

Present:

STATE OF THE INDUSTRY 2023:

An Eye on Crew Demographics & Sentiment

Introduction

We are FREE THE WORK— a global nonprofit relentlessly focused on shifting the prevailing systems in media. Our mission is to ensure that all storytellers are not just heard but also have unhindered access to create and influence within the film, television, and advertising sectors. We believe in more than just representation; our goal is to transform the foundational structures that dictate narrative opportunities and platforms.

We started INVOKE in 2021 to collect anonymous demographic and sentiment data from crew members in commercial production across the industry. Our goal was to gain a clear picture of the reality of demographic breakdowns on set, as the industry has previously lacked comprehensive self-identified data on this topic. With this anonymous data, we aim to provide the industry with a roadmap to engage in meaningful advocacy efforts for communities shown to be underrepresented (based on numbers, not assumptions). So far, we have surveyed 3,197 live-action and post-creators.

INVOKE is the first production industry survey to collect data using self-identification. Its highly comprehensive and considerate lists of demographic question response options will provide the industry with a higher-resolution picture of its workers.

The survey also includes open-ended questions with space for free-form answers, where crew members can anonymously share their thoughts and feelings about industry norms and practices. Anonymity is central to the initiative and enforced through rigorous data security standards.

INVOKE aims to gain an overall understanding of the industry and what industry workers experience in order to pinpoint the needs of creators. INVOKE intends to equip those in positions of power with the data necessary to assess and improve working conditions, benefitting all parties involved by providing credible, entirely anonymous data from a neutral third party.

This report reviews the data INVOKE has collected so far, as well as the existing landscapes, successes, gaps, opportunities, and challenges embedded within it

This inaugural INVOKE State of the Industry report is only the beginning. We intend to release annual reports of INVOKE data by the industry and for the industry.

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Key Findings

- Nationally, sets are much more diverse when it comes to ethnicity and sexual orientation than gender.
- Sets in the Western region of the country have diversity ethnically and with sexual orientation, but men are significantly overrepresented in roles on sets.
- Sets in the Central region of the country are less diverse ethnically and with sexual orientation, but historically underrepresented genders are significantly more present on sets than men.
- Sets in the country's Eastern region are the most diverse across categories.
- People of historically underrepresented sexual orientations are strongly represented on sets compared to their percentage of national and regional populations.
- Black creatives are the most underrepresented ethnic group on sets nationally compared to their percentage of the national population.
- People with disabilities and veteran status are underrepresented across the board.
- The most vocalized issue for crew on sets is fair pay.
- Overall, crew members believe that DE&I is not an area that the industry desires to prioritize improving and that positions of power are still primarily held by white men and women.

Importance of Diversity in Advertising

Shoots

The benefits of diversity in production crews go far beyond equity. By reshaping the internal dynamics of the production process, diversity on sets determines the creative, economic, and social efficacy of the content produced. Brands aiming to carve a meaningful and resonant space within the complex, globalized consumer market cannot afford to ignore the importance of diverse crews.

Varied perspectives improve creativity, innovation, workflow, and job satisfaction.

- **Varied Perspectives:** A blend of different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives fosters innovative ideas and solutions, enriching the creative process.
- **Problem Solving:** Diverse teams often demonstrate superior problem-solving abilities due to their various viewpoints and approaches.
- **Synergized Workflow:** Diverse teams often create a synergy that enhances workflows, effectively combining varied skills and competencies.
- **Employee Satisfaction:** Inclusive environments tend to foster higher levels of employee satisfaction and retention.

Equitable representation behind the camera means more diversity in front of it.

- **Reflecting Reality:** A diverse crew helps ensure that a shift toward better representation in ads is comprehensive and inclusive because people of different backgrounds working together are more likely to create content that accurately mirrors the varied tapestry of society.
- **Ethical Standards:** Inclusivity and equitable representation in advertising ensure that varied demographics see themselves reflected in media.
- **Social Impact:** Advertising has the power to shape societal norms and challenge societal perceptions. Diverse representation on screen can contribute to dismantling stereotypes and fostering inclusivity in real life.

