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Qualitative inequalities research for the archaeology sector

Final report

by Cultural Associates Oxford for the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Cultural Associates Oxford, June 2023

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Executive summary

Background

Heritage organisations need to ensure that they serve a wide range of audiences and uncover and tell a diverse range of stories. However, the demographic profile of people working in archaeology does not match the demographic profile of the UK workforce as a whole.

This qualitative research explores people's individual experiences of archaeological careers, with the aim of improving understanding of barriers that prevent a wider range of people from entering the archaeology industry and progressing within it. It was commissioned by CIfA as part of its ongoing commitment to improving workforce diversity; it was supported by Historic England and undertaken by a team from Cultural Associates Oxford (CAO). The research focuses on the experiences of individuals, gathered through a survey, focus groups and a series of one-to-one storytelling sessions.

Key Findings

As this was a piece of qualitative research, these findings reflect the views and experiences of individuals.

The archaeology discipline in the UK is seen by many as exclusive, closed to different kinds of experience. People feel that they are excluded or marginalised because of ethnicity, sex, gender identity, health and disabilities, social class, lack of family wealth, caring responsibilities and age. Many respondents reported witnessing discriminatory behaviour directed at others, even if they had not experienced this themselves.

The experiences described by participants suggest that disabled people face a particularly complex set of barriers. Many people also report negative experiences relating to sex and gender, experiences of racism and of being excluded or treated differently because of their cultural identity or faith.

The experiences of respondents suggest that archaeology is less inclusive than related sectors (such as local government, the environmental sector and museums).

People with experience of working overseas suggested that archaeology in the UK is less progressive than in some other countries.

Respondents consistently described a number of perceived **barriers to entry to the UK archaeology industry** that can have a discriminatory impact:

- There is a disconnect between academic study and the realities of archaeology jobs.
- Recruiters often expect candidates to demonstrate practical experience which can often only be obtained through volunteering. This expectation particularly disadvantages poorer people, and disabled people who are less likely to be able to volunteer.
- Recruitment practices are seen as inflexible, with respondents arguing that recruiters do not recognise alternative career pathways and transferable skills.

And there are discriminatory **barriers to career progression**:

- Low pay and financial insecurity affect some groups of people more than others: many respondents stated that their career has only been possible because of family wealth, particularly support from a better paid partner

- A number of respondents state that bullying and harassment have negatively impacted their career development
- Respondents report that discriminatory attitudes and unconscious bias are common in some workplaces. These behaviours often go unchallenged by managers - or are carried out by managers themselves
- CPD requirements are identified as a barrier to equitable career progression: where CPD has to be undertaken outside of working hours, this is harder for disabled people and people with caring responsibilities
- There are few flexible working opportunities, and disabled people and people with caring responsibilities in particular report that this has impacted their career progression.

Respondents suggested that there are structural issues contributing to inequalities:

- The discipline is fragmented, making it hard for people to transfer between different areas of archaeology
- Competitively tendered developer-funded archaeology encourages low pay and short-term contracts, often requiring regular changes of location. Some respondents also felt that poor practice was perpetuated because contracting units need to maintain good relationships with developers
- Professional and personal networks are important in archaeology, but networks can be exclusive and act as gatekeepers, thereby increasing inequality.

The experiences of the respondents suggest that there are pockets of good practice. Parts of the public and not-for-profit sectors have more progressive organisational cultures and working practices, as do some contracting organisations. But some of those most affected by inequalities suggest that initiatives to improve equalities can place too great a burden on the very individuals the initiatives aim to support.

Some respondents acknowledged that CIfA has been active on equalities, but others were highly critical of what they saw as failures to take adequate action and to better represent the workforce. Many respondents perceived barriers around CIfA's professional pathways.

These recommendations are described in further detail in Section 3 of the full report.

A Recommendations for CIfA

Having considered the findings of the report, the following recommendations are made to CIfA:

- A1: CIfA should work to maintain momentum and profile for improving equality and should encourage others in the discipline to commit to action and to work together
- A2: CIfA should review and, where necessary, adjust its professional pathways, looking at other accreditation processes for good practice
- A3: CIfA should encourage people to report poor practice, discrimination and harassment
- A4: CIfA should improve connections between academia and the Institute
- A5: CIfA should use its frameworks and regulations to encourage good practice
- A6: CIfA should seek to improve opportunities for disabled people through reviewing its own processes and supporting attitude change

B Recommendations to others

These recommendations are for the discipline as a whole and for other organisations. CIfA could look to convene a sector meeting to discuss ways in which these recommendations can be taken forward, or to seek opportunities where these can be tied into other strategies:

- B1: Sector organisations should initiate a programme of leadership development
- B2: Employers should continue to improve HR practices

- B3: Employers should review the wording of their job adverts or recruitment documentation to ensure they are not creating an expectation that voluntary experience is required and should also ensure they are taking account of transferable skills
- B4: Sector organisations should collect better equalities data
- B5: Employers and sector organisations should broaden access to career development opportunities
- B6: Sector organisations should consider further research on topics including into good practice from elsewhere and ways of overcoming attitudinal barriers to careers in archaeology among young people.

Foreword

When the CIfA EDI Standing Committee was formed, one of its primary goals was to identify concrete actions that could be taken to make archaeology a more accessible, equitable, and inclusive profession. For that, research was needed - not just raw numbers of the profession, but the stories behind those numbers. Simply knowing who isn't represented in the profession isn't enough to enact effective change - we needed to know why, so we could begin to understand how to work towards removing the barriers.

This report represents the excellent work done by Cultural Associates Oxford in answering a difficult question - what are the barriers to a career in archaeology, and how do we overcome them? The results make for sobering reading, that should challenge the profession to take serious and significant action to address what are clearly entrenched and inherent barriers. It is clear from the findings that though work has, on paper, begun to make changes in the profession - these changes have not made enough actual, tangible change to those who face barriers to entry or progression. Particularly for disabled people, people of the Global Majority[1], women and non-binary people, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and those with caring responsibilities, the barriers to either entering or developing a career in archaeology are significant and systematic.

This research then, not only gives the profession a stark understanding of the landscape within the profession, but also insight into what needs to happen next. From these findings, the CIfA EDI Standing Committee can develop training plans, advise the CIfA Board on actions, inform policy and guidance for its members, and develop key partnerships with groups to develop truly inclusive practice going forwards.

This important work was enabled by funding and support from Historic England and would not have been possible without the hard work of those who volunteered their time to CIfA's former Equality and Diversity Special Interest Group (disbanded in 2022 and replaced with the EDI committee) and now the Standing Committee. The tireless work of these individuals over the years has seen EDI rightfully placed high on the agenda for CIfA and a core facet of its ongoing business plan and strategy - informed by research like this project.

Penelope Foreman

CIfA Board member and Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

CAO and CIfA would like to thank the other members of the steering group for this project: Jenni Butterworth, Sean Curran, Alex Llewellyn, Kayt Hawkins, Melanie Johnson and Poppy Szaybo.

