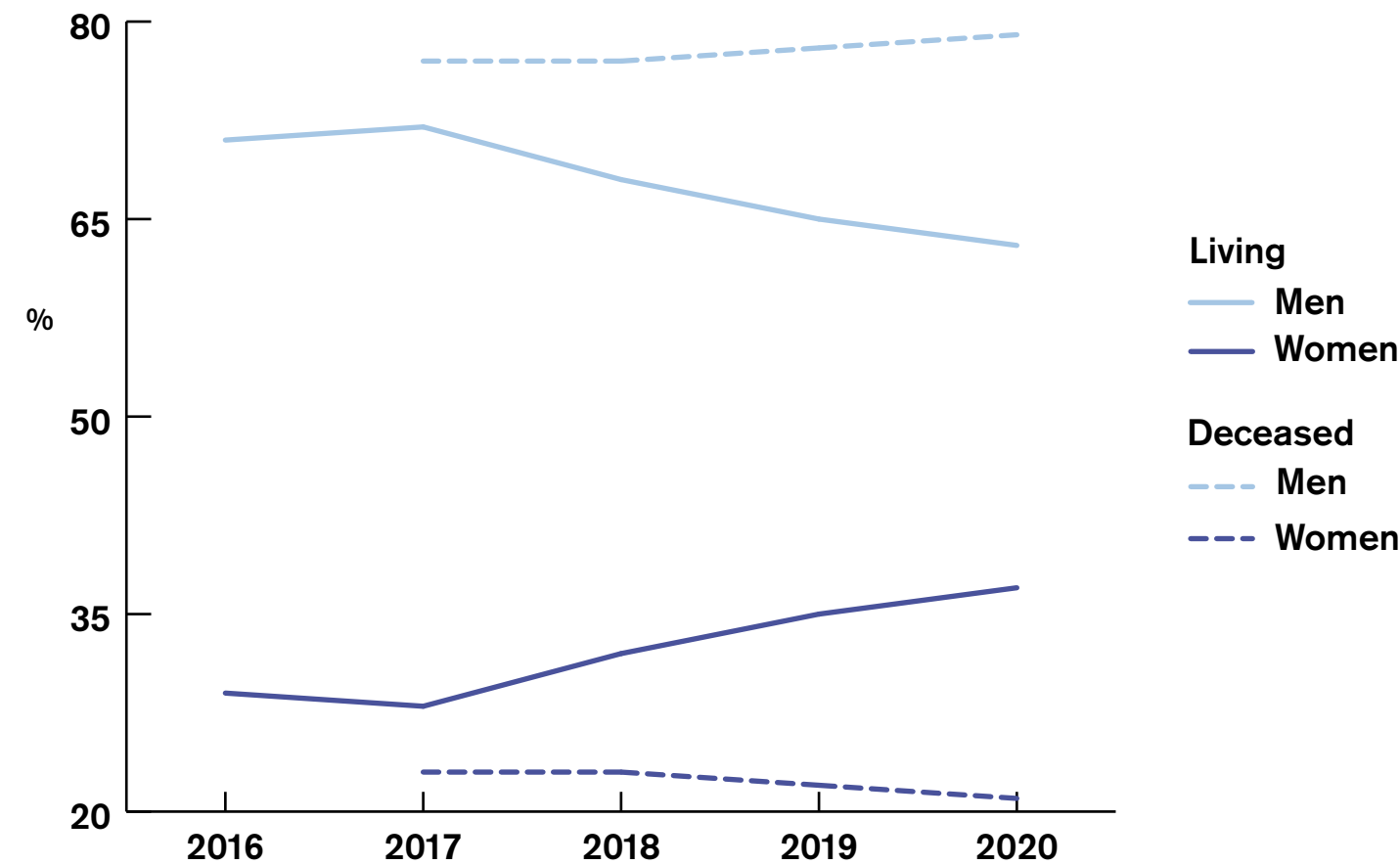
Thirty recorded public art commissions took place during 2020 by nine organisations (down from 13 in the previous year), and only ten were completed by three commissioning bodies. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted new and existing commissions. It is notable that 25 commissioning bodies appear to be inactive, or no longer operating since 2018. This is a trend we have identified in recent years, and it may be that COVID-19 put further pressure on these organisations.

59% of these commissions were by women artists, 22% by men and 22% by mixed gender partnerships.

Of the 30 public art commissions in 2020, 71% were awarded to white artists, 16% to Black and Brown artists, and we were unable to identify a further 16% due to a lack of availability of data on the artist. Of the completed commissions we counted, 100% were by white artists.



Evidence 11
Artists and Deceased Estates Represented
by Major Commercial Galleries in London
Gender



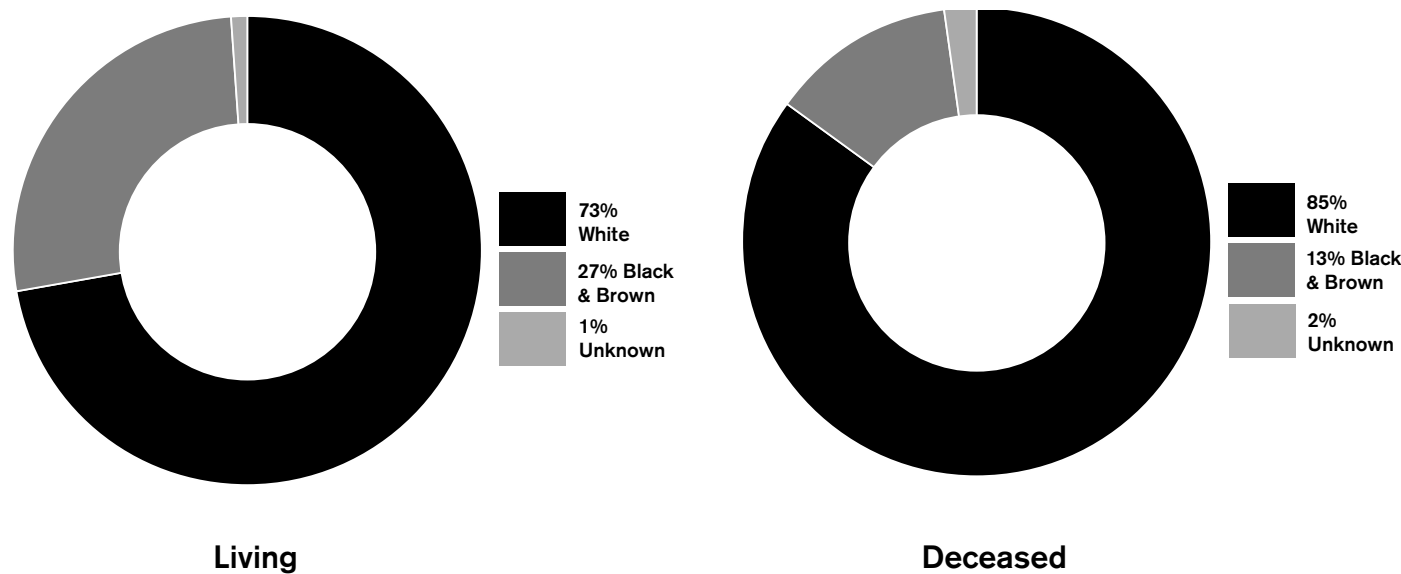
This year, of the artists represented by the 40 galleries* we counted, 37% were women, which marks a 2% increase from the previous year. This maps an overall trend since we began collecting this data in 2016. None of these 40 galleries represent any non-binary artists.

Of the 259 deceased artists represented by these galleries (up from 169 in the previous year), 79% were men, a 1% increase from the previous year. Since we began mapping this data in 2017, the number of estates of women artists has decreased each year.

* an increase from 27 galleries last year, as we base our selection on those galleries selected for Frieze Art Fair.



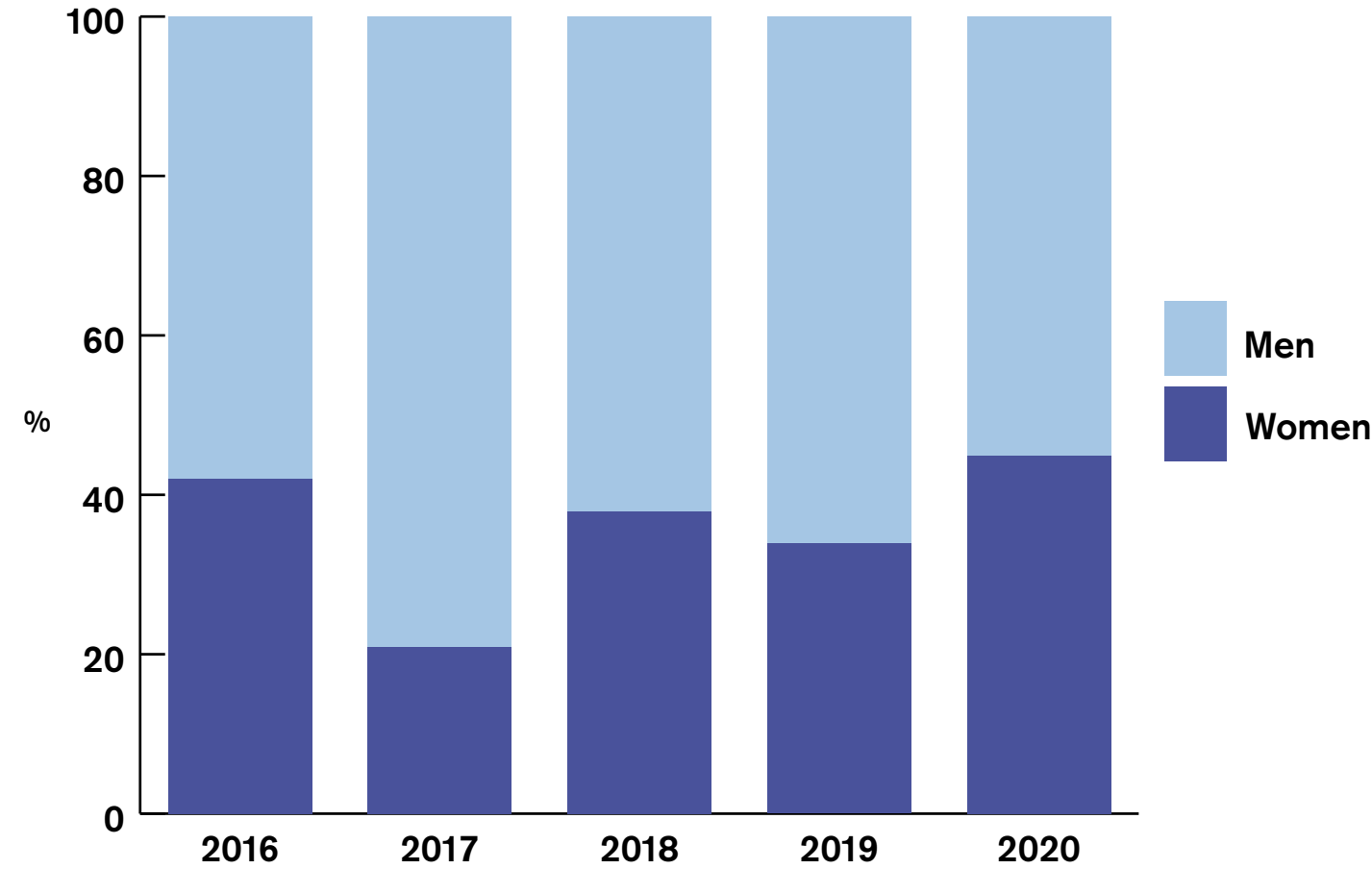
Evidence 11.1
Artists and Deceased Estates Represented
by Major Commercial Galleries in London
Ethnicity



Of the 40 galleries, 73% of the artists they represent are white. Of the 259 deceased artists they represent, 85% were white.



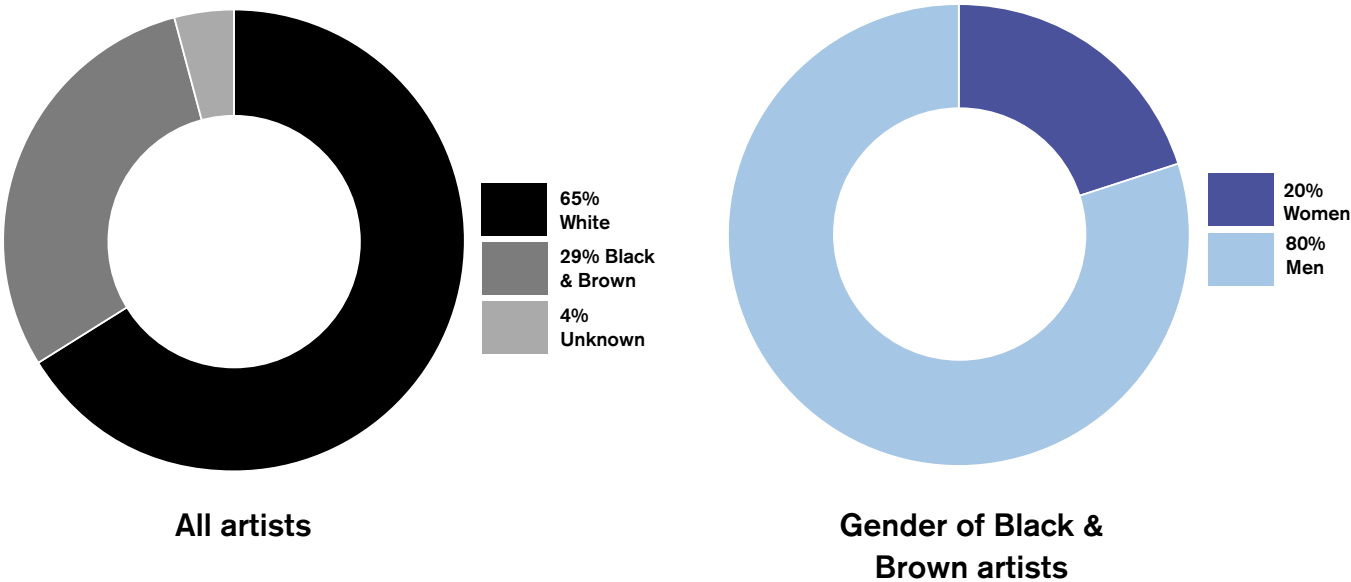
Evidence 12
Solo Exhibitions at London's Major
Commercial Galleries during Frieze
Gender



In 2020, Frieze London shifted online in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Forty galleries participated in the Online Viewing Rooms, showcasing 51 solo presentations of artists. 45% of those solo presentations were by women artists, an increase of 11% from the previous year, but only a 3% increase from 2016 when 42% of solo presentations were by women artists.