Inclusive content is good for the bottom line.

- **Local Sensitivity:** A crew that encompasses varied cultural competencies can enhance understanding of and respect for local norms and sensitivities, giving content more reach in global and local markets.
- **Market Appeal:** Content that resonates with diverse audiences has the potential to tap into broader markets.
- **Brand Image:** Companies that champion diversity are often perceived positively, enhancing their brand reputation and market positioning.
- **Relatability:** According to a study from NYU School of Professional Studies, US consumers are increasingly more likely to form a stronger affinity towards and purchase from brands that they perceive as inclusive and align with their identities

and values.

Crew diversity is increasingly a legal requirement.

- **Adherence to Laws:** Ensuring diversity can also be a matter of complying with legal standards and regulations regarding equal opportunity and nondiscrimination.

Methodology

INVOKE surveys are performed by invitation wherever a shoot happens. The productions surveyed are often advertising-focused, shooting photography, digital/social media content, and television commercials. INVOKE's presence also ranges between union and non-union projects.

We have collected data from 3,197 crew members from nearly 200 productions from 2021 through 2023. The survey was open to all production crew behind the camera on all sets surveyed.

The data collected comes from below-the-line crew members across senior/key roles, mid-level roles, and entry-level/assistant roles, covering jobs like hair and makeup department head, costume designer, camera operator, production assistant, assistant directors, and catering.

To date, INVOKE has surveyed productions in 13 states:

Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, Washington

The survey asks 19 questions and takes about three minutes to complete. It is organized into four main sections: Industry Sentiment, About You, Role and Travel Logistics, and an open feedback question. Certain sections (role/travel logistics) are not included in this report but are used for internal guidance on advocacy.

More information on the methodology can be found in the appendix.

Current State of Diversity in Advertising Crews

In this report, we are focusing purely on self-reported demographic data of behind-the-camera crew members in the commercial production industry. The data is presented in its most straightforward form to establish an industry benchmark. We intend to build upon this report yearly to allow us to draw meaningful comparisons.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity Overall

Across all INVOKE productions, 3,191 crew members (*n*) provided their self-identification for their ethnicity. Together, 48.82% of all participating crew members identified as a historically underrepresented ethnicity (Table 2). This statistic is marginally higher (7.72 percentage points) than the percentage the US Census provides when grouping together historically underrepresented ethnicities (41.1%).

Table 1
Self-Reported Ethnicity

Ethnicity	% of Responses	# of Crew Members
White, European Origin	44.78%	1429
Hispanic/Latinx	18.33%	585
Multi-racial	9.93%	317
Black/African Origin	9.84%	314
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.61%	211
Prefer not to say	6.39%	204
Jewish	2.38%	76
Indigenous Peoples	0.88%	28
SWANA (South West Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African)	0.63%	20
Not Listed	0.22%	7

Note: “Not Listed” is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: “Asian/Pacific Islander” was re-coded from responses that identified as: Asian, Pacific Islander, South Asian, East Asian, Southeast Asian, and Central Asian.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Table 2

Ethnicities Presented by Historically Underrepresented / Not Underrepresented Grouping

Ethnicity Category	% of Responses	# of Crew Members
Historically Underrepresented	48.82%	1558
Not Underrepresented	44.78%	1429
Prefer not to say	6.39%	204

Note: The “Historically Underrepresented” category was re-coded from responses that identified as: Black/African Origin, Hispanic/Latinx, Indigenous Peoples, Mixed Race/Multi-Ethnic, Pacific Islander, Asian, South Asian, East Asian, Southeast Asian, Central Asian, Jewish, SWANA (South West Asian/North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African), and Not Listed
Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Ethnicity Across Role Levels

Ethnicity distributions across various role levels were fairly consistent with ethnic distribution overall. White crew members' presence remained consistent across all three role levels at 47%. The most significant difference is seen in the presence of Hispanic/Latinx crew members in each role level. The highest percentage of Hispanic/Latinx presence is in Assistant/Entry level positions (20.15%), and it lessens by about four percentage points as it goes up to Mid-Level (16.08%) and Key/Senior (11.93%).