This research would not have been possible without the generosity of the many individuals who shared their experiences with the research team. The research was designed and promoted with the support of the following organisations: Enabled Archaeology Foundation, Mentoring Womxn in Archaeology, the Council for British Archaeology, the BAJR Respect Group, the BAJR LGBTQ+ Group, University Archaeology UK, the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, Prospect, and relevant CIfA special interest groups, including the Early Careers Group and the Diggers' Forum.

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[1] final-leeds-beckett-1102-global-majority.pdf (leedsbeckett.ac.uk)
I'm Embracing the Term 'People of the Global Majority' | by Daniel Lim | Medium

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and aims

This research was undertaken to improve understanding of the issues affecting equality of access to careers within the archaeological discipline, through exploring individual experiences.

It is well known that the demographic profile of people working in archaeology and the broader historic environment sector does not match the demographic profile of the UK workforce as a whole[2]. It is also well known that better workforce diversity improves organisational performance in organisations of all kinds[3]. This matters in every sector, but it particularly matters for heritage organisations, which need to ensure that they serve a wide range of audiences and uncover and tell a diverse range of stories about the past. We know, for example, that people from non-white ethnic backgrounds experience heritage attractions as unwelcoming if all staff are white.[4] Historic England's strategy recognises the link between a diverse heritage workforce, and equity in the provision of services to audiences.[5]

But while the importance of improving workforce diversity is widely recognised, there have been many unanswered questions about how this could be done. By focusing on the experience of individuals, the research aimed to answer some of these questions.

The research built on a long-standing commitment by CIfA to take a lead on improving workforce diversity, through a series of initiatives over the past five years. The research was supported by Historic England and undertaken by a team from Cultural Associates Oxford (CAO).

The research aimed to

- enable a deeper understanding of the structural issues within the discipline, taking individual experiences as its starting point
- provide an authoritative evidence base to enable CIfA's Board to make decisions for taking forward any recommendations within its wider ED&I strategy.

The research set out to answer the following research questions:

- What are the factors which attract people to working in archaeology and which encourage people to maintain a career in the industry?
- What are the barriers to entry to the industry?
- What are the barriers to progression within the industry, or the factors which lead to people leaving the industry?
- What sources of support are or have been important to people developing a career in archaeology?

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[2] See Profiling the Profession, first published in 1997, a report into the nature of the archaeological profession. The 2020 edition of Profiling the Profession can be accessed here, with links to all earlier reports: https://profilingtheprofession.org.uk/ (Accessed 29 March 2020).

[3] For a recent comparison from another sector, this report for the Financial Conduct Authority establishes that more diverse workforce in financial institutions leads to better risk management, and appears to lead to better business performance: Financial Conduct Authority, *Review of research literature that provides evidence of the impact of diversity and inclusion in the workplace*, July 2021 https://www.fca.org.uk/publication/research/review-research-literature-evidence-impact-diversity-inclusion-workplace.pdf (Accessed 29 March 2022).

[4] For example, Centre for Social and Economic Inclusion, Barriers to Engagement in Heritage by Currently Under-Represented Groups, 2013 https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/0809881_barriers.pdf (Accessed 29 March 2022).

[5] Historic England, *A Strategy for Inclusion, Diversity and Equality, November 2020 to March 2023,* https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/about/strategy-ide-nov20-mar23/

- What further sources of support might make it easier for people from a wider range of backgrounds to develop a career in archaeology?
- What changes within CIfA's remit could improve the experiences of people from a wider range of backgrounds seeking to develop a career in archaeology?
- What changes beyond CIfA's remit are also required?

The report authors and CIfA are grateful to all the individuals who shared their experiences and took time to support the development of the report. Many respondents welcomed the initiative but emphasised the need for the research to be translated into action, especially given how long many of these problems have been debated. This report includes a series of recommendations which should help achieve some of the progress which is required.

1.2 Research methodology and approach

The research gathered insight into individuals' experiences through three strands of work:

- online engagement, including a survey with space to submit an extended free text response
- a series of one-to-one story telling sessions
- a series of four focus group, each focusing on a particular area of individual experience, but with wide-ranging discussion.

More detail about the approaches used and our recruitment of participants is included in the *Appendix - Detailed methodology*. All three approaches offered scope for individuals to tell their own stories in their own words and extracts from these accounts are included in the report, to illustrate the findings. All survey and focus group responses are reported anonymously. Participants in the storytelling sessions were offered a choice of whether they wanted to speak anonymously or put their name to their story; where we use their names in this report, that is their choice.

We supported this original research with a literature review, and we have included insight from this where appropriate.

In interpreting the findings, it is important to remember that this was a piece of *qualitative* research. It focused on the experiences of individuals, as a way of shedding light on broader themes and structural issues. CIfA and the report authors do not claim that these experiences are representative or universal and cannot make judgements about their prevalence. Rather, the rationale for taking this approach is that understanding these individual stories and experiences can help sector bodies plan more appropriate and tailored ways of addressing the problems of inequality. These findings reflect the lived experiences of individuals and their perceptions of archaeology. We have indicated where perceptions may be inaccurate (for example, some of the comments about CIfA's professional pathways were based on misperceptions about the requirements). But those perceptions still matter if they are acting as barriers to progression.

Surveys and focus groups are commonly used for qualitative research, but storytelling may be a less familiar approach. In storytelling, an individual who wishes to share their experiences is invited to work one-to-one with a researcher. Unlike in a traditional interview, the storyteller takes the lead and is encouraged to talk about their experiences in whatever form and with whatever emphasis matters to them. Their story is then written up by the researcher and agreed by the storyteller, to be sure that it fairly reflects their experiences. As well as the extracts included here, the full stories have been shared with CIfA for the organisation to use in planning its own work and making the case to others.

In reporting the survey findings, we sometimes give figures for the proportion of respondents giving a particular response. **It is important to bear in mind that we do not claim that the survey respondents were representative of**

the sector as whole and the figures should not be used in that way: indeed, we know that individuals with experiences of inequality or discrimination are likely to be more motivated to respond to this kind of research.

The research aimed to engage with four groups:

- People working in archaeology, in a wide variety of roles, for a wide range of employers and as freelancers/independent consultants.
- People studying archaeology, either at university or through an alternative entry route, such as an apprenticeship. University students included both undergraduates and people studying for higher degrees.
- People who are currently aiming to establish an archaeological career, including those volunteering to gain experience and those applying for archaeology jobs while working in other fields.
- People who have previously unsuccessfully tried to establish a career in the archaeology sector, or who have left the sector.

1.3 Definitions

The definitions used throughout this report are in line with those set out in CIfA's Strategy and Values Statement[6]:

The profession: CIfA-accredited archaeologists, or those on other credible professional registers

The discipline: all archaeologists

The industry: all paid archaeologists

When we talk about the 'sector' we mean the broader heritage and historic environment sector, of which archaeology is a part.

Where we quote from individual responses, we have kept the terminology used by respondents and have only changed quotations to correct misspelled words.