Evidence 12.1
Solo Exhibitions at London's Major
Commercial Galleries during Frieze
Ethnicity



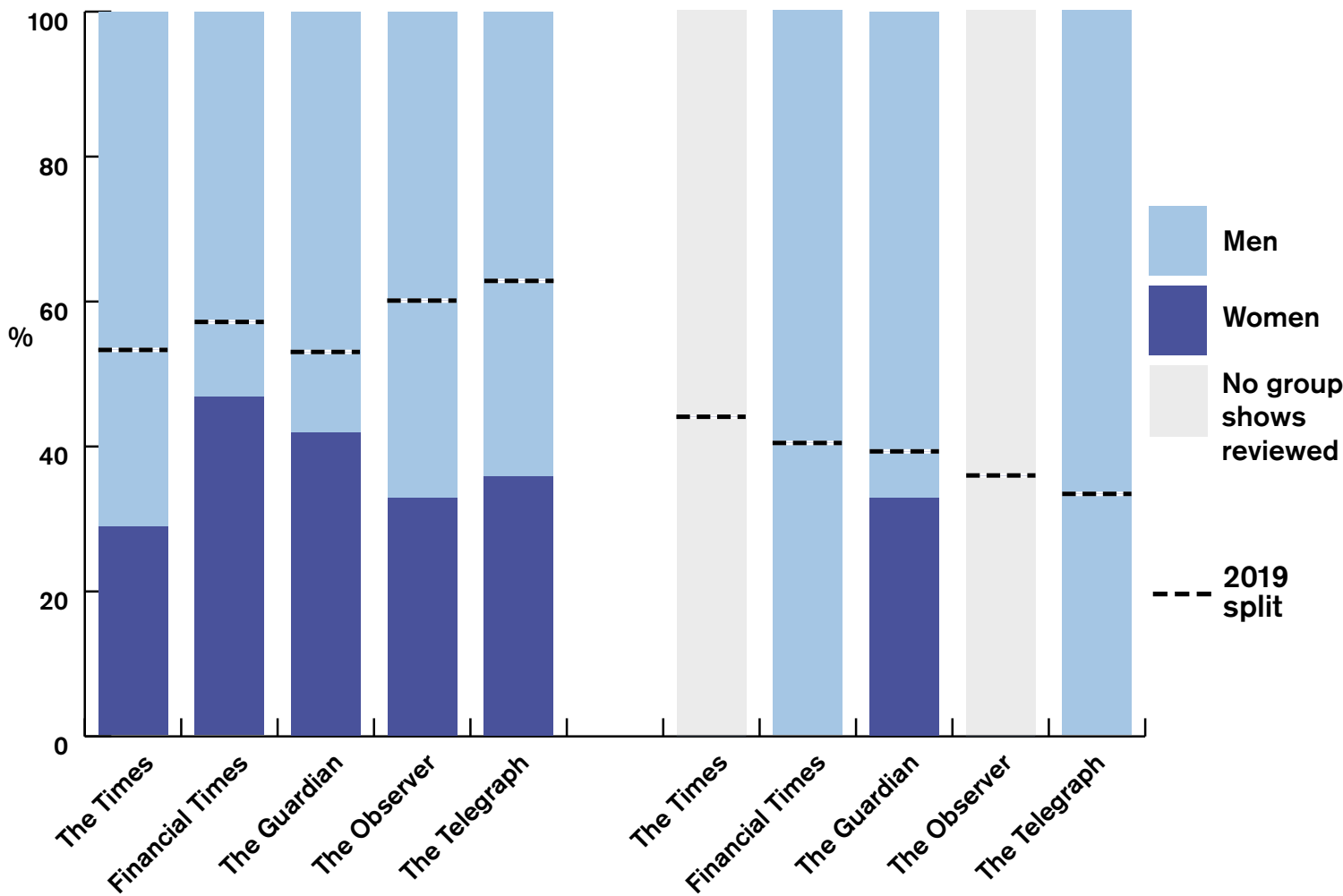
Of the 51 solo presentations, 29% (15) were by Black and Brown artists. Of those, only three were by Black and Brown women (6%).



Evidence 13
Artists Reviewed in National Newspapers
Gender

Solo Shows

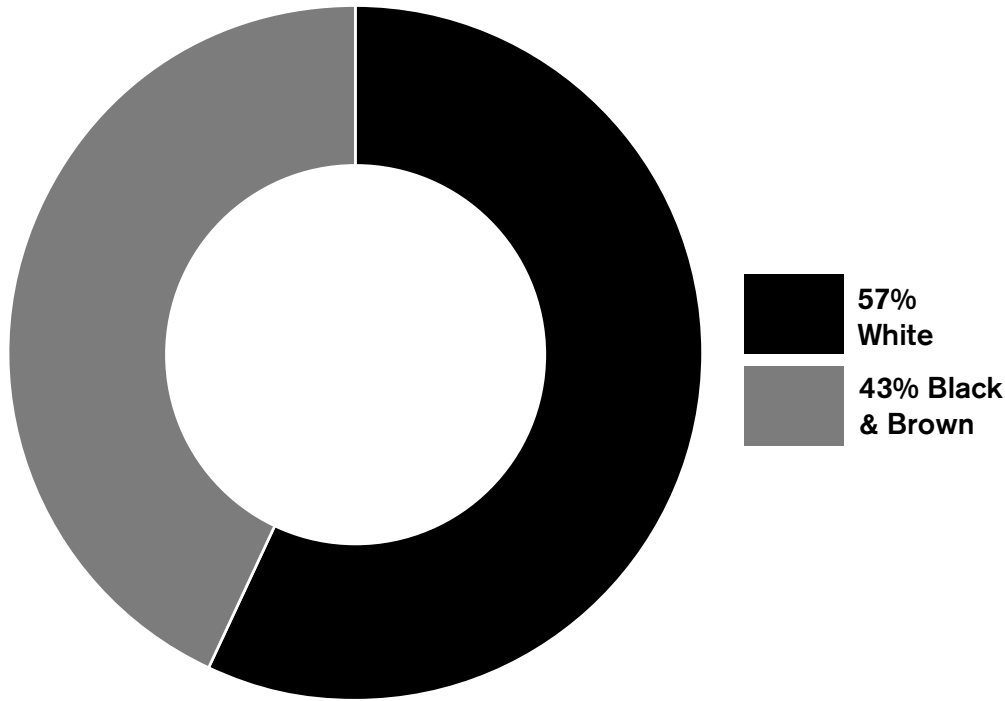
Group Shows



Of the 88 reviews of solo exhibitions across the five newspapers we surveyed, the subject of 61% of these were male artists, up from 57% in 2019, but lower than in 2018 when it was 63%.

Of the 52 group shows reviewed, only 22% of the named artists were women, a significant decrease from 50% in the previous year, and 2018 when it was 68%.

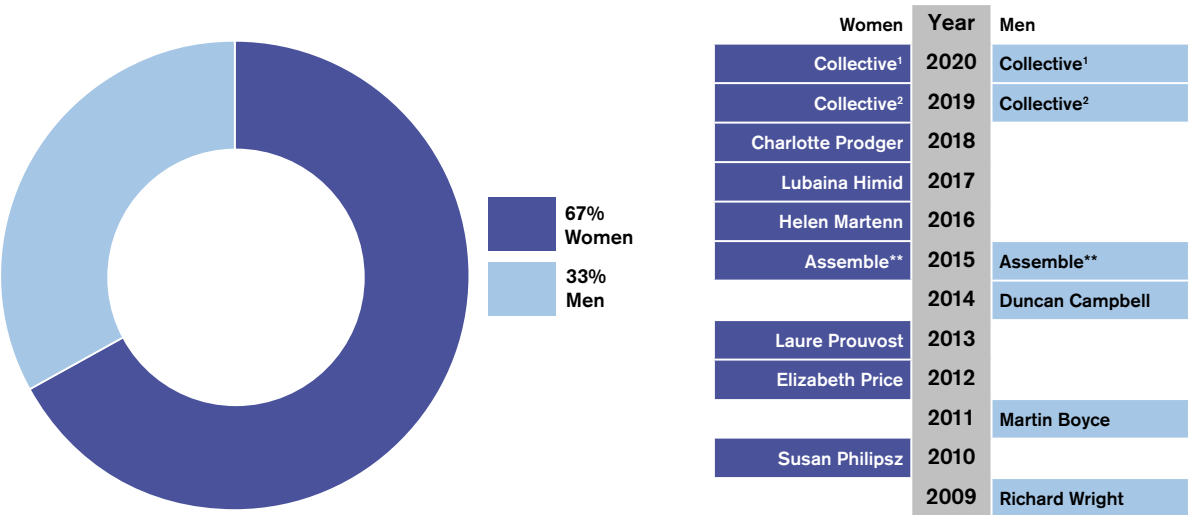
Evidence 13.1
Artists Reviewed in National Newspapers
Ethnicity



Across all solo exhibitions, 43% of the artists reviewed were Black and Brown. Of the 39% of solo exhibitions by women, 44% of those were by Black and Brown women artists.



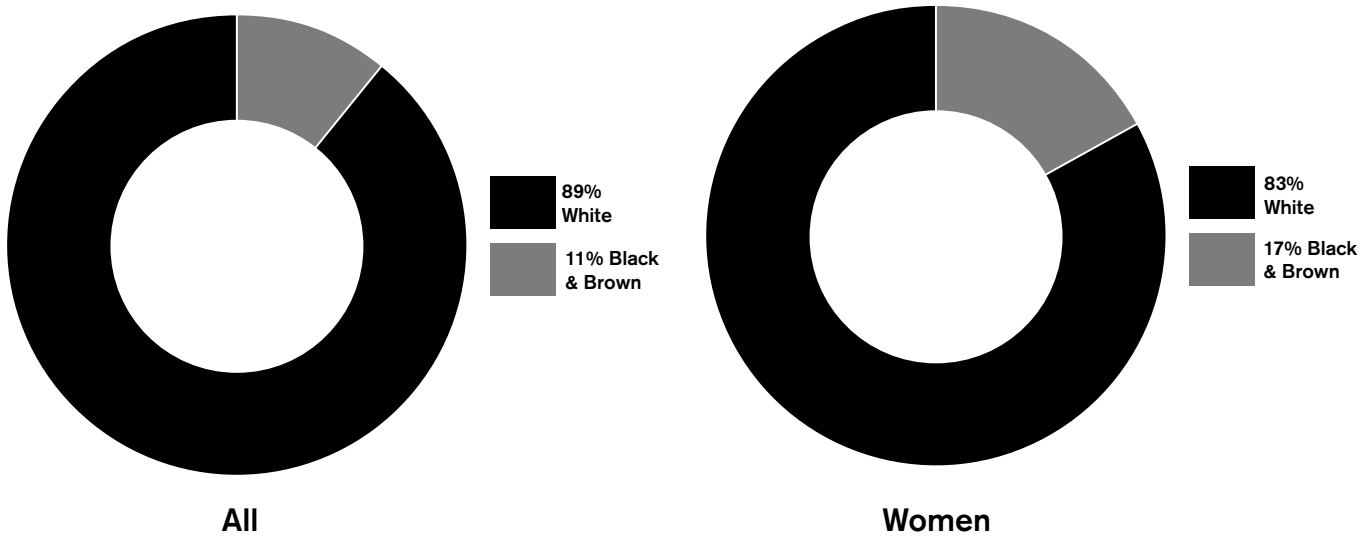
Evidence 14
Turner Prize Winners 2009–20
Gender



Since 2009, 67% of solo winners have been women. In 2020, the prize was awarded as ten bursaries to all the shortlisted artists, which included six women, one man, one non-binary artist and one collective.

¹Oreet Ashery, Liz Johnson Artur, Shawanda Corbett, Jamie Crewe, Sean Edwards, Sidsel Meineche Hansen, Ima-Abasi Okon, Imran Perretta, Alberta Whittle, Arika
²Collective: Oscar Murillo, Tai Shani, Helen Cammock, Lawrence Abu Hamdan
**Collective

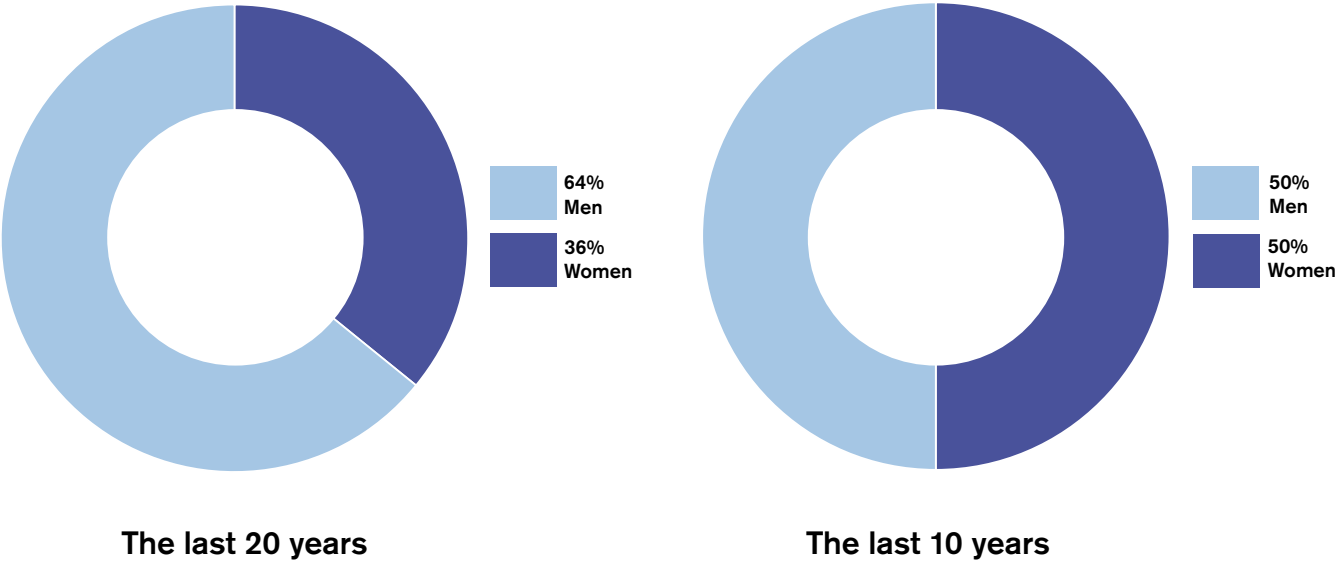
Evidence 14.1
Turner Prize Winners 2009–20
Ethnicity



Since 2009, only one Black and Brown woman artist – Lubaina Himid – has won the Turner Prize. In 2019, four artists collectively took the prize, a group that included two white women and two male Black and Brown artists. In 2020, five bursaries were awarded to white people, and five bursaries were awarded to Black and Brown artists.