Table 3
Self-Reported Ethnicity by Role Level

Ethnicity	Key/Senior %	Mid Level %	Assistant/Entry %
White, European Origin	47.94%	47.61%	47.08%
Hispanic/Latinx	11.93%	16.08%	20.15%
Black/African Origin	10.29%	8.09%	8.85%
Multi-racial	11.32%	10.37%	9.98%
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.26%	6.22%	6.50%
Prefer not to say	4.94%	6.54%	4.43%
Jewish	3.29%	3.53%	1.22%
Indigenous Peoples	0.41%	0.41%	1.13%
SWANA (South West	0.62%	0.93%	0.38%

Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African)			
Not Listed	0.00%	0.21%	0.28%

Note: "Not Listed" is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Ethnicity Across US Regions

Compared across the 3 US regions, the Central region has a significantly higher percentage (62.55%) of White creators on set than the other two regions. The Central region also has the highest percentage (10.59%) of creators who preferred not to report their ethnicity. Representation for Hispanic/Latinx creators is significantly higher in the West region, while representation among Black crew members was about equal in the West (10.64%) and East (11.87%).

Table 4
Self-Reported Ethnicity by Region

Ethnicity	West	Central	East
White, European Origin	40.94%	62.55%	48.92%
Hispanic/Latinx	20.96%	6.86%	12.23%
Multi-racial	10.46%	6.86%	8.27%
Black/African Origin	10.64%	6.67%	11.87%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.68%	3.73%	7.55%
Prefer not to say	5.74%	10.59%	6.47%
Jewish	2.43%	1.18%	3.24%
Indigenous Peoples	0.89%	1.18%	0.72%
SWANA (South West Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African)	0.79%	0.20%	0.36%
Not Listed	0.33%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: "Not Listed" is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Gender

Gender Overall

As shown in Table 5, a total of 3,212 self-identified gender identity choices were recorded, with a total (*n*) of 3,189 unique participants. Participants were able to choose to self-identify with multiple gender identities. The percentage of crew members who self-identified as women was only 38.44%, which is significantly less than their representation in the US Census (50.4%). Together, only 40.98% of all crew members who responded identified with a historically underrepresented gender identity (Table 6).

Table 5
Self-Reported Gender

Gender	% of Choices	# of Crew Members
Man	55.69%	1776
Woman	38.44%	1226
Prefer not to say	3.57%	114
Non-Binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gender-Queer	2.60%	83
Transgender	0.31%	10
Intersex	0.06%	2
Not Listed	0.03%	1

Note: "Not Listed" is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Table 6
Gender Presented by Historically Underrepresented / Not Underrepresented Grouping

Gender Category	% of Choices	# of Crew Members
Not Underrepresented	55.44%	1768
Historically Underrepresented	40.98%	1307

Prefer not to say	3.57%	114
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Note: The “Historically Underrepresented” category was re-coded from responses that identified as: Woman, Non-binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gender-queer, Intersex, Transgender, Not listed.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Gender Across Role Levels

Across role levels, Key/Senior roles had the highest percentage of women (45.36%) and were the most gender-balanced between women and men (50.52%). Mid-level roles had 11% fewer women (34.17%) than Key/Senior roles and 11% more men (61.98%).

Assistant/Entry level roles had the highest presence of Non-Binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gender-Queer crew members (4.33%). Men held the highest percentage in Assistant/Entry roles (52.54%). There were no transgender people in Mid-Level roles and very few in Key/Senior and Assistant/Entry level roles.