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[6] https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfA%20Strategy%20and%20values%20web.pdf

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2 Findings

2.1 Overall perceptions of the sector

The overall culture in the discipline is not seen as equitable and positive about diversity: many respondents felt that the discipline is monocultural, exclusive, and not open to different kinds of experience. There are many aspects to this: people felt that they and others are excluded or marginalised because of race and ethnicity, sex or gender identity, health issues and disabilities, and factors associated with ageing. Others described exclusionary attitudes and barriers around social class, caring responsibilities and a whole range of life experiences. This view was not limited to people from marginalised groups: many respondents reported witnessing discriminatory behaviour directed at others. In spite of a range of equality initiatives, there are huge barriers still to overcome and some respondents spoke about being dismayed at the lack of progress over the last twenty years.

Respondents with experience of other sectors often noted that archaeology appears to be less progressive in terms of equalities than related sectors (such as local government, the environmental sector and museums). People with experience of working in other countries, including Greece, Italy and the US, suggested that archaeology in the UK is less progressive in terms of equalities than elsewhere. Some volunteers or people working outside mainstream structures felt that their contributions were not recognised or valued. (Nevertheless, some respondents did point out ways in which equalities in the industry had improved over their working lives.)

2.2 Motivations for working in archaeology

People are attracted to work in archaeology by a wide variety of motivations. Respondents most often described being attracted to work in the discipline because of their passion for the subject. They were looking for opportunities to work on active excavations, to grow and deepen specialist expertise and to work with likeminded people. Opportunities to travel, to be part of a research community and to have a varied working life were also reported to be important motivations for starting a career in archaeology.

> *"I have loved archaeology since before I knew what it meant. I still love what I do, I have loved the travel it has given me, the opportunities to live and work abroad and to have experiences and jobs I could only have had through archaeology."* Survey respondent

As might be expected, motivations for staying in the industry are somewhat different. For people already working in archaeology, motivations for staying in the industry tended to focus more on people: these included the chance to mentor or teach others and being part of a research community. For many people, the passion for the subject and its importance remains a strong motivating factor; but some of the factors that make a career in archaeology attractive at an early stage can become more problematic as people move on to a different stage in their life, particularly the difficulty of balancing travel and changing work locations with other responsibilities.

> *"Archaeology provides immense social value, which is why I'm still here despite pay/conditions/prospects. Archaeology offers perspective (a modern western way of living isn't universal, but highly specific to here and now - other possibilities might help us tackle some of the problems we face) and illuminates the lives of ordinary people in the past, who are not represented in the written record."* Survey respondent

2.3 Barriers to entry to the industry

This research engaged with people who had already begun either to study archaeology or to attempt to develop a career in archaeology, and so had already overcome any initial barriers associated with understanding of what

archaeology is, or why it might be of interest. Other research carried out at the same time as our project has highlighted that many young people perceive archaeology as elitist and not for them[7] and this remains an important barrier to overcome.

Many respondents felt that their academic training has not equipped them for work in the archaeology industry. Many people cited what they perceived as a gulf between academic archaeology and the industry as a barrier to entry. Some participants in both the survey and the focus groups mentioned that they felt what they had learned while studying archaeology was not applicable when they entered the industry. This goes some way to answer the question of why the university archaeology student body is more diverse than the archaeology industry: university archaeology does not directly prepare students for working life.

> *"I'm sure something needs to be done with UK universities. Introducing proper student training on site might be a good start."* Survey respondent

This is supported by the CBA's recent research with young people, which also found that respondents were concerned that university courses did not offer sufficient insight into a career in archaeology.[8]

Many respondents felt that the need to build practical experience before gaining paid work acted as a barrier to entry to the industry. Several respondents stated that they had struggled to secure work because they did not have practical experience. The expectation that people entering the industry will have substantial voluntary experience is exclusionary: this especially affects both poorer people, and disabled people (for many disabled people, daily life and everyday tasks take longer, leaving less free time to be able to consider volunteering, as we discuss below).

Recruitment practices are not sufficiently flexible and open to recognising alternative career pathways and transferable skills. Respondents reported that many recruiters are too restrictive about the need for certain prior experience or qualifications, and not focused on ability and potential. Respondents frequently cited the requirement to have a driving licence among unnecessary barriers, rather than allowing for alternative approaches which might be more accessible to disabled people.

2.4 Barriers to progression: structural, management and cultural issues

Low pay and financial insecurity are big issues in the industry, and affect some groups of people more than others. Many respondents stated that their career had only been possible because they had a better paid partner who could help to support them.

> *"Many senior managers and specialists I know are able to stay in the profession only because they have a professionally employed spouse who earns more than them. It is the spouses who are propping up archaeology."* Survey respondent

Respondents frequently reported that long-standing problems with low pay were being exacerbated by the current economic pressures.

> *"Whilst conditions have improved for commercial archaeologists over the past decade, the current pressures on the profession [are] extreme. I fear the cost-of-living crisis will have a devastating impact on early- and mid-career archaeologists that will reverberate through the industry for many years. This financial instability*

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[7] Council for British Archaeology, Youth Voice Consultation, September 2022. For a summary see: https://www.archaeologyuk.org/youth-engagement/youth-governance.html
[8] CBA 2022, p.31

undermines much of the effort we put in to trying to diversify the sector and make archaeology more inclusive." Survey respondent

As might be expected, people from lower income backgrounds and people who had attended state schools were more likely to report in the survey that financial barriers had had a significant impact on their careers, reflecting the fact that they are less likely to be able to rely on family support to help overcome problems associated with low pay.

Access to CPD opportunities such as conferences is unequal, with some people unable to access opportunities because of financial barriers. Respondents also described difficulties associated with the expectation that job applicants will be able to drive and have a car, which also creates a barrier for those from lower income backgrounds.

CIfA is seen as not advocating effectively for higher wages.

> *"I knew that I didn't want to be just a digger due to the financial hardships involved - I wouldn't be able to get a mortgage, have a family, or generally move on with my life. So having been made redundant several times in academic/museum settings, and spending a few miserable years on the digging sector, I moved into consultancy. The salaries for commercial archaeologists are untenable and CIfA needs to be more of an advocate for raising that. My friends who are diggers are visiting food banks and have no life really. It is sad to see!"* Survey respondent

Many respondents reported experiences of bullying and harassment, which have negatively impacted on their career development. Respondents reported inappropriate behaviour ranging from name-calling to unwanted touching. Respondents in our research frequently reported experiences of bullying and harassment and discrimination. Respondents working in fieldwork reported that the attitudes which are prevalent in the construction industry can become the dominant culture in the workplace: this particularly affects women and disabled people, but is also likely to affect others who experience harassment and discrimination.