Evidence 15
Artists Representing Britain at the Venice Biennale
1999–2020
Gender

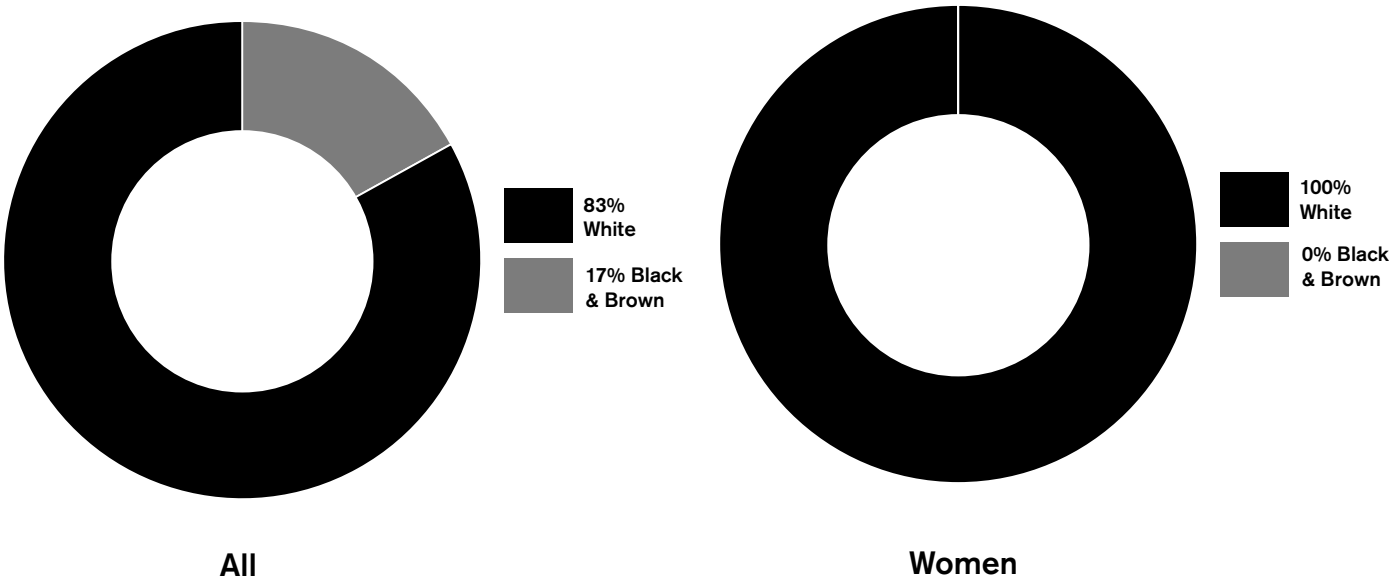


Over the last ten years, 50% of the artists representing Britain at the Venice Biennale have been women. This compares to the data over 20 years, which shows that 36% of the artists were women and 64% were men.

Women	Year	Men
Cathy Wilkes	2019	
Phyllida Barlow	2017	
Sarah Lucas	2015	
	2013	Jeremy Deller
	2011	Mike Nelson
	2009	Steve McQueen
Tracey Emin	2007	
	2005	Gilbert & George
	2003	Chris Ofili
	2001	Mark Wallinger
	1999	Gary Hume



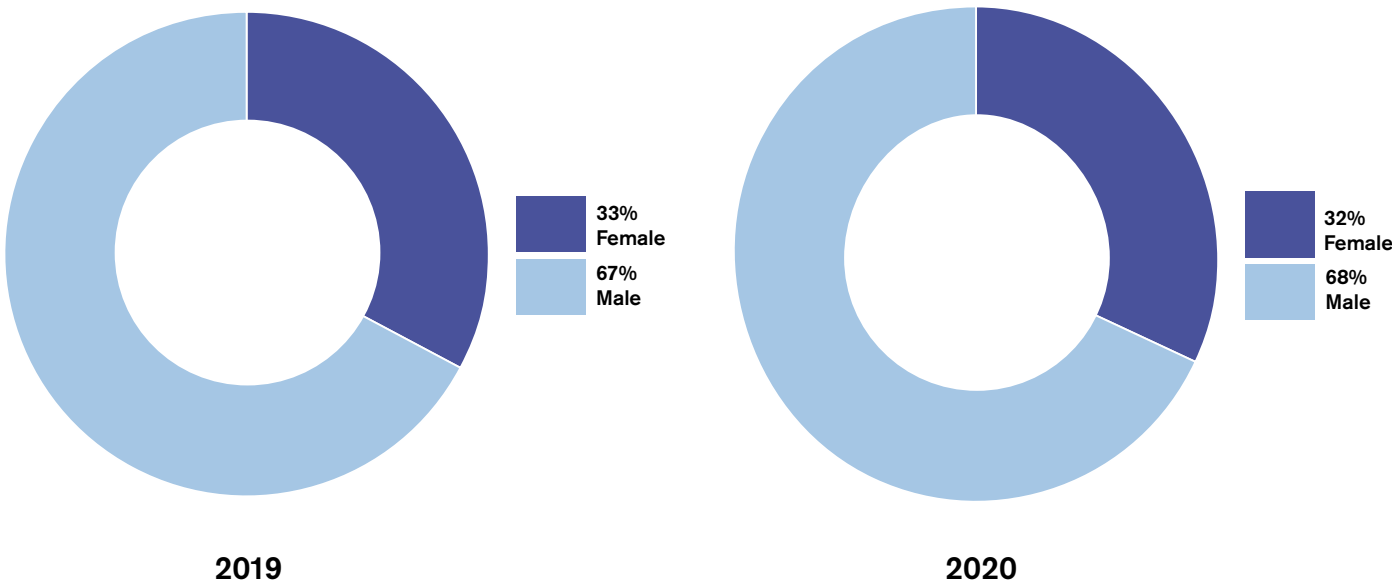
Evidence 15.1
Artists Representing Britain at the Venice Biennale
1997–2020
Ethnicity



Only two of the artists (17%) representing Britain at the 12 Venice Biennales that have taken place since 1997 were Black and Brown – Chris Ofili (who exhibited in 2003) and Steve McQueen (who exhibited in 2009). During this time, no Black or Brown women have represented Britain.



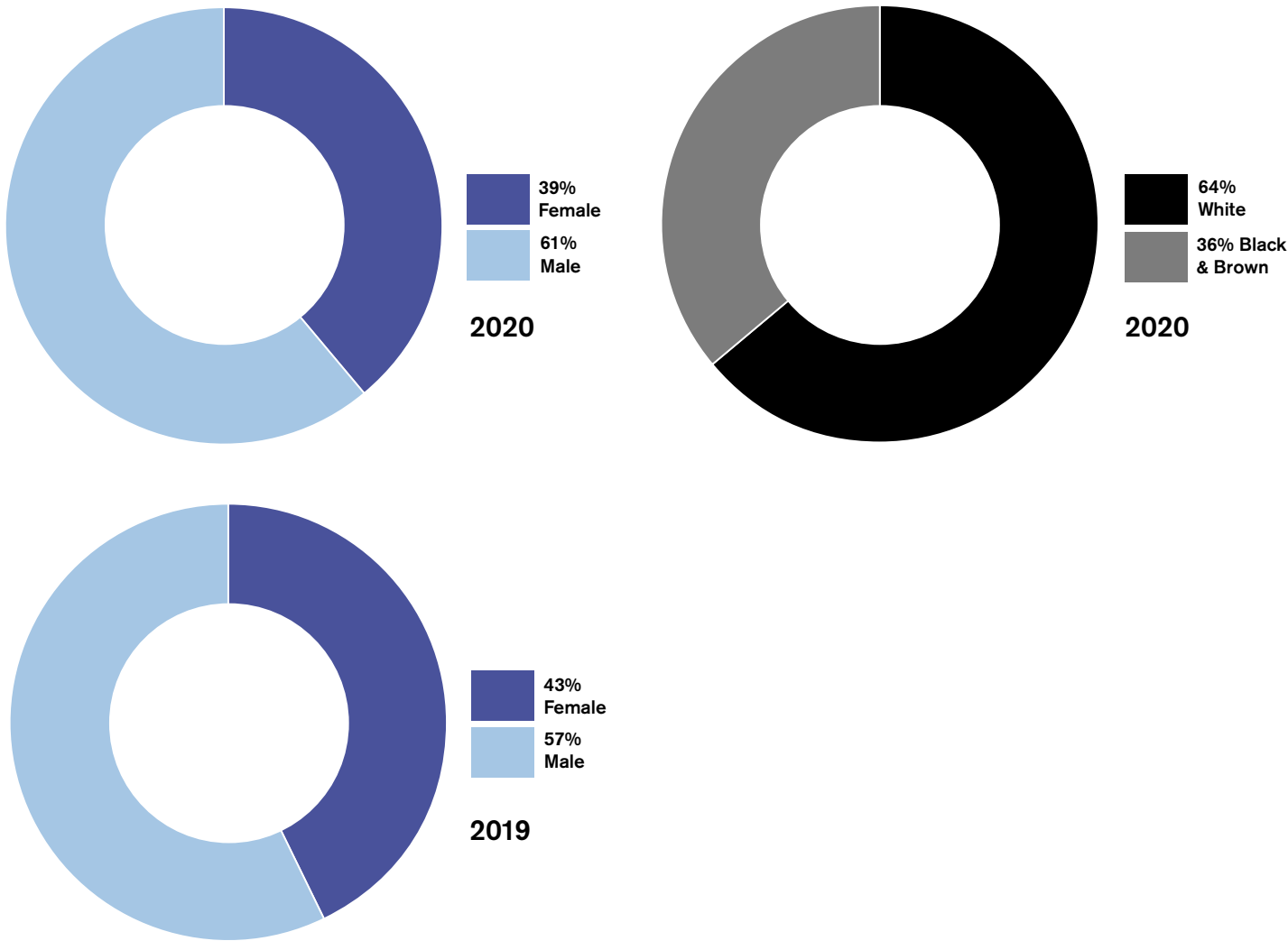
Evidence 16
Tate Collection – Artworks Acquired
2019–20
Gender



The Tate acquired 481 works, either through direct purchase or donation in the 2019–20 financial year. This included 325 works by men (68%) and 155 by women (32%). This is a 1% decrease of works by women from the previous year.



Evidence 16.1
Tate Collection – Artists Acquired
2019–20
Gender, Ethnicity

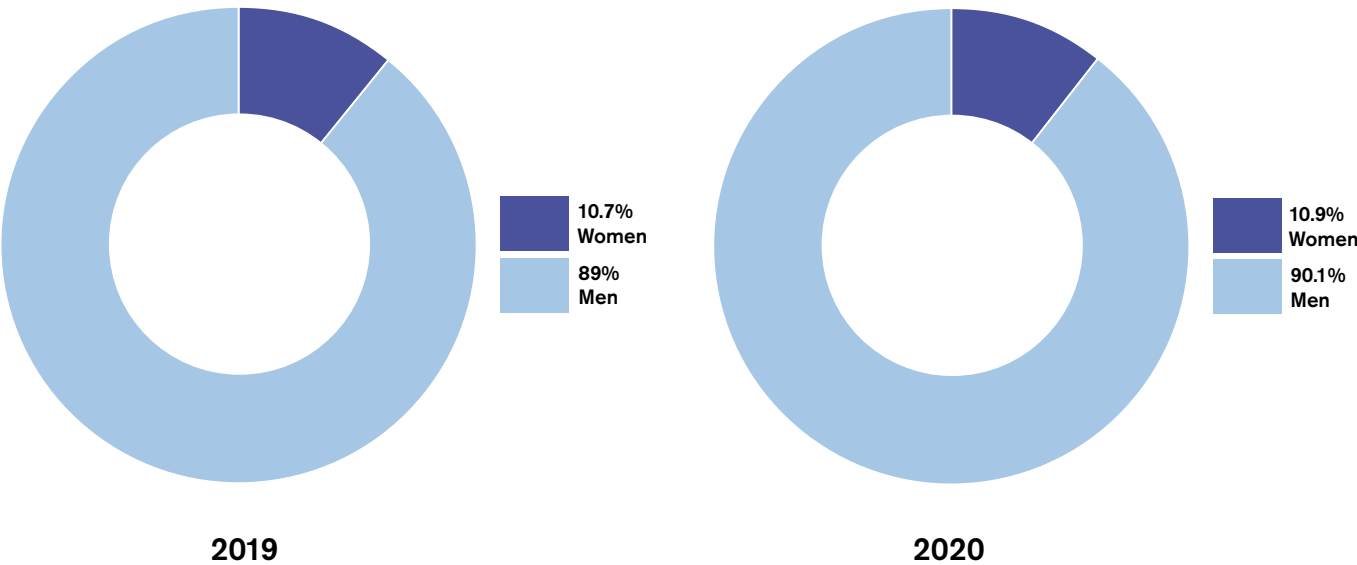


Work by 180 individual artists was acquired by the collection in 2020. This included 70 works (39%) by women. This was an increase of 6% from the previous year when we first began collecting this data.

Of these 180 artists, 115 (64%) were white, and 65 (36%) were Black and Brown artists. Of the 180 artists, 20 were Black and Brown women (11%).



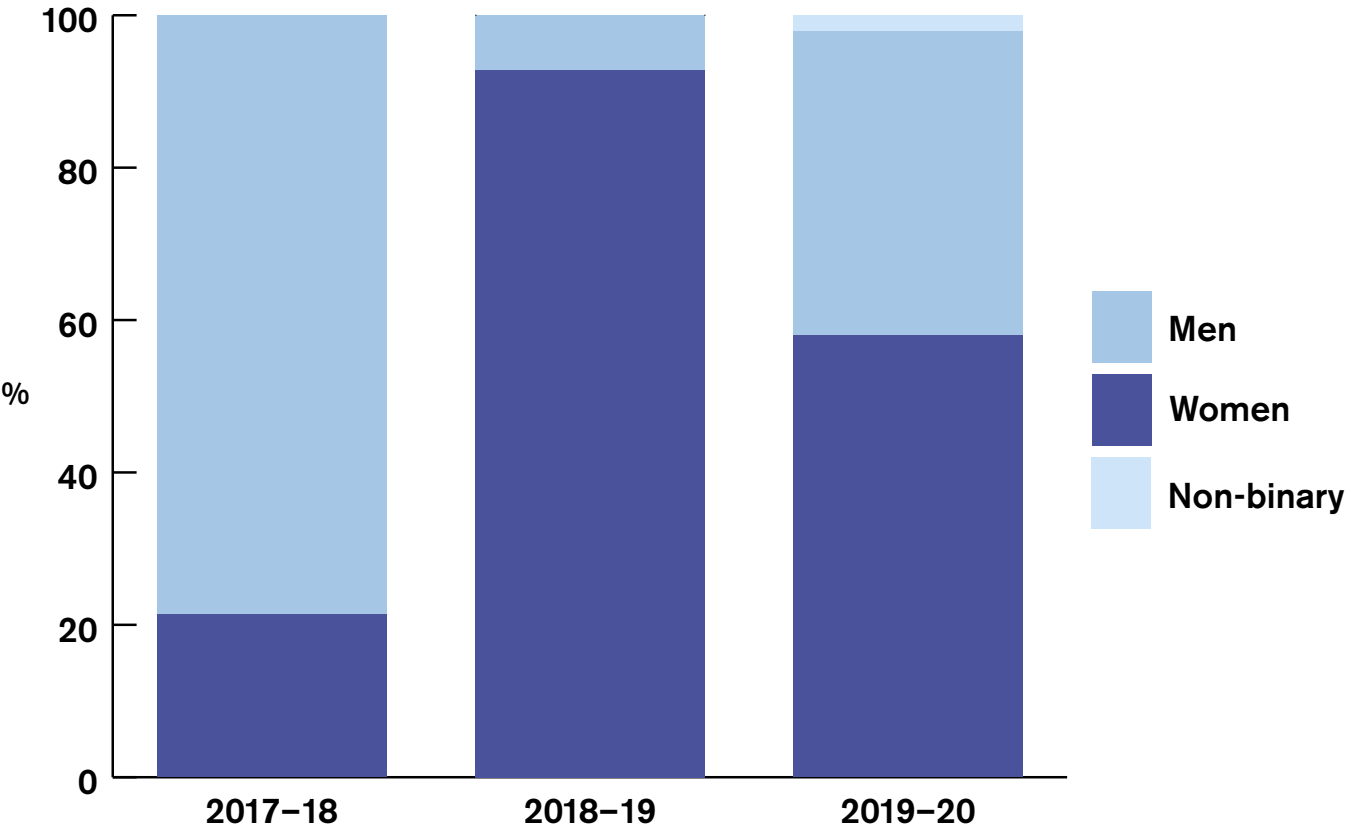
Evidence 18
Government Art Collection
Gender



There are now 14,468 works in the Government Art Collection. Of those, 1,574 are by women. As a percentage, this is 10.9%, an increase from 10.7% in the previous year, when we first began recording this data.