Table 7
Self-Reported Gender by Role Level

Gender	Key/Senior %	Mid Level %	Assistant/Entry %
Man	50.52%	61.98%	52.54%
Woman	45.36%	34.17%	40.40%
Prefer not to say	2.06%	2.92%	2.92%
Non-Binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gender-Queer	1.86%	0.94%	4.33%
Transgender	0.21%	0.00%	0.56%
Intersex	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Not Listed	0.00%	0.00%	0.09%

Note: “Not Listed” is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Gender Across US Regions

The West has the highest percentage of men on sets (60.08%), which is significantly more than the percentage of women (34.87%). While in the Central region, women (46.47%) slightly outweigh men (41.57%) on sets. The Central region also had a significantly higher percentage of respondents who preferred not to report their gender (7.65%). The East had the most gender-balanced sets when looking strictly at men (49.28%) and women (47.12%).

Table 8
Self-Reported Gender by Region

Gender	West	Central	East
Man	60.08%	41.57%	49.28%
Woman	34.87%	46.47%	47.12%
Prefer not to say	2.99%	7.65%	1.44%
Non-Binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gen der-Queer	2.19%	3.33%	2.16%
Transgender	0.23%	0.20%	0.36%
Intersex	0.09%	0.00%	0.00%
Not Listed	0.05%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: "Not Listed" is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Gender by Historically Underrepresented Ethnicity

Overall, across all roles and role levels, more men from historically underrepresented ethnic backgrounds (28.53%) hold roles on sets than white men (24.18%). Fewer women from historically underrepresented backgrounds (17.89%) hold roles on sets than white women (18.64%). The gap between historically underrepresented men and women (10.64%) is wider than the gap between white men and women (5.54%), which points to the possibility that for underrepresented women creators, it's harder to get roles in general and more challenging than it is for white women to close the gap between them and their male counterparts.

Table 9
Self-Reported Gender Grouped by Self-Reported Ethnicity

Gender	Total % of Genders by Not Historically Underrepresented Ethnicities (White)	Total % of Genders by Historically Underrepresented Ethnicities
Man	24.18%	28.53%
Woman	18.64%	17.89%

Prefer not to say	0.75%	0.53%
Non-Binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gender-Queer	0.81%	1.13%
Transgender	0.13%	0.03%
Intersex	0.00%	0.03%
Not Listed	0.00%	0.00%

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation Overall

Table 9 shows the overall percentage of self-identified sexual orientations. A total of 3,184 unique crew members (*n*) responded, with a total of 3,261 self-identified sexual orientation choices recorded. Participants were able to choose to self-identify with multiple sexual orientations. Only 17.46% of creators surveyed self-identified as a historically underrepresented sexual orientation.

Table 10
Self-Reported Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	% of Choices	# of Crew Members
Straight	73.30%	2334
Prefer not to say	9.58%	305
Bisexual	6.91%	220
Queer	4.15%	132
Gay	3.80%	121
Lesbian	2.04%	65
Pansexual	1.98%	63
Asexual	0.53%	17
Not Listed	0.13%	4

Note: "Not Listed" is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Table 11
Sexual Orientation Presented by Historically Underrepresented / Not Underrepresented Grouping

Sexual Orientation Category	% of Choices	# of Crew Members
Not Underrepresented	72.96%	2323
Historically Underrepresented	17.46%	556
Prefer not to say	9.58%	305

Note: The “Historically Underrepresented” category was re-coded from responses that identified as: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Pansexual, Asexual, and Not Listed.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Sexual Orientation Across Role Levels

Across role levels, the percentage of crew members across all role levels who preferred not to report their sexual orientation remained consistent at around 8.5%. Assistant/Entry level roles had the most diversity of sexual orientation, with 68.93% of respondents self-identifying as straight. Mid-level roles had the least LGBTQIA+ presence, with 79.05% of crew members identifying as straight.