Experience of bullying or harassment was prevalent for all age groups in the survey, but was slightly less prevalent for those aged under 35 or aged between 55-65, compared to other groups. Women and people who described their gender as 'other' were more likely than men to have experienced bullying and harassment. Disabled people were more likely than non-disabled people to report experiences of bullying and harassment. Respondents described negative impacts of these experiences both on their wellbeing and their career development:

> *"The working culture of bullying, unreasonable demands, intimidation, a lack of mentorship and in-house training from senior staff created a hugely toxic atmosphere to work in which in turn caused me considerable anxiety and depression."* Survey respondent

> *"I find that there is a lack of acceptance in archaeology as if you don't hold the same views as others then you are treated terribly. If you do not adhere to certain ideologies then you are targeted even if you are respectful of others yourself. Concerted personal attacks occur regularly with individuals building groups and hounding someone they have targeted. This can result in malicious gossip and making someone feel unwelcome. It also means that career prospects can be adversely affected."* Survey respondent

Within some workplaces, discriminatory attitudes and unconscious bias were seen to be common. Too often, these behaviours either go unchallenged by managers or are carried out by managers themselves suggesting that there are important issues to be addressed around basic management approaches. We heard about instances of male trainees being given better opportunities than female trainees and people of colour and people from other ethnic minority backgrounds being subject to stereotyping and racism. While it is important to note that this is qualitative research and the survey sample is not representative of the discipline as a whole, it is significant that nearly a quarter of respondents thought that discrimination (whether from other archaeologists or others they work

with) has had a substantial degree of impact on either the development of their career or their ability to thrive in their day-to-day work. Respondents reflected on a lack of basic management and HR competency in the industry.

Some respondents expressed disappointment that CIfA's inspections of Registered Organisations do not appear to investigate breaches of employment law in this respect. However, CIfA's Registered Organisation's inspection process is not the correct process for investigating or addressing issues of employment law and therefore CIfA needs to clearly communicate this to members. (Nevertheless, it should also be noted that all Registered Organisations are expected to comply with the law and that a breach of the law may well also be a breach of the *Code of Conduct*.)

> *"I took part in an international management training programme known as the 'Common Purpose' project which trains people from all sectors in management and leadership, facilitating them to work on their sector-specific tasks and problems; however, there seems to be a lack of management training and development for archaeologists. A manager may be a great archaeologist, but have they had professional management training? Archaeologists don't get enough training in research and development, people development, or balancing risks in your portfolio."* Perry Gardner, story

> *"Perhaps there needs to be training to support managers in valuing employees with caring responsibilities; the appropriate adjustments that could be made to support and so retain them, perhaps taking some time off or reducing their hours, or how to ensure that they are supported with the training and career development that they need when they return to work."* Anonymous story, shared by someone who had left the sector because of caring responsibilities.

> *"In archaeology, management tends to be seen as something to get through, not the job itself. Workplace cultures can be awful."* Ken Hamilton, story

The structures and business models which predominate in the industry were seen to further inequality.
Respondents argued that the prevalence of developer-funded archaeology gives rise to a business model which encourages low pay and short-term contracts, although it must be acknowledged that some contracting organisations are actively working to counter this. Some respondents felt that poor practice was perpetuated because contracting organisations need to avoid 'rocking the boat' and to maintain good relationships with developers.

> *"Employers need to make sure people are disciplined when they need to be. There needs to be much better training and awareness, especially because when you are in a hire and fire environment like commercial archaeology you don't raise things because you think you might be let go."* Liz Carlton, story

The fragmented nature of the industry sector, with archaeologists working in many different contexts, was seen as working against equality. Because different parts of the industry have different cultures and career structures, it can be hard for individuals to move between different industry sub-sectors, as their experience and skills are not seen as transferable. More scope to move between different roles and operating environments would make it easier for people to develop a career which makes full use of their potential, while accommodating changing needs relating to life stages and ageing.

> *"There are thousands more community volunteers than there are paid-for archaeologists or university lecturers, but their work is not well accounted for by the sector. The skills and expertise of volunteers are not being utilised effectively enough, representative organisations such as CIfA/CBA have become too specialised, and this has resulted in us not being an active, dynamic community of practice. The commercial archaeology sector, higher education and community and voluntary groups should collaborate as equals, but this doesn't happen."* Perry Gardner, story

"Having a range of jobs within archaeology – I have been e.g. finds officer, archives, outreach, academic, fieldwork, heritage officer – when you go for different types of jobs in archaeology there is often a question of why you have so many jobs and different skills – and at times you make yourself 'unemployable' for certain jobs you could do with your eyes closed or 'someone else has a little bit more experience than you' so negates every other job you've done apart from those 'most relevant' to the job you are applying for regardless of the transferable skills of them all – which is due to the nature of archaeology anyway!!" Survey respondent

For many respondents, developing a career in the sector was seen as problematic. Asked how easy it was to find new job opportunities which meet their aspirations, over half of survey respondents reported it being hard or very hard, compared to only a few who reported it being easy or very easy. This mirrors findings in the CBA's recent research with young people which showed that for young people considering a career in archaeology, concerns about job availability and security were very common.[9]

"I always wanted to work in archaeology from an early age, particularly in post-ex work as an environmental specialist. The majority of support I have received has been informal teaching from current specialists working for the unit but has been held back by the limited availability of material. While I have been able to do some specialist work and develop my skills, there is no clear opportunity for progression in this field due to lack of job roles/promotion opportunities." Survey respondent

CPD requirements can also be exclusionary. Where CPD has to be undertaken outside of working hours, respondents highlighted that this is harder for disabled people and people with caring responsibilities who have less free time in their days because of the demands of daily life.

There are pockets of good practice in terms of flexible working and other positive HR approaches, such as support for CPD. Respondents mentioned some contracting organisations, and some other parts of the not-for-profit and public sectors, have more progressive organisational cultures and working practices. However, some respondents felt that this is perhaps serving to perpetuate some equality issues: people who experience discrimination tend to favour roles in these organisations or sub-sectors, and as a result certain areas of the industry are becoming even more unwelcoming and less diverse.

2.5 Common experiences of barriers to progression

The findings from our research indicate that disabled people face a particularly complex set of barriers in developing and sustaining a career in archaeology. While many of the experiences that respondents describe apply to a lot of people, there are issues which particularly affect disabled people. For example, disabled people who are unable to dig are especially affected by an expectation that applicants for all roles (even those which do not involve digging) will have digging experience. And it is harder for many disabled people to build experience through volunteering and to access CPD opportunities.

"Another thing that counted against me is that everything I do domestically takes a long time and a lot of energy. This means that my CV tends to be less varied than someone who doesn't have a disability – both because of limited opportunities but also because disabled people have less time for extracurricular activities and work experience because ordinary living takes more time, and there's not much left over. This means that the culture of requiring voluntary experience (partly as an indicator of commitment) is discriminatory." Rebecca Reynolds, story

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[9] CBA 2022, p.31

Participants in our focus group for disabled people reflected that difficulties accessing entry level posts go on to have an impact on a whole career. The discipline does not always recognise that people can bring expertise to roles from a wide range of study, research and practical experience besides excavation.

There is also a need for employers to structure roles to make them accessible to people with mobility and other issues.

> *"There has been a complete lack of willingness of employers offering permanent positions to make adjustments for my disability preventing my driving. There is also an unwillingness in the industry to engage with government schemes to assist people with disabilities into work."* Survey respondent

Many respondents - both those who identified as disabled, and others - reflected on their experiences of becoming disabled or less mobile over time, in part because of the physical demands of the job, and described employers unwilling to accommodate their changing abilities.