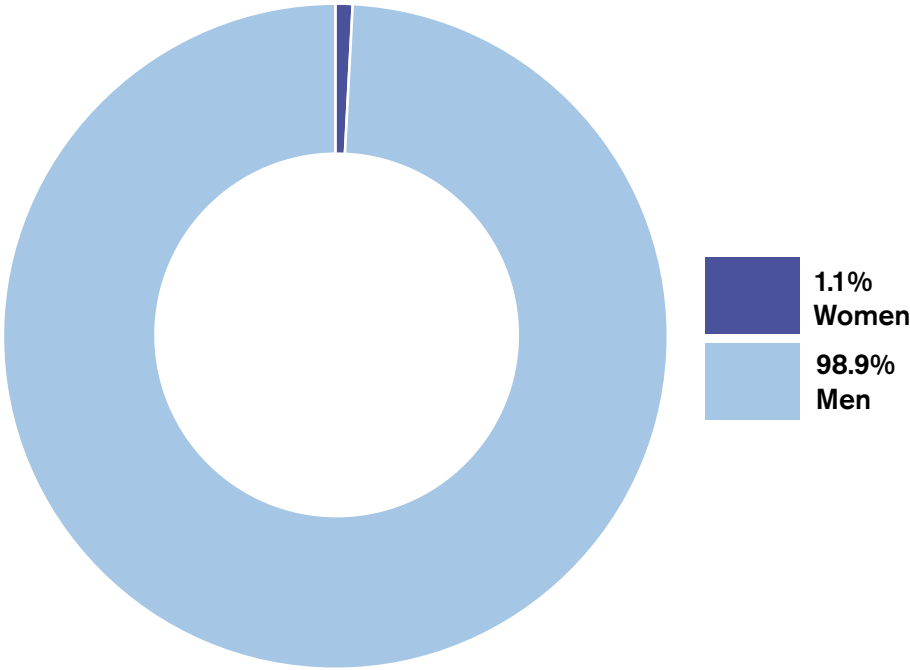
Evidence 18.1
Government Art Collection – Artworks Acquired
2017–20
Gender



In the 2019–20 tax year, the Government Art Collection acquired 57 new works by 46 artists. Of the works acquired, 58% of them were by women, even though women accounted for 61% of the artists overall. This means that, as is often the case in collecting patterns we've identified, when work is acquired from a male artist, more individual works by that one artist are purchased. The Government Art Collection also collected one work by a non-binary artist. In 2018–19, 93% of the work that came into the collection was by women artists, a substantial increase from 2017–18 when it was only 20%.



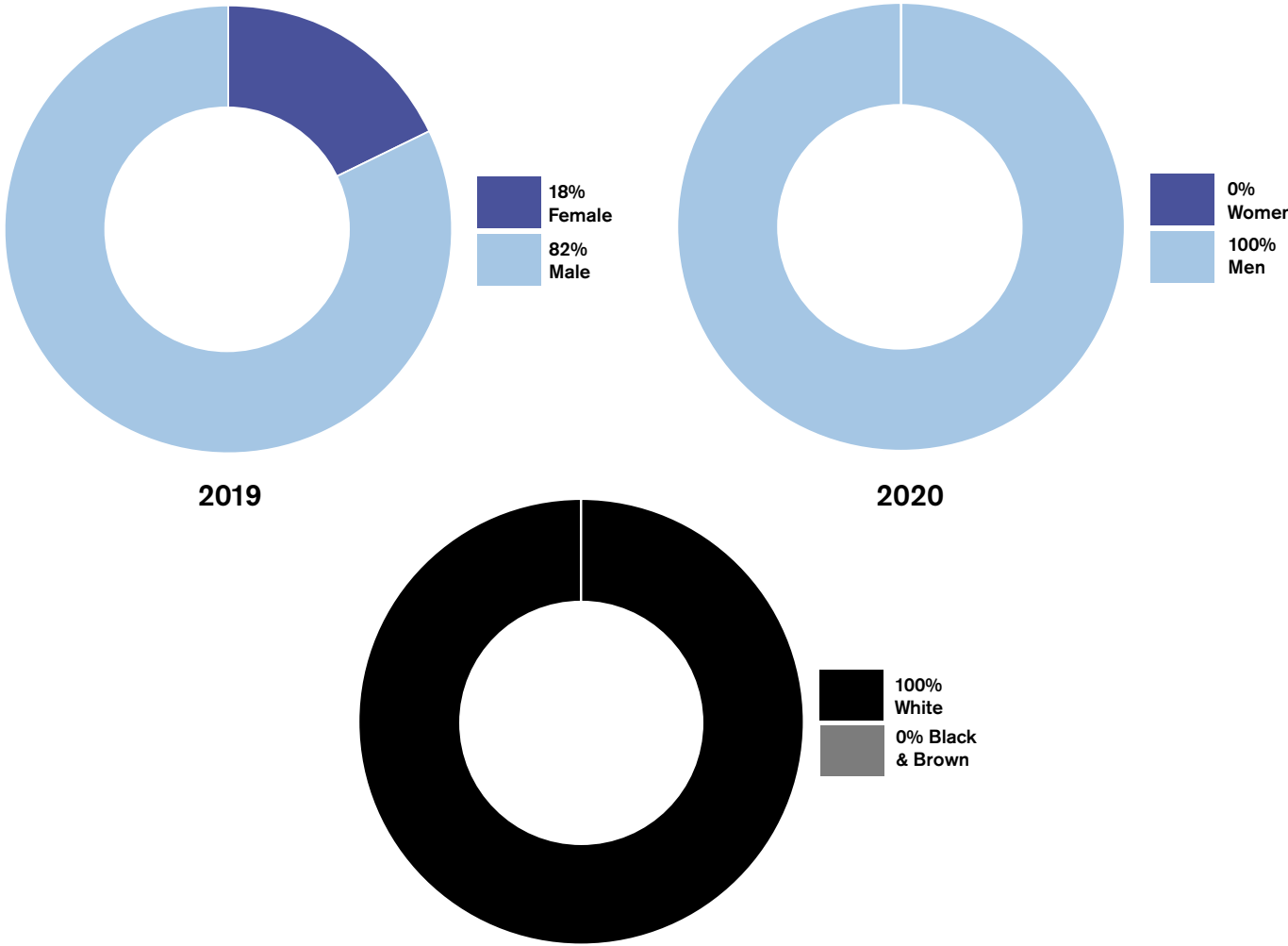
Evidence 20
The National Gallery Collection
Gender



The total number of works in the collection of the National Gallery is 2,632. Of these, just 29 works (1.01%) are by 17 women artists. This represents a drop of 0.5% of works by women in the overall collection in comparison to the previous year.



Evidence 20.1
The National Gallery Collection – Artworks Acquired
Gender, Ethnicity

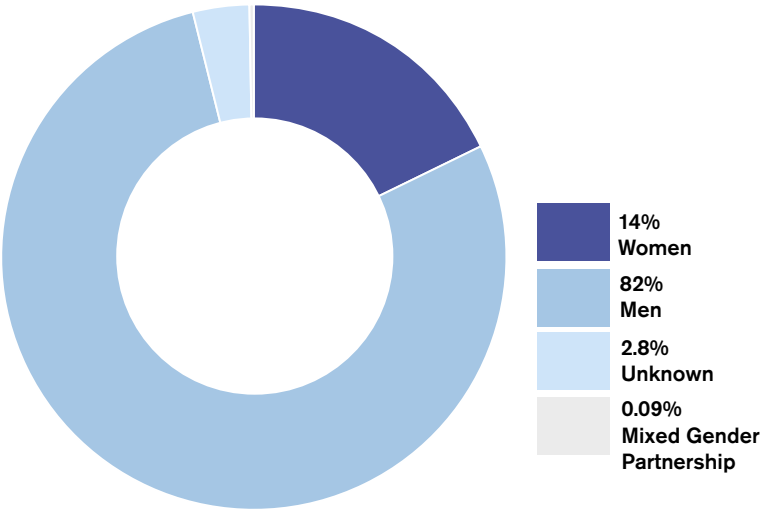


In 2020, eight works came into the collection with a total value of £19.5 million. This is a substantial increase in the value of works from the previous year of £9.5 million. Of these eight works, there was no work by women artists. This was a drop from the previous year when, of the 11 works that entered the collection, two were by women.

The National Gallery Collection acquired no works by Black and Brown artists in 2020.



Evidence 21
British Council Collection
Gender

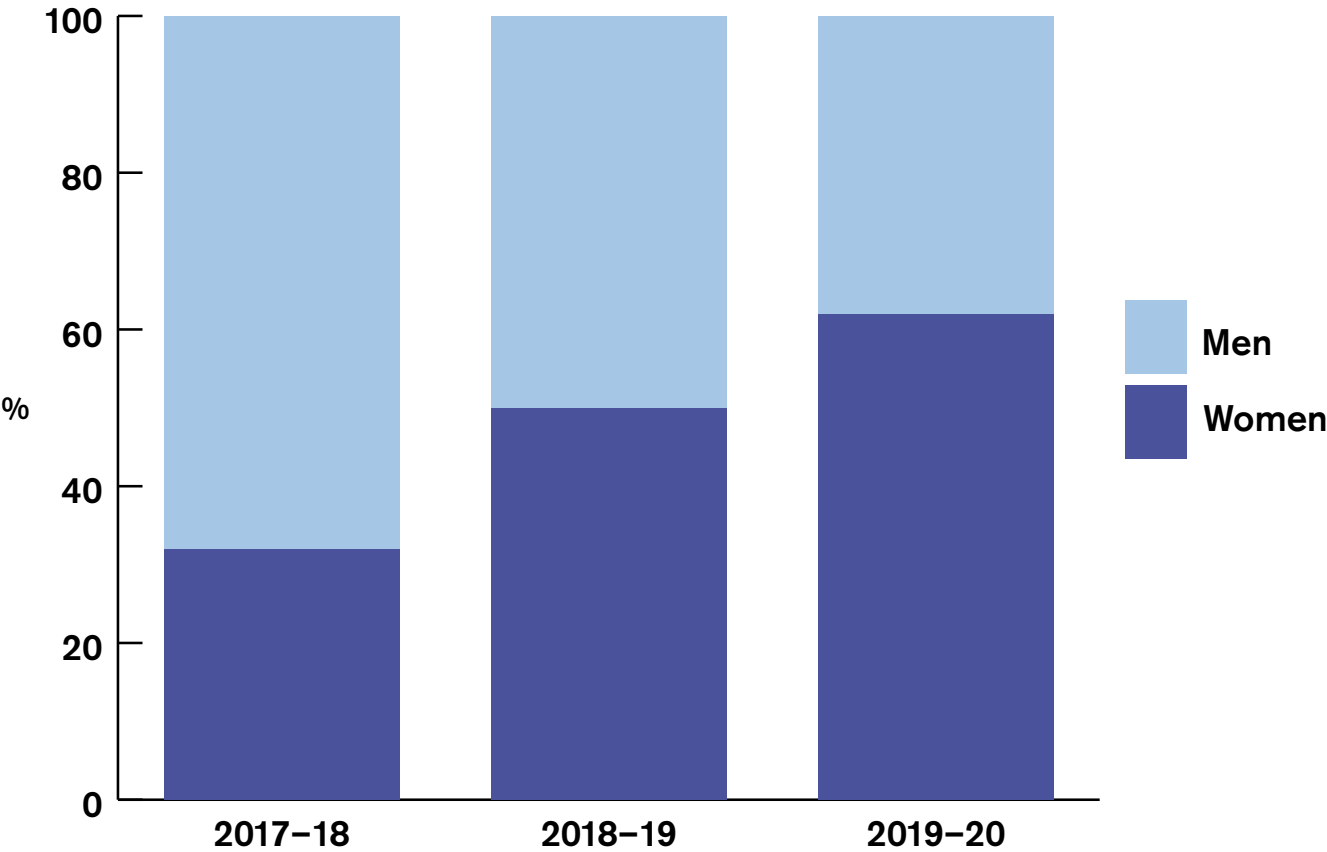


There are now 8,828 works in the British Council Collection. 14% of the works in the collection are by women, 82% of works are by men, 2.8% are unknown and 0.09% are works by men/women partnerships.

20% of the artists represented in the collection are women, 65% are men and 15% are unknown.



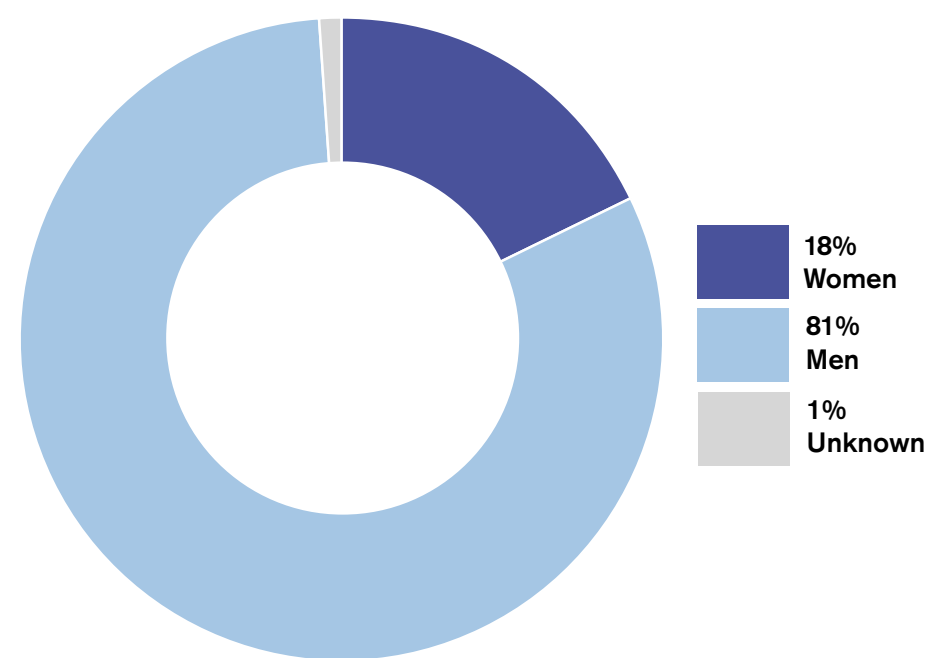
Evidence 21.1
British Council Collection – Artworks Acquired
2017–20
Gender



Eight works by five artists were acquired in the 2019–20 tax year. This included three works by three women artists (37.5%) and five works (62.5%) by two artists who are men (25%). This follows a collecting trend since we started recording data in 2017–18 whereby more individual artworks are collected by artists who are men, but a greater proportion of individual artists are women.



