

## **We need producers to play their part in Doubling Disability**

[Doubling Disability](#) is an ambitious initiative led by the [Creative Diversity Network](#) (CDN) which aims to double the percentage of disabled people working in British television by 2020. If you haven't heard of it before, it is the first major campaign to come out of the data published by the industry-wide diversity monitoring system, [Diamond](#), which showed that just 4.5% of those working off-screen, and 5% of those on-screen in the UK's television industry have self-declared as disabled, compared to 18% within the general population.



Given this stark representation gap, in 2018 the CDN Board – which includes Pact – committed to placing disability front and centre of its two-year strategy. Working with Channel 4's former Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, Dan Brooke, I designed the Doubling Disability initiative, and we announced it in September that year.

The first thing we did as part of the initiative was to commission a major piece of research from the [CAMEo Research Institute for Cultural and Media Economies](#) based at the university of Leicester. Using their findings and recommendations, we are now creating an action plan over the Summer, ready to launch to the industry this Autumn.

### **We need Producers to play their part**

Pact members already do - and will continue to - play a vital role in ensuring that, as an industry, we meet our target of increasing both on- and off-screen disabled representation. That's why we're working with Pact's Head of Diversity, Anjani Patel, and want to encourage members to get involved over the coming months.

We know this won't be straight forward. We're at the start of the process and looking at the best ways to enable a wide range of stakeholders to engage. No one can be expected to know everything about disability, and consequently we need to consider a range of different approaches to address the cultural and systematic barriers currently preventing disabled people progressing in our industry.

It's all of our responsibility to try to solve this. So whilst you're sat in the sun over the Summer – perhaps on a beach somewhere or in this blistering British heat wave! – I want to ask you to have a think about all the questions you have about disability; the things you'd like to know about how to make your own business more accessible; what practical tools or support would help; and if you were/are disabled, what you think needs to change.

Our research promises to provide some useful insights and recommendations, but if you don't want to wait there are already some great resources available that can help businesses and individuals to take action, like the [Attracting and Employing Disabled Talent](#) section on the [Pact Diversity Tool Kit](#). You can also find more general information and advice about diversity across the industry on the [Diversity in Practice pages](#) on the CDN website.

And keep up to date with the Doubling Diversity campaign by following [@tweetcdn](#) and my own account, [@cdndebs](#), on Twitter.

### **What next?**

In September, we will publish the executive summary and recommendations from the CAMEo research [on our website](#). Then, with Pact, we will start rolling out a range of activities, including a Doubling Disability round table to focus on Access To Work with the aim of creating a shared understanding of the concerns amongst producers; training specifically for producers; and a campaign to get producers to sign up to the government initiative Disability Confident. I hope that you will join in and let your industry knowledge be part of the solution. This practical approach to increasing disabled talent in TV will only work if we are all involved.

*Guest post for Pact written by CDN Executive Director, Deborah Williams.*