> *"I think there needs to be more opportunities for people who become injured and cannot continue with fieldwork. We are losing a lot of knowledge and expertise because of this. I know a lot of people who have had to leave the field of archaeology entirely as they are not able to continue due to injury."* Survey respondent

> *"During COVID 19 many organisations turned to online training, but many have now returned to in person training, which makes it so much more difficult for someone with a physical disability to attend. I was unable to attend a training session paid for by my employer because it was located far away and there were no accessible taxis available at the station. When I explained this to the training provider and asked if they would consider recording it or providing some future online training, they couldn't have cared any less. This typifies the disdain and contempt held by individuals towards disabled people."* Rebecca Reynolds, story

Many respondents reported negative experiences relating to their sex and gender roles. These included sexist and exclusionary attitudes on sites, as well as perceptions that some men are given better opportunities than women.

> *"Being a woman has been a massive barrier – male dominated and condescending, bullying and harassment with no structure or place to go to report and the fear / knowledge that it will always be YOUR career, not THEIRS that will be affected. If you speak up you will be isolated and not employed. This is still a very real thing."* Survey respondent

> *"We had a particular supervisor, who trained male trainees ahead of female ones. Male trainees would be given 'better' jobs, despite us all needing the same training to pass our traineeship. My partner was on the same scheme and experienced that from the other side. He could see it happening and didn't know what to do. On top of that, female workers had to clean the cabins, and male staff didn't – and that's not the only time that's happened to me."* Liz Carlton, story

> *"Discrimination can be localised. I worked in one institution where women and some men were held back because they didn't fit a certain macho / arrogant 'male' expectation. I have worked in others where this is not the case."* Survey respondent

Nevertheless, some women did report that they felt attitudes had improved over the course of their careers:

> *"I consider myself to fall into the first year-group to have faced no barriers based on gender. I graduated in the very early 00s and know that some of the women who trained me had faced gender discrimination. They were only two/three years older than me, but I never experienced it. Additionally, I see that the year-groups below me have not faced the normalised gender discrimination that the ones above me did (although I do not discount the experiences of the year-groups below me in one-off situations). So, hats off to the women just a*

few years older than me who so effectively smashed the glass ceiling and who also did a wonderful job in sweeping up the glass fragments!" Survey respondent

Respondents reported experiences of racism and of being excluded or treated differently because of their cultural identity or faith. Most of the respondents to our survey were white, and this makes it impossible to establish whether particular experiences of discrimination are more common among people of colour. While we cannot draw conclusions about prevalence, we collected in-depth individual accounts through our storytelling and a focus group which focused on race and cultural identity.

"There is a survey called Profiling the Profession, and its most recent results showed that 97% of the archaeological workforce is white British; this certainly resonated with my own experiences in the UK where I don't think I met a person of a non-white background until I had been here for three years. A colleague of mine once asked me, "why would you go into Archaeology? It's a white persons' field," – they are not wrong." Alex Fitzpatrick, story

Of course, the fact that archaeology is an overwhelmingly white discipline in the UK is widely known and many respondents, including white respondents noted how uncomfortable this made them feel, and that they had witnessed racist behaviour directed at others. It was clear from our conversations with individuals that the discipline is still seen to perpetuate racist and exclusionary attitudes and that people of colour and people from other minority backgrounds are repeatedly marginalised and undermined.

"My Scottishness has been mentioned in almost every workplace… An Irish colleague has said that they are routinely made aware of their Irishness and that they are not English. A feeling of otherness never goes away even if it's not deliberate or malicious." Ken Hamilton, story

"I have also heard xenophobic and racist comments being made on site too, which was not directed at me but which I reported but it completely discouraged me from wanting to be a part of that work environment." Survey respondent

"I have been bullied for my faith – I am a Christian, and ultimately at times, adhering to the values of this, honesty, kindness, inclusivity, respect, doing the right thing has led to various types of bullying in various jobs." Survey respondent

Online abuse and trolling affect archaeologists of colour when they engage in public debate.

"If I speak about these issues at a conference, the response is usually positive…If the same content goes online then the response becomes much more negative largely due to internet trolls or people being more bold to speak about it anonymously. I've had comments where I've been told I shouldn't be doing British Archaeology if I'm not British and I've been harassed online." Alex Fitzpatrick, story

Too few people are able to benefit from flexible working opportunities, which limits progression opportunities for many. While there are pockets of good practice, lack of access to flexible working is a significant equality issue.

Disabled people and people with caring responsibilities particularly reported that employers are often reluctant to offer part-time work or other flexible work patterns which would enable them to take on roles which make full use of their experience.

"The need to move frequently with little notice, stay overnight regularly and little option for flexible hours mean the sector feels completely inaccessible to me. I have approached many units to ask if 4 days per week is feasible and the response from a large UK unit was that they would be very surprised if any unit would

consider employing someone on any kind of part time contract or allow more local working." Survey respondent with caring responsibilities

"I don't know where to go from here, I am the highest-ranking position that is still on site. Promotion feels like a step away from archaeology and I can get paid a lot more for similar managerial work elsewhere. This job is good when you are young, but it would be impossible to raise a family like this." Survey respondent

A larger proportion of women than men responding to our survey considered that their ability to develop their careers has been significantly impacted by both parental and other caring responsibilities. Some respondents were resigned to accepting limitations on their career:

"I accepted long ago that my career had reached its peak due to my parental responsibilities. My choice, but it was hard at first seeing others move on and do jobs I would have liked to do/advance their careers while I stayed put." Survey respondent

Several respondents report either leaving the profession or seeking alternative roles within the industry or broader heritage sector to accommodate caring responsibilities; these roles are often less well paid and less rewarding.

"Looking back there was a lot of unconscious bias, and as a working mum I had to fit into the system that existed. I did bring up the issue of wanting a better work/life balance, but not as much as I should have done; I believed that I should be able to cope and that I was failing if I couldn't. All the field unit managers I have worked for in my career have been male, predominantly from a fieldwork background. Understanding around caring responsibilities just wasn't there. Because of this I feel I faced some bullying and harassment which impacted on my mental health.

I went into the profession quite naively, I had not foreseen the struggles that I was going to be up against. My generation believed that women could do it all. It's when you have children that the profession becomes very hard." Anon story from someone who has left the industry because of caring responsibilities

Some respondents reported either opting not to have children in order to be able to progress their career, or feeling that they would have to seek a different role if they did have a family in future. Respondents reported that these decisions and their consequences can have serious mental health implications.

In our focus group, respondents noted that women archaeologists often apply for roles in local authorities, where access to family-friendly working arrangements such as flexible working and shared parental leave tends to be better. However, respondents suggested that this results in women taking roles for which they are overqualified and therefore being underpaid and that taking these roles is not a positive choice, but a forced one as the sector overall does not accommodate the needs of employees with families.