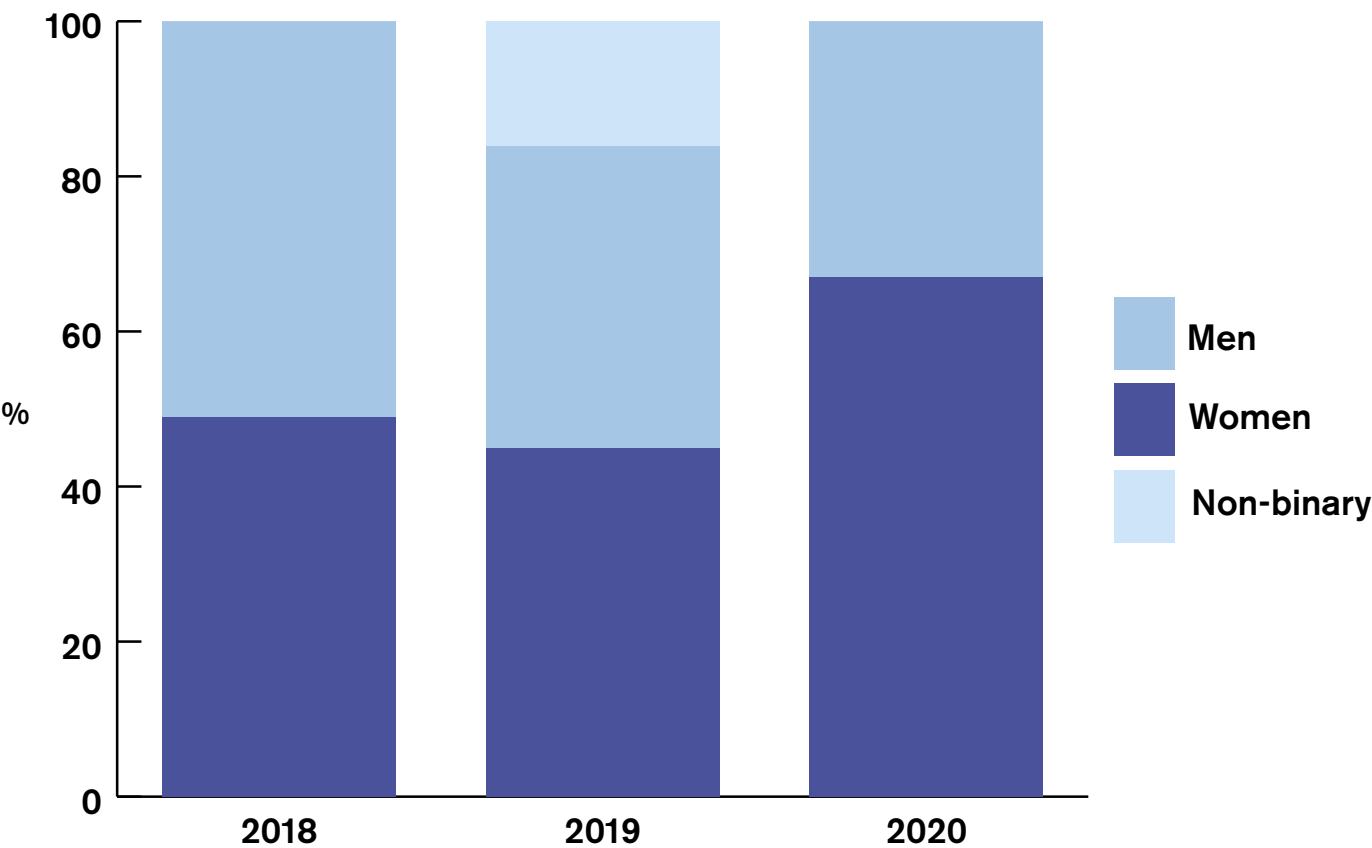
Evidence 22
Arts Council Collection
Gender



There are 7,979 works in the collection, of which 6,440 are by artists who are men (81%), 1,443 by artists who are women artists (18%) and 1% are unknown. While this is a tiny, incremental improvement in raw numbers from last year, it is not a significant enough shift to change the overall percentages.



Evidence 22.1
Arts Council Collection – Artworks Acquired
2018–20
Gender

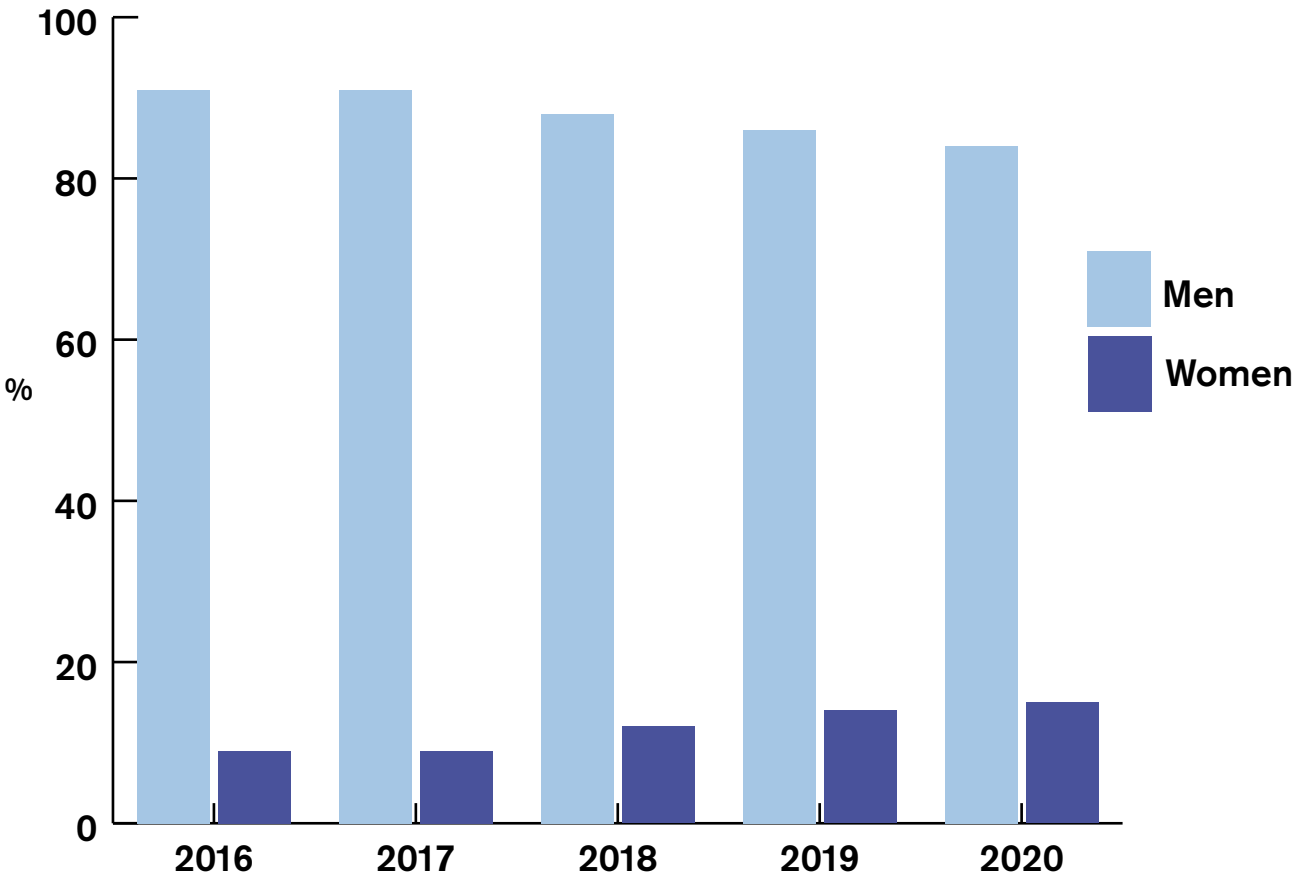


In 2019–20 the Arts Council Collection acquired 38 works from 21 artists, including 14 women (67%), down from 75% in 2018–19 but substantially higher than the percentage in 2017–18, which was 45%.

Of the 38 works in 2019–20, 18 (47%) were by women artists.

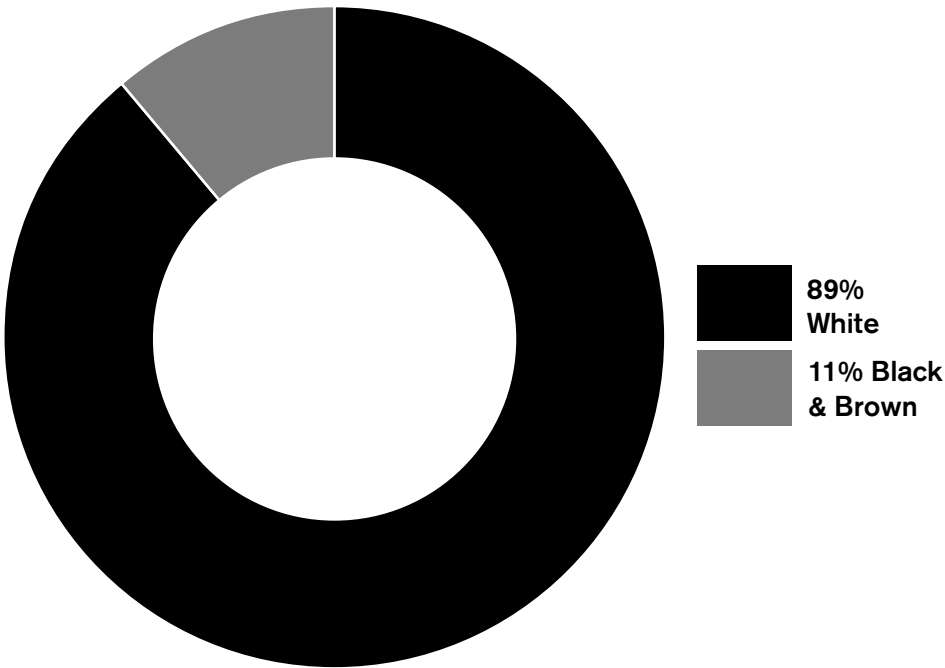


Evidence 23
Sotheby's Contemporary Art Evening Sales
in London 2016–20
Gender



A number of last year's art auctions were held online. Across all auctions, 151 lots were up for sale. 15% of those were by women artists, an increase of 1% from the previous year. But there were 2% less women artists overall, falling from 18% in 2019 to just 16%. Only two of the top ten highest grossing sales were by women artists.

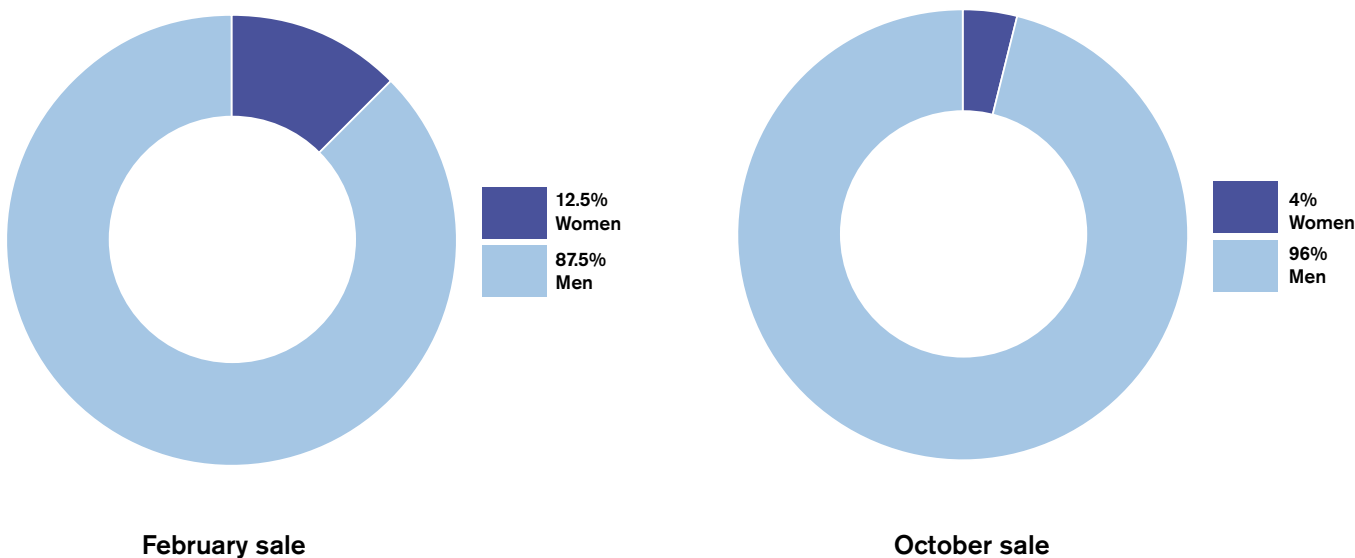
Evidence 23.1
Sotheby's Contemporary Art Evening Sales
in London 2020
Ethnicity



89% of all the artists represented in the Sotheby's Contemporary Art Evening Sales were white. Only two of the 136 artists were Black and Brown women. Of the top ten grossing sales at each of the three sales (30 sales), three were by Jean-Michel Basquiat, the only Black and Brown artist represented. No Black and Brown women featured in the top grossing sales.



Evidence 24
**Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art
Evening Sales in London 2020**
Gender

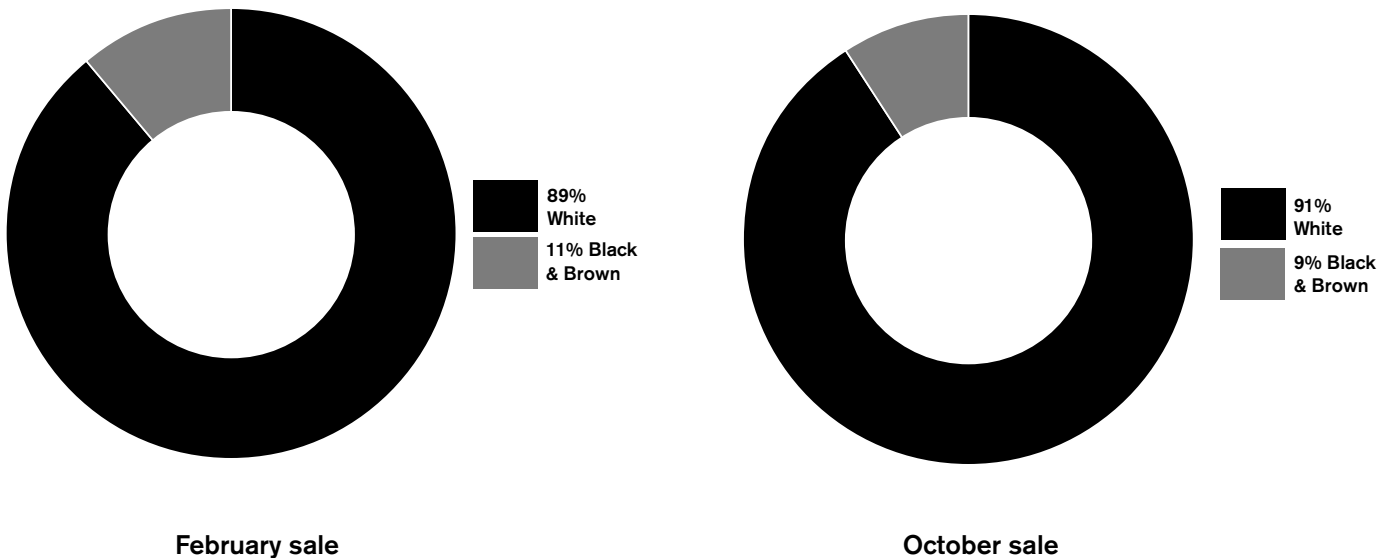


During 2020, many auctions were moved online or cancelled. The February and October Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening sales both took place virtually. There was no summer sale.

