

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.00AM ON TUESDAY 23 AUGUST 2022**



To Our Industry Friends, Colleagues and Partners,

We are writing to ask for your help.

Collectively, we have been working hard to raise the representation of disabled people on screen and off, but over the past year we have come to realise that our progress has been stymied by a significant, yet resolvable, problem - physical accessibility. How can the 1 in 5 of the population who are disabled hope to work on our productions, if the spaces in which they are made are not accessible to them?

The UK Equality Act 2010 makes discrimination unlawful and Building Regulations make disabled access a legal requirement, however, compliance with both can still result in spaces that are not accessible to all of those with the talent and motivation to be there.

Last year the lobbying group Underlying Health Condition, conducted a survey into the accessibility of facilities companies and studio spaces. Based on the responses they received, the problems are clear and disturbing. It revealed a UK TV industry which is largely inaccessible, denying disabled people the right to participate. Particularly disturbing was the lack of accessible toilets, all-round step free access, and crucially accessible fire regulations.

The UK TV and Film industry does not have a standard that sets out our expectations for inclusive workspaces. We believe that now it is time to make one.

Earlier this year a pan-industry roundtable took place between disabled creatives and UK industry heads of content creators, alongside leaders from PACT, the CDN (Creative Diversity Network), Triple C DANC (Disabled Artists Networking Community) and DDPTV (Deaf & Disabled People in TV), to discuss accessibility and the state of the facilities in which we work.

Creativity can take place in any space. Not all studios are purpose built, some post houses are based in old buildings, facility vehicles need to be flexible and capable of operating in any environment. But our industry is good at solving problems. We are aware some changes will take more time than others, and that there will be a costs attached.

So our vision is to come together as an industry and create a document of accessibility standards for our Studios and Facilities. A commitment that together we can create better and more flexible workplaces that include everybody who wants to work in this industry.

To do this we propose a three stage process:

1. Join us in a roundtable in the Autumn so we can agree on our path forward together, supported by industry bodies.
2. Continue to work with us on a pan-industry access group to accessibility standards
3. Collaborate to audit your facilities so we can create a target timeline for addressing access requirements

Once our journey and the timeframe are laid out, we would expect studios, post production houses and facilities companies to meet the industry standards we have developed together.

We know this change asks a lot and we share responsibility for it, but we feel there is no other way to meet the historic imbalance of disabled people than through rapid and meaningful change. Otherwise, another generation of talent will be shut out again. We ask you to join us in committing to a better future for all

signed by:

Charlotte Moore, Chief Content Officer, BBC  
Ian Katz, Chief Content Officer, Channel 4  
Dan Grabiner, Head of UK Originals, Amazon Studios & Prime Video UK  
Reemah Sakaan, CEO, Britbox International  
Kevin Lygo, Managing Director of Media and Entertainment, ITV  
Ben Frow, Chief Content Officer, UK, Paramount  
Zai Bennett, Managing Director of Content, Sky UK and Ireland  
Marcus Arthur, Chief Executive Officer, UKTV

Supported by:

UHC, TripleC DANC, DDPTV, CDN and PACT