As we discuss in the section on networks, difficulties attending meetings, training and other networking opportunities particularly affects people with caring responsibilities or for whom travel is difficult. The experiences of the pandemic have shown that there are ways of making these opportunities more accessible, but that there is a danger of these gains being lost and not all organisations take the issue of the barriers around travel arrangements and meeting timings seriously:

"Over a 20+ year career it is great to see some of the gender imbalances start to even out, and also working practices that create more opportunities for working parents etc. It was always a source of frustration that involvement in national networks and initiatives required extensive travel to London for long face-to-face meetings mainly attended by older men who did not face limitations on their ability to participate due to childcare responsibilities. The acceptance of online meetings has made a massive difference in this area." Survey respondent

Issues relating to the location of opportunities affect many in the industry. In order to build a career, there tends to be an expectation that people will move for short-term contracts. Many roles which involve field work come with an expectation that people will be able to commute long distances to different sites, or be prepared to work away. This affects many people, but is especially difficult for disabled people, for people with parental or caring responsibilities and for people from low-income backgrounds, who are more likely to find the costs of moving prohibitive and perhaps be less likely to have learnt to drive at an early age.

> *"The greatest barriers to me have stemmed from living in a remote rural location making it very difficult, both physically and financially, to attend courses/conferences – making such events virtual as well as in person is brilliant."* Survey respondent

> *"For individuals coming from low paying urban backgrounds – where it is more common to not have learned to drive by the age of 18 years old – I have seen a pattern of individuals being unable to progress in their career at the same rate."* Survey respondent

2.6 Networks

Professional and personal networks are important in archaeology. These can be a positive source of support, and respondents cited important informal mentoring relationships helping them in their careers as well as support from formal networks. Respondents who have experienced discrimination spoke about the particular importance of informal and formal networks of support, which enabled them to share experiences.

> *"I have been very lucky to have been supported by key formal, but also many informal, mentors through the years. These have had a much more profound impact than any number of formal mentoring links."* Survey respondent

However, networks can also act as barriers, and can increase inequality. In some cases, this is to do with the cost of joining organisations such as CIfA. In other cases, it relates to the expectation that people will contribute to networks in their free time.

> *"In terms of CIfA opportunities, the annual fee was off putting earlier in my career. I completely understand that the societies need income, however it can be difficult as incomes are typically low in early career stages. I have always had to choose carefully which ones I belong to. Usually I am paying for around 4-6 annual memberships."* Survey respondent

> *"There is literally no support whatsoever for becoming an archaeologist. Instead WE have to volunteer and support other archaeologists and even worse, we have to volunteer to support the organizations that are meant to support US. Groups like CIfA are inherently broken because they rely too heavily on volunteerism to operate which doesn't work."* Survey respondent

Initiatives to improve equalities can place too great a burden on individuals. Some respondents from diverse backgrounds also spoke about the additional (almost always unpaid) labour of being expected to contribute to initiatives around diversity and inclusion. Respondents felt that organisations needed to look at new approaches which made it easier for a wider range of people to contribute. Where peer support groups exist, respondents felt that these should focus on helping individuals, and that there should not be an expectation that they would do the work of addressing inequality in the discipline.

Informal networks can also be a source of gatekeeping, perpetuating inequality. As noted above, a sense that archaeology is a small, closed discipline, where people know each other, can make it harder for people who have experienced bullying and harassment to report their experience, as they fear it will mark them out and destroy their careers. Many respondents saw archaeology as an exclusive discipline, where they were made to feel they did not belong for a whole range of reasons, including gender, race, class and educational background. Some felt that opportunities were closed to them which were open to other people who fitted into an expected pattern of background and experience. It can be harder for people without the right connections and background to progress their careers. Respondents suggested that this can extend to prejudice against certain university courses or entry routes.

> *"The 'clique' of archaeology, the 'old boys network' 'knowing the right people' still prevents you from getting jobs."* Survey respondent

> *"[I] feel being of a particular background has made senior members of the profession treat me differently – being of a broadly working class, state school background. There's still an immense amount of gatekeeping throughout the field, whether purposeful or incidental."* Survey respondent

> *"I went for several archaeology jobs and didn't get them. The feedback felt a bit unusual. For example, for a university geophysicist job the head of department said I wasn't well enough qualified, which was nonsense. Asking around, it became clear that I wasn't a known face. In another case, I couldn't get any feedback, but it became clear that the department had simply never employed any Bradford graduates. Jobs seemed to be partly awarded on the basis of 'we know this person, he fits'. I realise there's a risk of sounding bitter, but it's something I've noticed often. I think people get into a cliquey mindset, fall into lazy habits and go for people they know. Now that I'm more senior, I sometimes sit on recruitment panels, where I've heard people dismiss certain universities and the people who went there. I have countered that to force people onto the longlist."* Ken Hamilton, story

2.7 Perceptions of CIfA

Some respondents were critical of some or all of CIfA's track record on equality issues. Some respondents acknowledged that CIfA has been active on equalities, but noted that there is more still to be done. Others were highly critical of what they saw as a failure to act on equality issues and be more representative.

> *"I won't return to commercial archaeology because of the hugely negative impact it had on my health and wellbeing, and the lack of respect shown by those in management towards women and junior colleagues… CIfA has been doing good work to address this, but it needs to go further...I also feel like CIfA needs to make a route clearer for people to report harassment/bullying by [accredited] members or in a chartered institution, and for there to be potential serious reprimands where this toxic behaviour is endemic (such as a loss of [accredited] status)."* Survey respondent

> *"CIfA are not there yet but they are moving in the right direction. Their equalities group are pushing to get conversations going. I'm involved in CIfA inspections and we do look at it. A key weakness is the low level of CIfA membership. There is misunderstanding in the profession about what CIfA does, but the primary problem of people I speak to is the cost of membership. The same is true of union membership, which people say is too expensive for them."* Ken Hamilton, story

We have noted above that many respondents were concerned that networks like CIfA become inherently unrepresentative because not everyone is able to give up time to serve on committees. Some respondents felt that

CIfA was too far removed from the experiences of people working in the discipline to be able to respond effectively to their needs, or did not represent the whole discipline effectively.

> *"[From a respondent working in outreach/community archaeology] At the moment I don't feel that CIfA provides support for individuals working in this area of the profession. The career pathways and matrices could be better designed to help progression of both early career archaeologists and those working outside of field archaeology."* Survey respondent

Some respondents also questioned CIfA's ability to represent people working in the discipline. This stemmed from a misconception that CIfA is both a professional body, and an employers' body. CIfA needs to communicate its role better to counter the misperception that it represents employers.

Respondents identified many perceived barriers around CIfA's professional pathways although some of these may not accurately reflect current practice. For example, in a focus group, participants described the CIfA application process for the professional pathways scheme as 'long, relentless and daunting.' In the survey, large numbers of respondents were negative about CIfA's professional pathways. Thinking about equalities, it is important to note that attitudes towards the CIfA pathways vary according to certain characteristics. Respondents aged 55-64 are significantly more likely than younger people to believe both that the pathways provide an appropriate structure and that they are open and accessible to them, as are white respondents and people who grew up in families from higher socio-economic groups. Overall, when asked to what extent they considered CIfA's professional pathways provided an appropriate structure, nearly half of respondents felt the structure was either highly or somewhat inappropriate. Asked to what extent they considered CIfA's professional pathways were open and accessible to them, over half of respondents rated them as either highly or somewhat inaccessible. Again, it is important to note that these results cannot be taken as representative of the sector as a whole, but they do represent significant levels of disquiet.