Overall, there were 79 lots across both sales, including work by 61 artists, 11% of whom were women artists. This was a decrease from the previous year when the percentage of women artists was 12.5%. In the February auction there were 54 lots by 38 artists, with a total value of £56,180,434. 84% of these artists were men. In the October sale, there were 25 lots by 23 artists totalling £49,220,500. 96% were by men.



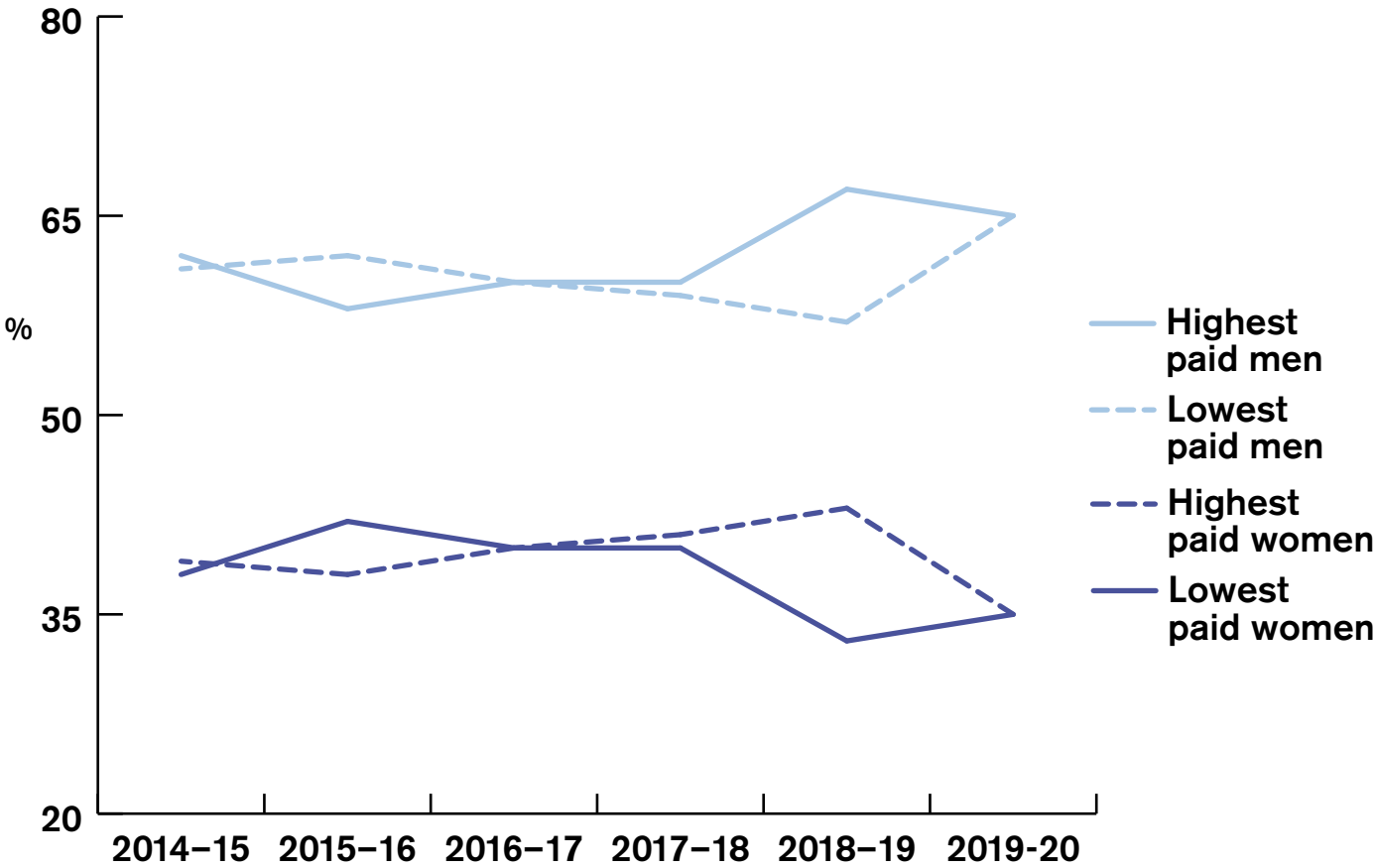
Evidence 24.1
**Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art
Evening Sales in London 2020**
Ethnicity



89% of the artists in the February sale were white, and of the 11% of lots by Black and Brown artists, only 3.7% were by Black and Brown women artists – Jordan Casteel and Tschabalala Self. 91% of the artists in the October sale were white. There were no top grossing sales by Black and Brown women.



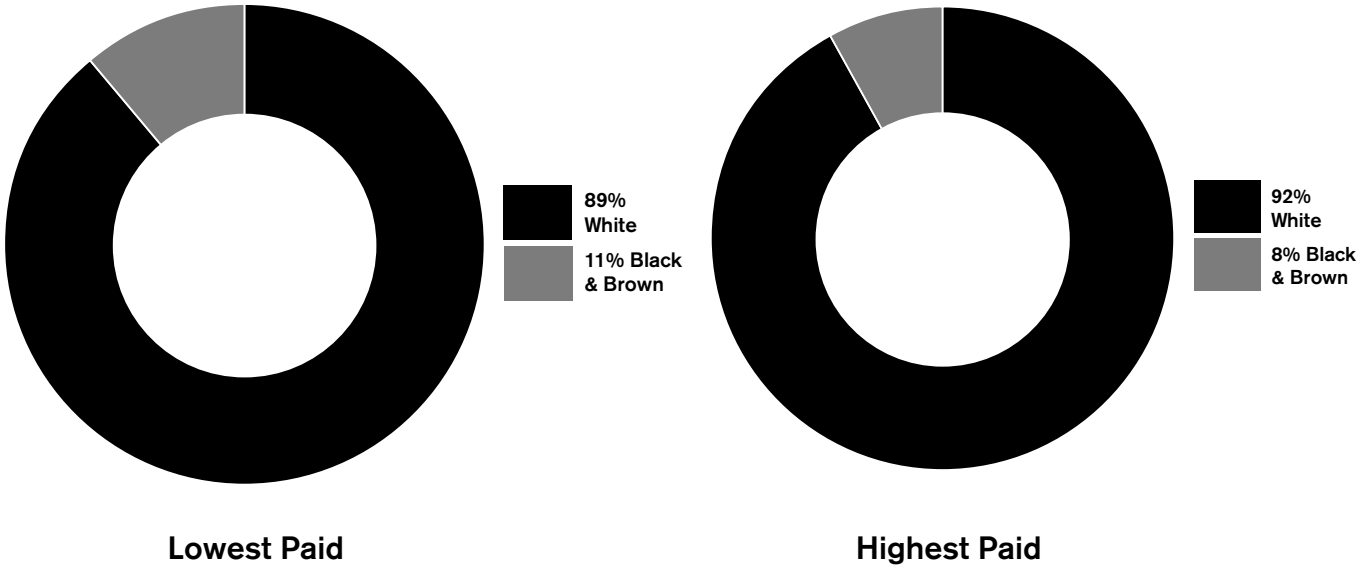
Evidence 25
Academic Staff Teaching Creative Art & Design
in UK Universities 2014–20
Gender



Women make up 53% of all teaching staff. Only 43% of Professors are women, an increase of 3% from the previous year, and a substantial increase from 35% in 2014–15. However, even these improved statistics continue to be almost the reverse of the gender statistics for students, whereby 65% of undergraduates were women in 2020.



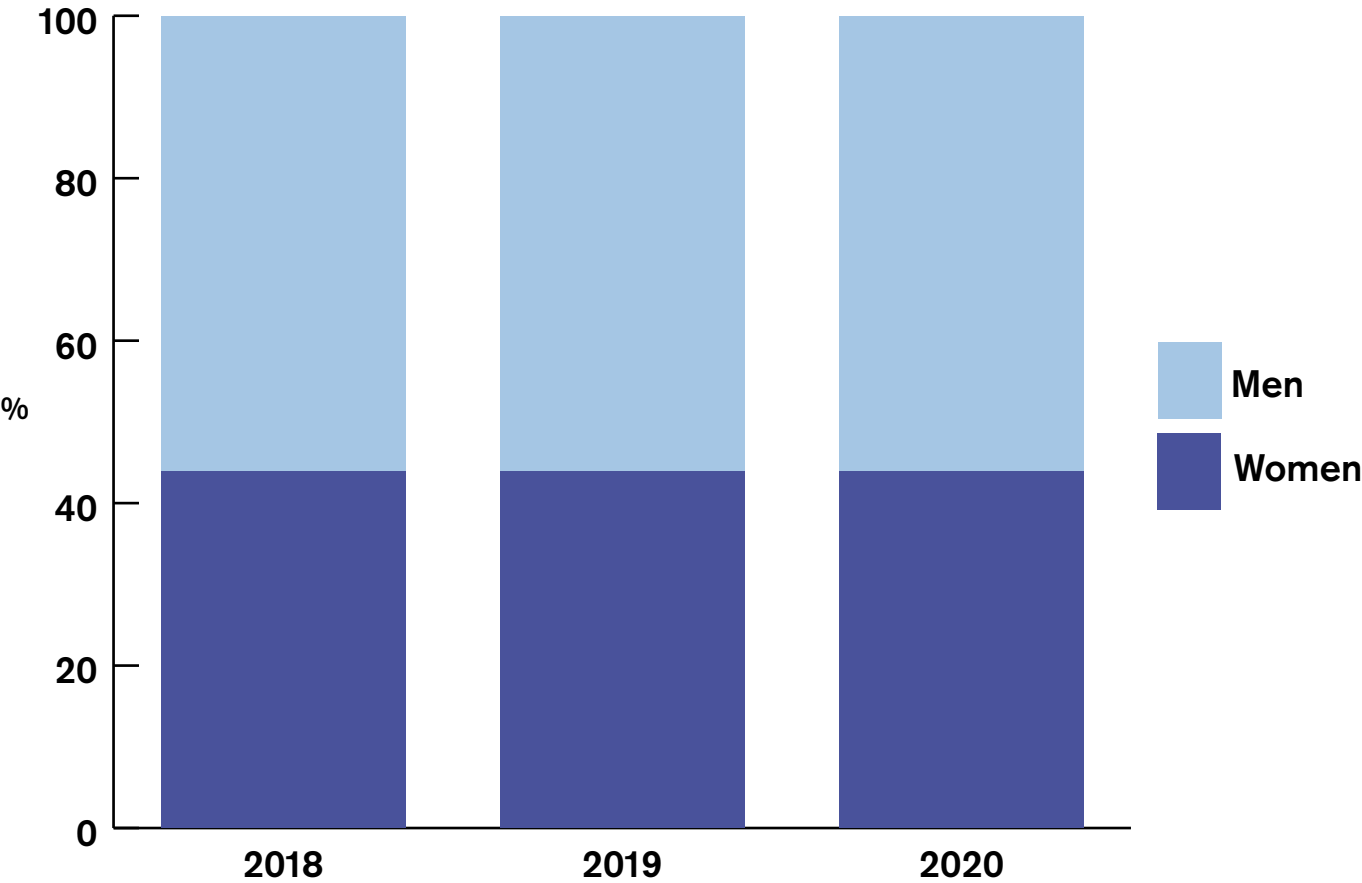
Evidence 25.1
Academic Staff Teaching Creative Art & Design
in UK Universities 2020
Ethnicity



Only 8% of Professors are Black and Brown, and even at the lowest pay level, 89% of staff are white.

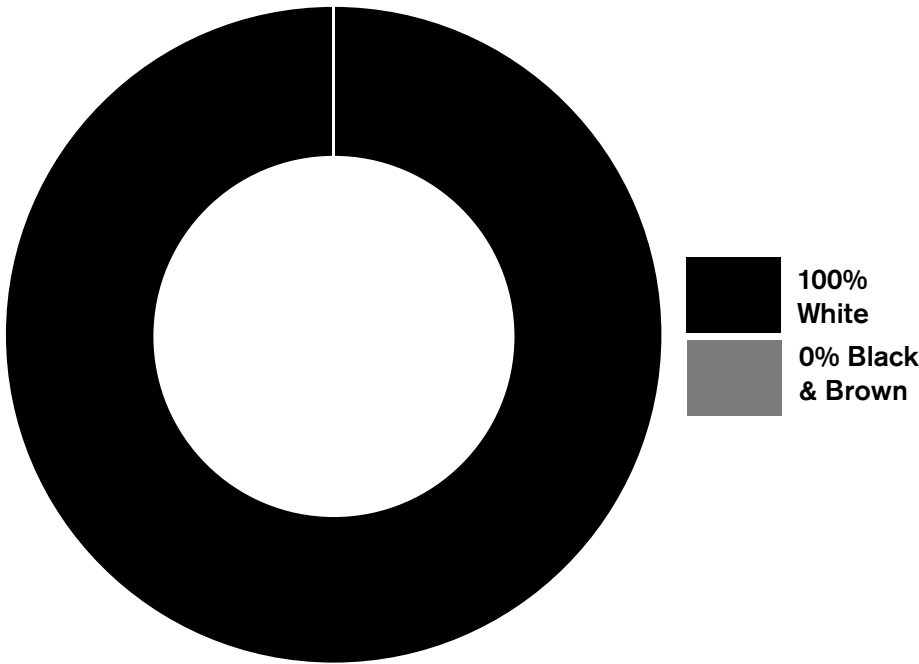


Evidence 26
Commercial Gallery Directors in London
Gender



56% of the Directors of the 27 major commercial galleries in London that we included in our data are men, a figure that has remained stable since 2018.