3 Recommendations to CIfA and recommendations for others

A. *Following the research undertaken during this project, and in close consultation with the Project Steering group, CAO has synthesised the findings in order to present the following recommendations to CIfA::*

A1. CIfA should work to maintain momentum and profile for improving equality and should encourage others in the discipline to commit to action and to work together.

As anticipated, this research has identified serious shortcomings around equalities in archaeology. In commissioning the research, CIfA committed itself both to identifying issues and to addressing those issues where it could, and to advocate for action from others.

The archaeology discipline has committed to joint working on other important contemporary issues such as the climate crisis but has not given the same collective effort to equality, inclusion and diversity. Historic England also recognises that diversity and inclusion is an ambition the heritage sector is falling short on in its Heritage Sector Resilience Plan 2022-2024. CIfA should continue to encourage collective action, in the first instance by convening a meeting to encourage action on the recommendations below.

CIfA should also look for opportunities to communicate better CIfA's role as a professional body to help to address some of the misconceptions about its scope highlighted by this research project and so improve clarity about responsibilities for addressing equality issues.

A2. CIfA should review and, where necessary, adjust its professional pathways, looking at other accreditation processes for good practice

CIfA needs to maintain rigour in its professional qualifications, but this research has identified some areas for adjustment in CIfA's approach to its professional pathways. CIfA should review and, where necessary, make adjustments, working with representative bodies where appropriate. This might include working with Enabled Archaeology to ensure changes reflect the concerns of disabled people. CIfA should keep its processes under review to reflect emerging concerns.

Using the results of this research and the survey and focus group feedback, CIfA should review where it needs to communicate better the requirements and expectations of applicants for CIfA accreditation to address the misconceptions that exist. CIfA should also better communicate the support which is already available to applicants, such as assistance with completing forms.

A3. CIfA should encourage people to report poor practice, discrimination and harassment

This research has identified that many individuals feel they have nowhere to report specific instances of discrimination or harassment. CIfA should encourage more use of its professional conduct process (where relevant) and signpost other sources of advice and support. CIfA should also encourage employers, through mechanisms such as the Registered Organisations scheme, to have clear, well signposted processes for dealings with complaints relating to discrimination, harassment etc. CIfA should also work with Prospect to encourage membership of a trade union as a way of supporting complaints to employers.

A4. CIfA should improve connections between academia and the Institute

CIfA has already taken steps to improve its engagement with students and university archaeology. It should consider how it can build better connections between academia and the Institute as a means to supporting archaeology students into work and professional archaeology.

A5. CIfA should use its frameworks for organisations to encourage good practice

This research identified that there are areas of poor practice in terms of organisational culture and behaviour. CIfA's role is to encourage appropriate professional conduct, not legal compliance, but it should continue to use its frameworks such as the *Code of conduct: professional ethics in archaeology* to encourage ethical behaviour.

A6. CIfA should seek to improve opportunities for disabled people through reviewing its own processes and supporting attitude change

This research found that disabled people face a complex set of barriers to their career development and full participation in the archaeology discipline. CIfA should use its relationship with the Enabled Archaeology Foundation to ensure its own processes are accessible and to continue to promote opportunities for disabled people and to raise the profile of disabled archaeologists.

B. Following the research undertaken during this project, and in close consultation with the Project Steering group, CAO has synthesised the findings in order to present the following recommendations to the discipline as a whole and for other organisations..

CIfA could look to convene a sector meeting to discuss ways in which these recommendations can be taken forward, or to seek opportunities where these can be tied into other strategies such as Historic England's Heritage Sector Resilience Plan 2022-2024.

B1. Sector organisations should initiate a programme of leadership development

Many of the issues identified relate to failures in leadership and management. Individuals have experienced discrimination, bullying and harassment because of toxic organisational cultures, which should not have been allowed to develop or persist. Others have failed to reach their full potential because of attitudes and structural issues within organisations which could have been addressed with more courage or imagination from organisational leaders. Some leadership programmes in the broader cultural and heritage sectors have been open to archaeologists, but there is a need for a tailored programme designed specifically for archaeologists and which takes account of the many varied contexts in which archaeologists work.

The discipline should look collectively at how funding can be raised to deliver leadership development.

B2. Employers should improve HR practice

This report has identified that many people experience barriers to developing their career in archaeology because of failures of good HR practice. All employers in the industry should have systems in place to enable them to access good HR advice. Employers should take steps to ensure they make use of this advice to enable them to support staff more effectively, for example in supporting staff with caring and parental responsibilities, which are a particular cause for concern highlighted by this report.

B3. Employers should review the wording of their job adverts or recruitment documentation to ensure they are not creating an expectation that voluntary experience is required and should also ensure they are taking account of transferable skills

Volunteering is an important part of archaeology and many people want better opportunities to volunteer. However, the expectation that people will gain experience through volunteering before securing paid work is inequitable, as not everyone has the same opportunities to volunteer. As this report makes clear, volunteering is harder for disabled people and for people from lower income backgrounds. Employers should not require applicants to demonstrate prior voluntary experience in job applications, and should offer alternative ways of demonstrating commitment or knowledge, and should also take account of relevant skills and experience gained elsewhere.

B4. Sector organisations should collect better equalities data

In England, Historic England has begun work to improve data collection, which is essential to monitoring and improving equalities in archaeology and the wider historic environment sector. Consistency in data collection is important and other bodies working in England should consider HE's work and align with it where possible. CIfA should also work alongside bodies in other parts of the UK to support the development of more effective approaches to data collection.

B5. Sector organisations and employers should broaden access to career development opportunities

The research has identified that many people struggle with the costs of professional development and that access to opportunities is often limited by difficulties associated with travel. The Covid-19 pandemic has increased the use of online delivery and video conferencing which has opened up opportunities which need to be sustained. All organisations promoting or organising training opportunities should consider how they could be made more accessible. This could include building in a requirement to provide online access to training opportunities when commissioning new programmes, providing subsidised places, and publicising existing opportunities for financial support.

B6. Sector organisations should consider further research

This research has identified a number of areas to explore that were outside the scope of this report. Sector bodies should consider whether they can commit to undertaking research in the following areas:

- Good practice from other sectors
- Good practice from other countries
- More detail about how more university students of archaeology could be supported into an archaeology career
- Ways of overcoming attitudinal barriers to careers in archaeology among young people.

Appendix - Detailed methodology

Survey

We undertook an online survey aimed at:

- People working in archaeology
- People studying archaeology at university, at whatever level
- People training in archaeology through a non-traditional route
- People who are attempting to establish an archaeology career, including those actively engaging in volunteering with a view to building experience for job applications
- People who have worked in archaeology and left the profession and/or people who have previously unsuccessfully attempted to establish a career in archaeology.