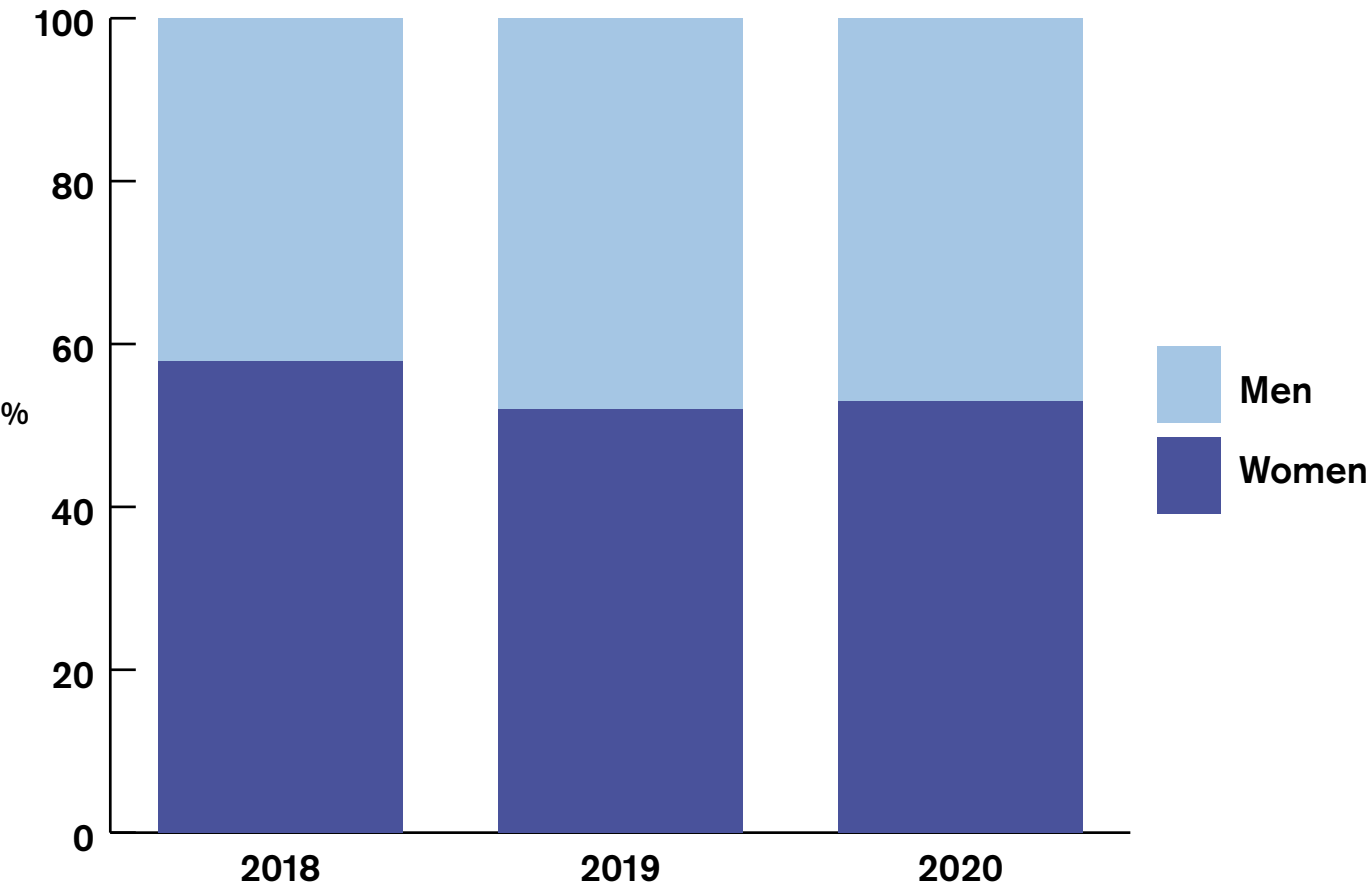
Evidence 26.1
Commercial Gallery Directors in London
Ethnicity



There are no Black and Brown gallery Directors.

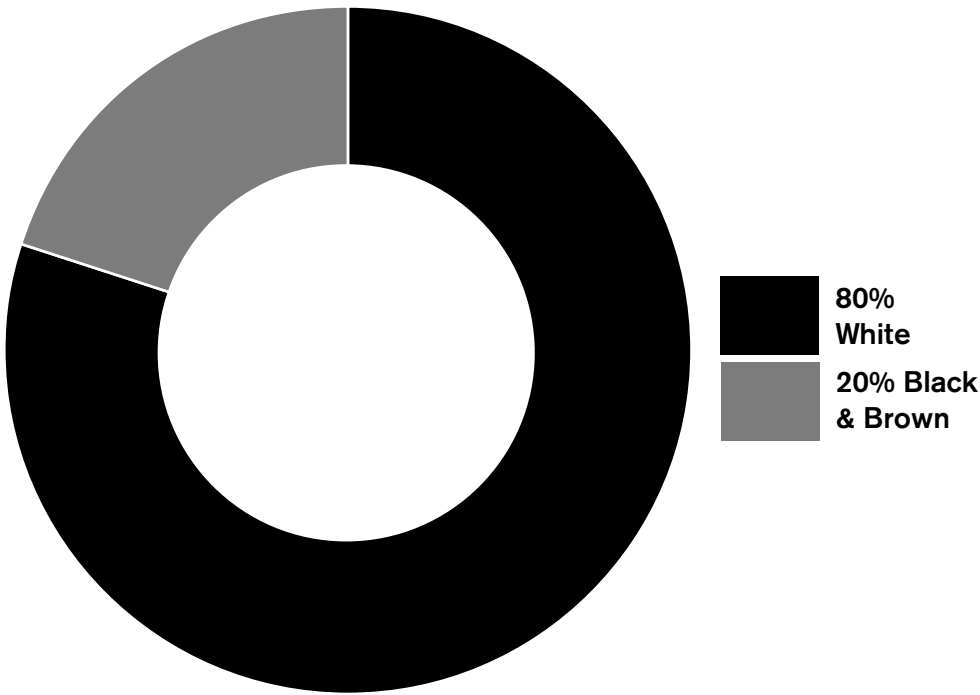


Evidence 27
Non-commercial Gallery Directors in London
Gender



Across all the non-commercial London galleries, 53% of Directors are women. This is up from 52% in the previous year, but down from 58% in 2018.

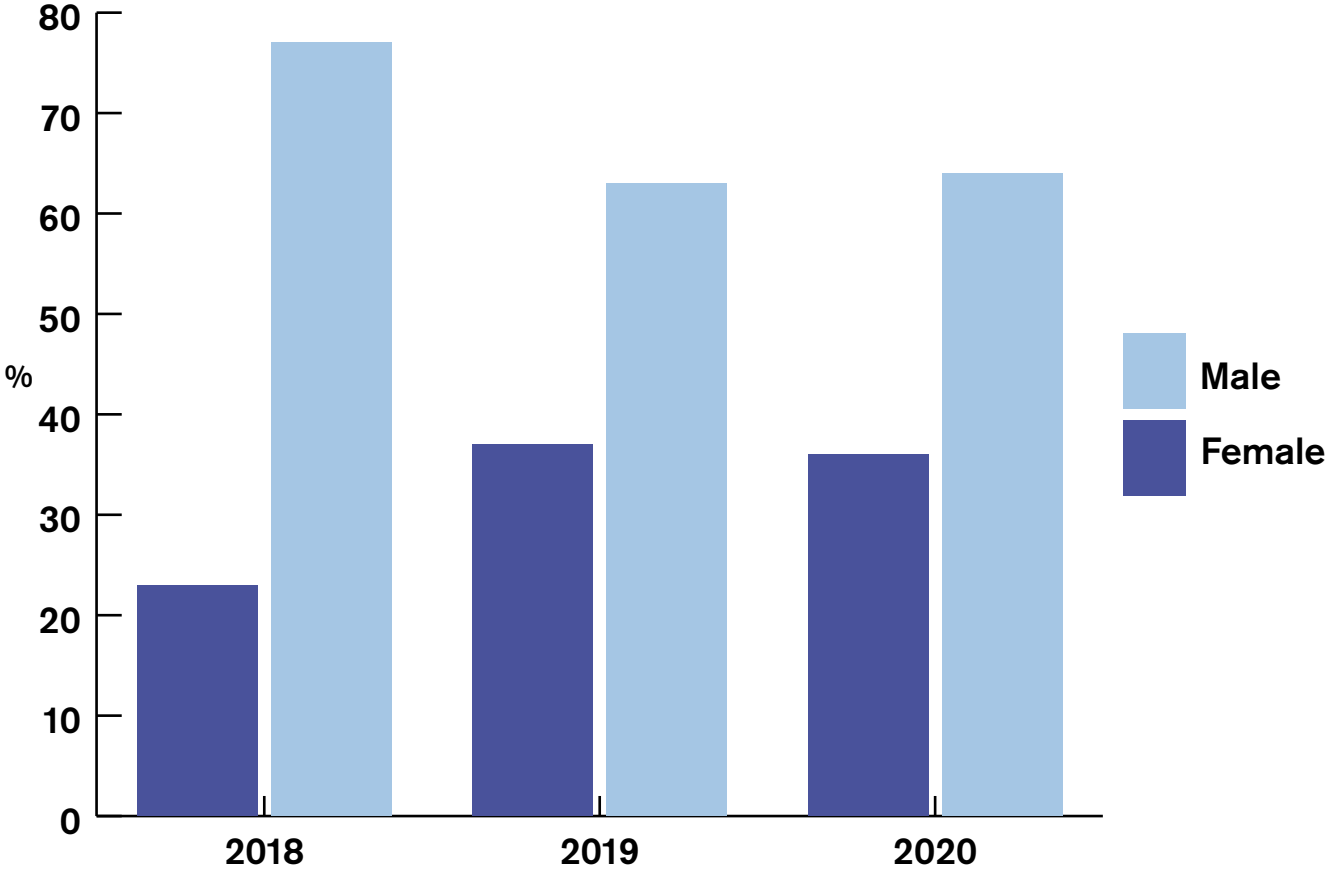
Evidence 27.1
Non-commercial Gallery Directors in London
Ethnicity



Only 6 (20%) of all Directors are Black and Brown, four of whom are women.



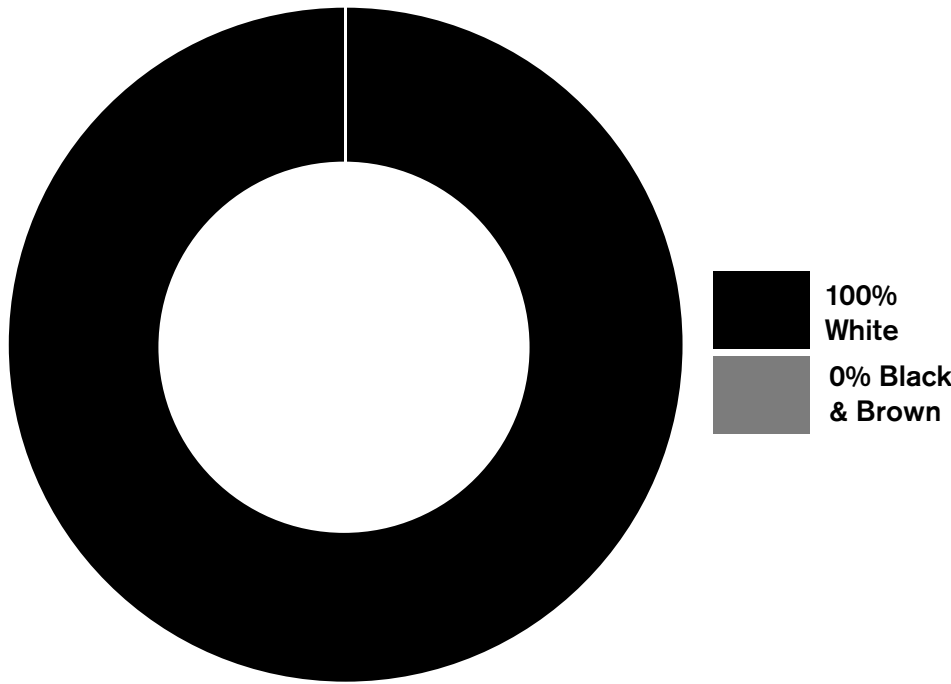
Evidence 28
Non-commercial Gallery Directors
in Major Institutions in London
Gender



In the top 11 major institutions that receive more than £1 million in ACE funding, only 36% were women. This figure did not change from the previous year, but is an increase from 2018, when it was slightly less than 25%.



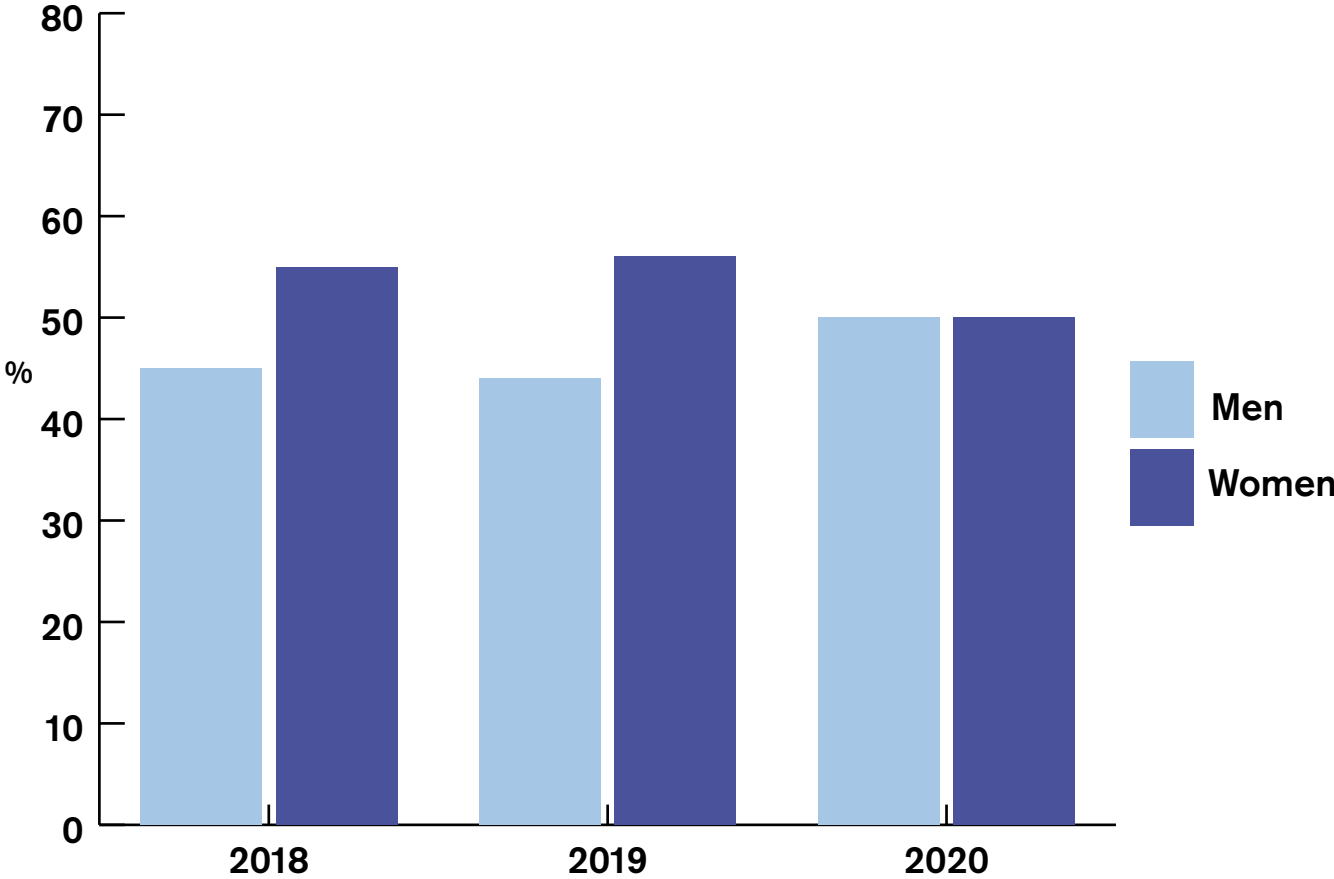
Evidence 28.1
Non-commercial Gallery Directors
in Major Institutions in London
Ethnicity



All Directors leading organisations with over £1 million in funding were white.