Participation in the survey was incentivised by entry into a prize draw for participants and promoted through representative networks we had contacted in advance. The survey encouraged free text responses and we also offered the opportunity for people to share experiences via a video upload although no respondents made use of this facility.

The survey ran from Monday 12th September to Tuesday 4th October.

The survey was targeted by bots which meant that we had to remove invalid responses. We based on our analysis on 213 responses which we were confident were genuine. This was somewhat smaller than the target of 300 responses, we did have a very good response to the request for free text responses reflecting in more depth on the questions in the survey. 126 respondents (or 60% of the total) made a free text response, which gives us a rich source of information on individual experiences.

Over three quarters of the respondents were working in a paid role in archaeology, which means that other experiences such as those of students or people attempting to enter the profession were somewhat underrepresented. We ensured that we captured these experiences through the focus groups and storytelling sessions.

There was a good spread of length of time working in archaeology, different levels of seniority and different kinds of roles among the respondents. 60% of respondents identified as female, suggesting that women are somewhat over-represented in the sample, as Profiling the Profession in 2020 found that only 47% of people in the archaeological workforce are women.

We might also conclude that we had a slightly higher level of responses than would have been the case if the sample reflected the make-up of the profession as a whole from some other groups, including: people who are disabled or have health issues, from people who are not heterosexual and people who are not white. This would not be surprising as people more likely to be affected by experiences of inequality are more likely to answer a survey of this kind. We also need to be cautious about comparisons as some definitions were different to those used in Profiling the Professions and our sample sizes were small.

Nearly a third of respondents had parental responsibilities which they felt impacted their work and career, and over a quarter had other caring responsibilities.

Other online engagement

To promote the research and to encourage participation, CIfA hosted a Twitter takeover and ran a Twitter poll. Engagement with these was modest, but helped to promote take up of the other opportunities to contribute.

The screenshot below shows the results of the Twitter poll.

Storytelling

We conducted seven story telling sessions. Each storyteller was recruited based on experiences they had described in the survey. As well as people with lived experience of issues relating to gender, disability, socioeconomic disadvantage and ethnicity, we ensured that our respondents also covered themes relating to financial challenges, caring responsibilities and issues relating to structural barriers.

Individuals were selected for participation to ensure that the stories collected included some of the major themes emerging from the survey evidence to capture the complexity of individual experiences. The aim was not to capture 'representative' or 'typical' experience but rather to produce a number of compelling individual stories.

Story tellers were given the option of anonymity and were also offered different levels of consent in terms of how they wanted their testimony to be used: for internal use only, for quoting publicly but only in full, or happy to have extracts used as well as the full story. One storyteller wanted their story to be used only internally and so their experiences have helped to inform the report, but we have not quoted from them directly. Another wished to remain anonymous but was happy to be quoted. Four participants agreed that their video testimony could also be shared and used by CIfA and we have prepared a short video with key extracts for use by CIfA.

Focus groups

We ran four group discussions, each aimed at recording the experiences of people with particular perspectives on inequality and their suggestions for improvements. All four were held online to and in total 21 participants took part. Participants were recruited through the survey. To address the lack of students in the survey, the sessions were directly promoted to CIfA's student network. Laura Hampden at Historic England also promoted the sessions to Archaeologists of Colour.

The sessions each had a particular focus, covering socio-economic inequalities, disability, race and ethnicity, and sex and gender. We encouraged broad-ranging discussion in each group, as none of these issues exist in isolation and individual experiences are complex. For example the participants in the focus group themed around race and ethnicity often mentioned the intersectionality between ethnicity and socio-economic barriers within the archaeology profession.

Each Focus Group session was in two parts, the first a discussion about barriers to entering and progressing in the profession and the second a discussion about solutions that could be made in the sector and by CIfA.

About the authors

Cultural Associates Oxford (CAO) has a particular interest in, and long-standing commitment to, increasing equity and diversity in the heritage workforce and the communities it serves. Members of our team for this project developed and launched the first heritage sector programme of positive action traineeships to improve workforce diversity, over twenty years ago. The team also brought lived experience of diversity issues, and wide-ranging research experience from the academic and heritage sectors.

Lucy Shaw is the Founder and Director of Cultural Associates Oxford (CAO). She is a cultural entrepreneur, who specialises in strategic leadership, organisational change, workforce diversity, and inclusive engagement with the cultural, heritage and creative industries. Lucy has had a long career in the museum and cultural sectors, where much of her work has focused on diversifying the workforce, including co-designing and running the Museums Association's ground-breaking Diversify Training Scheme. She also works for the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School, where she is Programme Director for the Oxford Strategic Leadership Programme a programme which challenges assumptions and encourages leaders to reframe their leadership practice through the lens of the humanities.

Rozia Hussain is a highly skilled researcher and evaluator, specialising in impact measurement and equitable evaluation within the charity sector, academia and local government. Rozia has managed numerous in-depth impact projects for high profile organisations such as Breast Cancer Now, the London School of Economics and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coalition. Rozia is particularly passionate about advocating for equity-based principles in evaluation, which can meaningfully engage audiences and ensure that organisations can demonstrate and communicate their impact.

Dr Helen Wilkinson works as a cultural consultant with a particular focus on developing governance, leadership and organisational transformation. Her work draws on her experience working in membership and sector support organisations. Until recently she was Business Transformation Director for the Council for British Archaeology where she led a programme to revitalise the organisation's business processes and enable it to serve wider audiences. She was previously Assistant Director of the Association of Independent Museums, where she helped the organisation secure NPO funding and before that led policy and programme development at the Museums Association where she undertook research to enable the MA to extend its Diversify programme of positive action traineeships to people from less affluent backgrounds.

Miki Lentin is a strategic creative consultant with over twenty years of experience across the public and private sectors. With a background in communications, Miki now works with a variety of cultural and creative clients on audience development, community engagement, strategic planning, communications and branding. He has recently led on a strategic review of Museum Detox working with Maurice Davies and managed CAO's cultural development programme for Buckinghamshire Culture, a programme to support the development of cultural leadership which took place online during the pandemic. Previously he was Head of Corporate Affairs at the UK's national library, the British Library, with responsibility for communications, marketing, video and broadcast, digital content and brand. Miki has a keen interest in the role cultural organisations have as neighbours within their cities and communities.

Dr Maurice Davies is a cultural consultant who leads, supports and develops museums, arts and heritage organisations, and the people who work for them to increase their effectiveness. As well as his extensive consultancy, advisory and research work he has been Head of Collections at the Royal Academy of Arts, Deputy Director of the Museums Association, Editor of Museums Journal and a curator at Manchester Art Gallery and Tate. Maurice sits on the National Trust's Collections and Interpretation Advisory Group and was on their Inclusive Histories Working Group. He has worked on equity, diversity and inclusion since the 1990s including membership of the London Mayor's Heritage and Diversity Task Force and several government and national committees exploring contested cultural property and human remains. He is currently helping to design and deliver several anti-racist and EDI-based development programmes in the arts and museums sector.