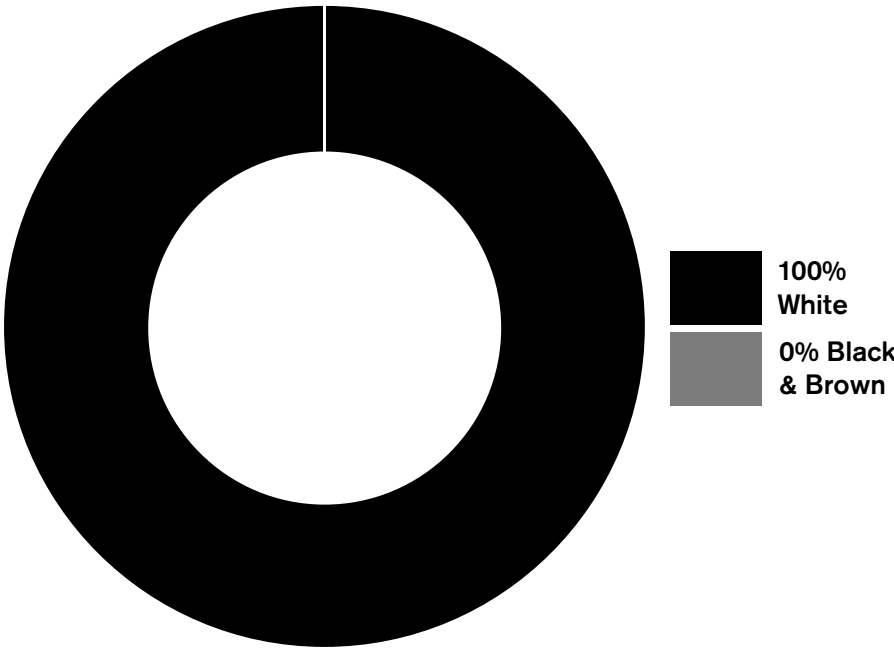


Evidence 29
Non-commercial Gallery Directors
Outside London
Gender



We counted 32 non-commercial contemporary art institutions outside London across England, Wales and Scotland. 50% of the Directors of these institutions are women, down from 56% in 2019 and 2018.

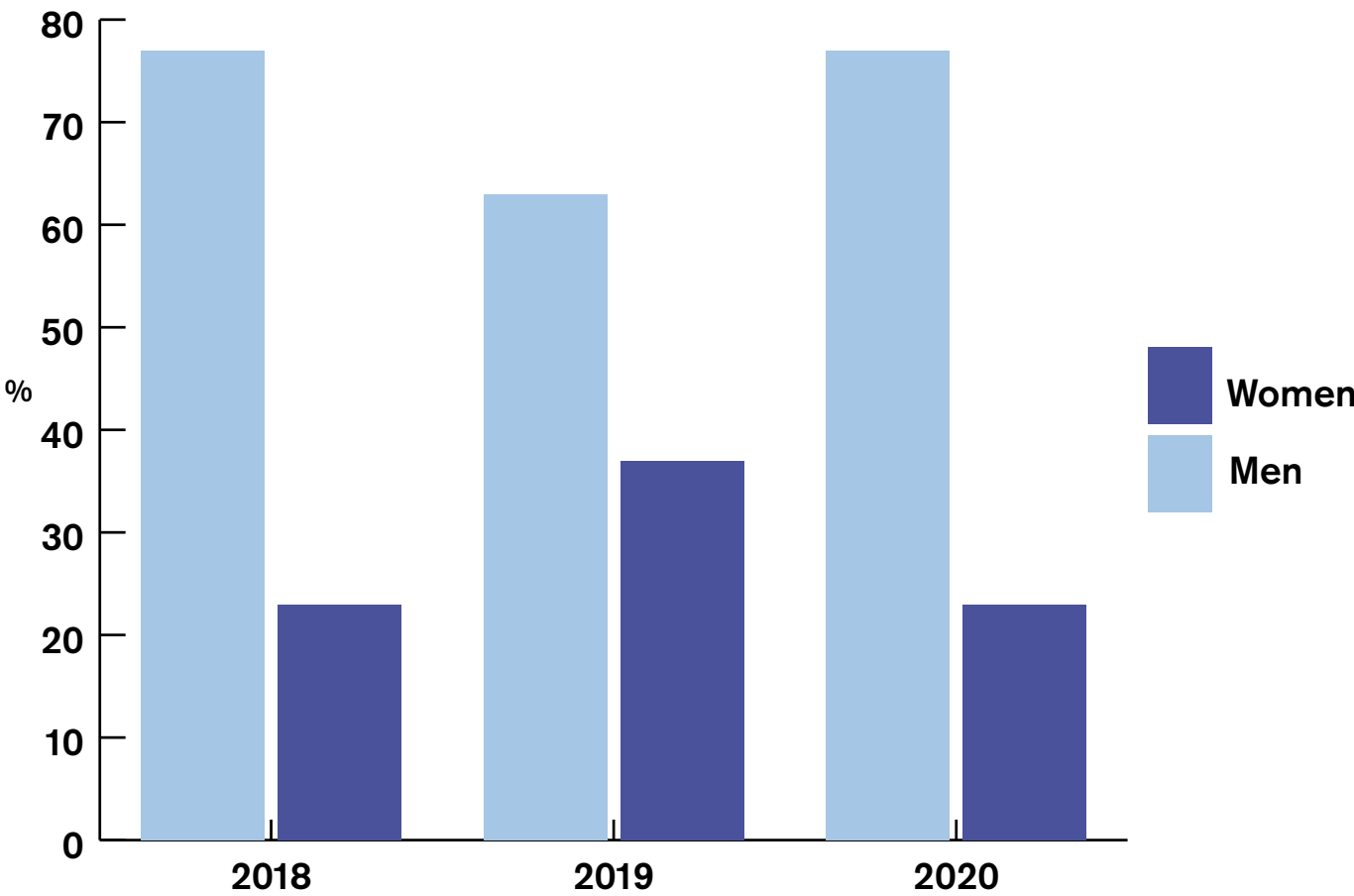
Evidence 29.1
Non-commercial Gallery Directors
Outside London
Ethnicity



All Directors of non-commercial galleries outside London were white.



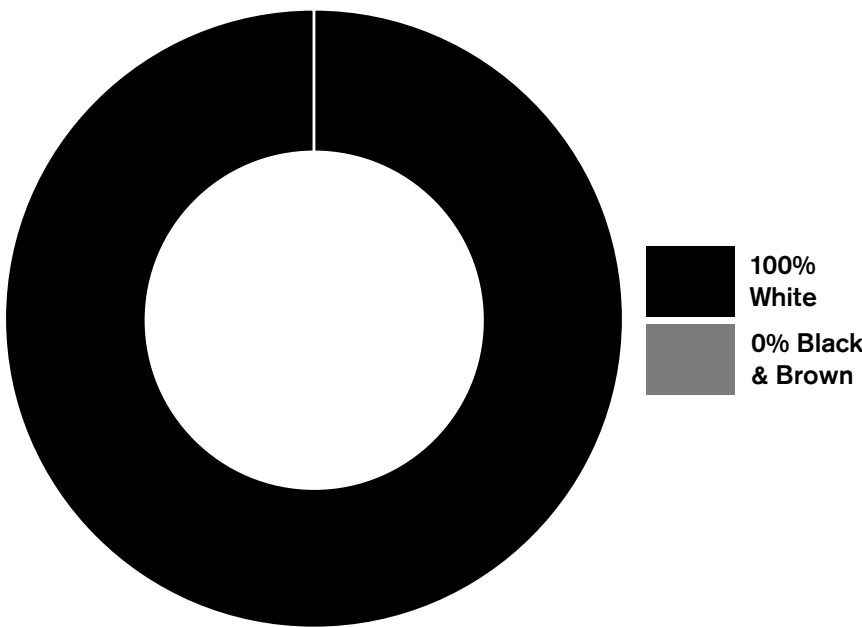
Evidence 30
Non-commercial Gallery Directors
in Major Institutions Outside London
Gender



Of the 13 major institutions receiving more than £500,000 in funding, only 23% of the Directors are women. This was a decrease from 31% in the previous year. In 2018 it was 24%.



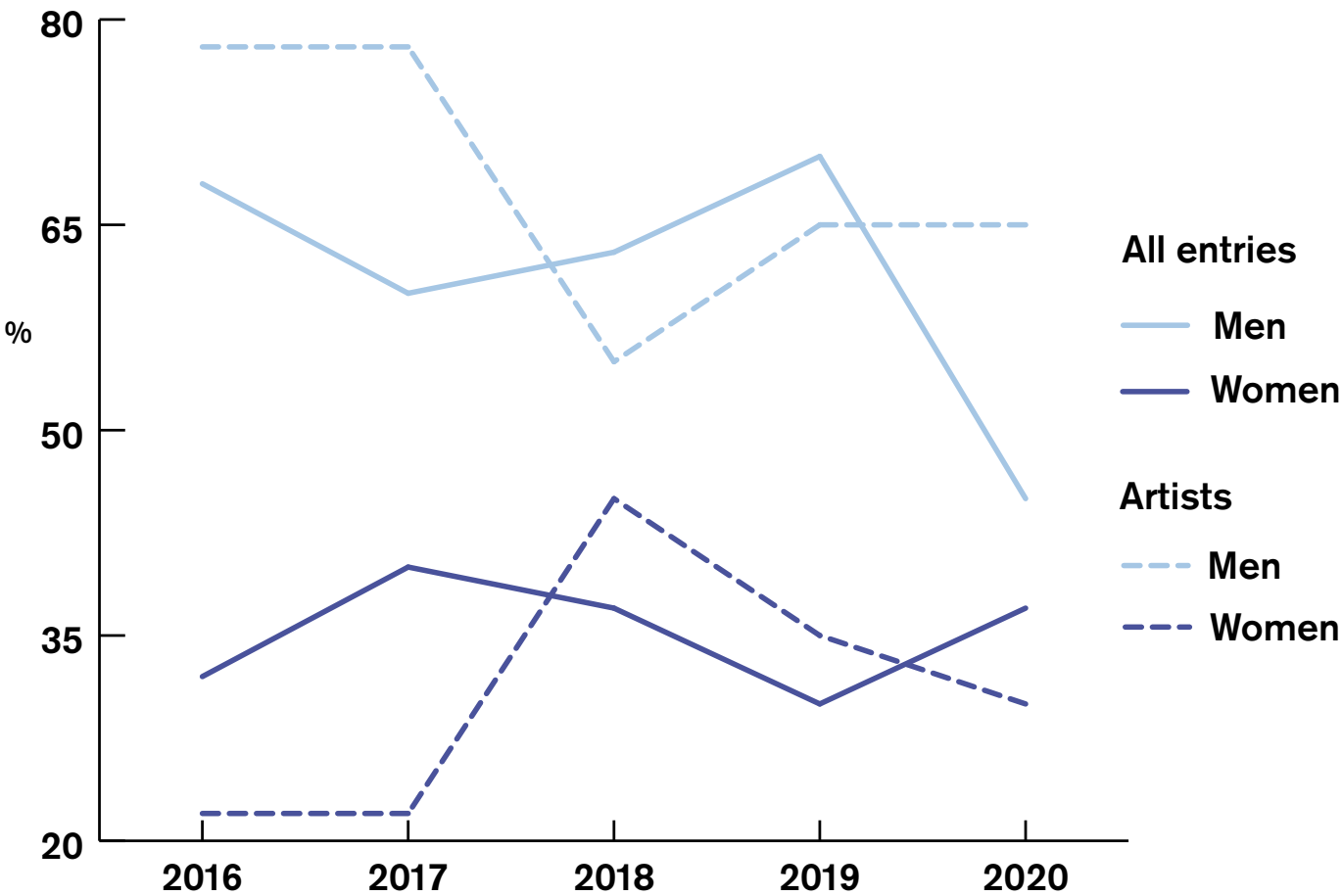
Evidence 30.1
Non-commercial Gallery Directors
in Major Institutions Outside London
Ethnicity



All Directors of major institutions outside London were white.



Evidence 31
The *ArtReview* Power 100
Gender

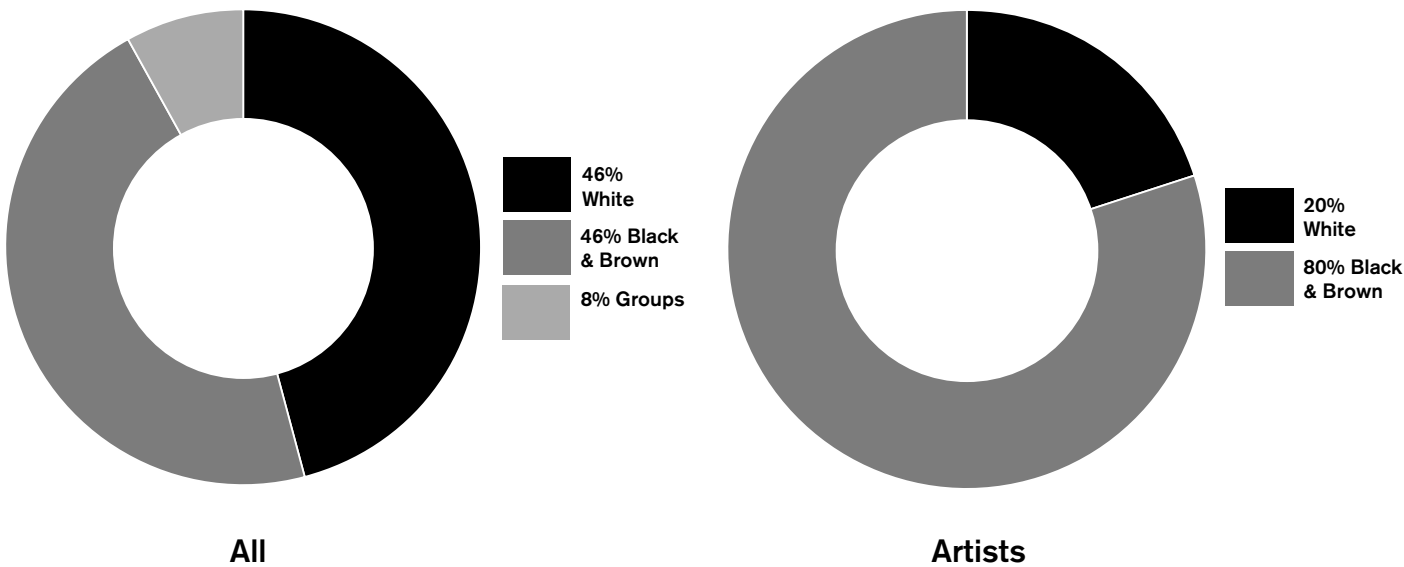


37% of the Power Top 100 in 2020 were women. This was up from 30% in 2019, and back to the same percentage as the 2018 report, which was also 37%. In 2020, one person (1%) was non-binary and 18% were mixed/non-binary groups.

Of the 20 artists in the Power Top 100, 30% were women (a decrease from 35% in the previous year) and 5% were non-binary.



Evidence 31.1
The *ArtReview* Power 100
Ethnicity



There was an equal number of white, Black and Brown people (46%) across all those on *ArtReview*'s Power 100 list, and 8% were groups whose members are of multiple ethnicities. Of the artists listed, 16 (80%) were Black and Brown people, and five of those were people were women.



This research was undertaken by Dr Kate McMillan (artist and Senior Lecturer in Creative Practice in the Department for Culture, Media and Creative Industries, King's College, London). Dr Lauren England (Lecturer in Cultural and Creative Industries, also from CMCI, King's College, London) assisted with data collection. Further essays were commissioned and gratefully received by Dr Sylvia Theuri and Beth Hughes. The report was designed by Gorm Ashurst from Bullet Creative and edited by Sarah Auld.

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