Table 12
Self-Reported Sexual Orientation by Role Level

Sexual Orientation	Key/Senior %	Mid Level %	Assistant/Entry %
Straight	72.63%	79.05%	68.93%
Prefer not to say	8.64%	8.51%	8.40%
Bisexual	5.76%	5.60%	9.82%
Queer	3.91%	3.11%	5.95%
Gay	6.79%	2.49%	4.63%
Lesbian	1.44%	1.14%	2.83%
Pansexual	2.26%	1.45%	2.17%
Asexual	0.41%	0.31%	0.76%
Not Listed	0.00%	0.00%	0.09%

Note: “Not Listed” is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Sexual Orientation Across US Regions

Overall, all regions had the same percentage of historically underrepresented sexual orientations. Notably, the Central region had the highest percentage of crew members who preferred not to report (18.04%), which is over 10 percentage points higher than the other regions. Still, the percentage of crew members who self-identified with historically underrepresented sexual orientations remained within 3 percentage points of each other across regions. The most significant difference among regions was that the Central region had a decrease of 10 percentage points in crew members who identified as straight.

Table 13
Self-Reported Sexual Orientation by Region

Sexual Orientation	West	Central	East
Straight	75.86%	64.71%	73.74%
Prefer not to say	7.89%	18.04%	7.55%
Bisexual	5.93%	8.43%	8.27%
Queer	3.87%	3.14%	3.60%
Gay	3.78%	3.92%	2.88%
Lesbian	2.01%	1.18%	2.88%
Pansexual	2.15%	0.98%	1.44%
Asexual	0.37%	0.78%	0.72%
Not Listed	0.14%	0.00%	0.36%

Note: "Not Listed" is an answer selected by the respondent.

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Disability Status

Disability Overall

Overall, of 3,194 responses (*n*), 8.02% of crew members identify as living with a disability. This is 5.38% lower than the national percentage of Americans living with a disability, according to the US Census (13.4%).

Table 14
Self-Reported Disability Status

Disability Status	% of Responses	# of Crew Members
Not Living with a Disability	86.82%	2773
Living with a Disability	8.02%	256
Prefer not to say	5.17%	165

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Disability Across US Regions

Across regions, percentages of crew members who identified as either not living with a disability or living with a disability stayed consistent. However, the percentage of people who preferred not to report was much higher in the Central region.

Table 15
Self-Reported Disability Status by Region

Disability Status	West	Central	East
Not Living with a Disability	87.11%	84.12%	87.05%
Living with a Disability	7.89%	8.04%	10.43%
Prefer not to say	4.90%	7.84%	2.52%

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Veteran Status

Veterans Overall

Out of 3,196 responses, only 2.53% of crew members ($n=81$) self-identified as veterans. This is 3.67% lower than the national percentage of veterans in the US, according to the US Census (6.2%).

Table 16
Self-Reported Veteran Status

Veteran Status	% of Responses	# of Crew Members
Not a Veteran	94.56%	3022
Veteran	2.53%	81
Prefer not to say	2.91%	93

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Veterans Across US Regions

Once again, across regions, the Central region has the highest percentage (5.88%) of crew members who preferred not to report. The East has a slightly higher percentage of crew members who self-identify as veterans (4.32%).

Table 17
Self-Reported Veteran Status by Region

Veteran Status	West	Central	East
Not a Veteran	95.19%	91.37%	94.24%
Veteran	2.24%	2.75%	4.32%
Prefer not to say	2.57%	5.88%	1.44%

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Sentiments On Set

We asked crew members, “What do you care about most on a production?” Here’s what they told us.

Table 18
Crew Members’ Cared Most Responses

	% Crew members that care about this issue
Fair pay	27.16%
Being treated fairly	22.59%
Sustainable working hours	17.47%
Safety	9.47%
Inclusion	5.12%
Diversity	4.68%
Not Listed	4.41%
Environmental sustainability	4.03%
No Response	3.05%

Healthy meals/The food	2.01%
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Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Underrepresented creators are significantly more likely to be concerned with inclusion and diversity and somewhat more concerned with being treated fairly.

Table 19
Crew Members’ Cared Most Responses By Representation

	Not-Underrepresented Creators	Historically Underrepresented Creators
Fair pay	27.66%	26.61%
Being treated fairly	19.15%	23.98%
Sustainable working hours	20.8%	16.67%
Safety	13%	8.48%
Inclusion	2.36%	6.05%
Diversity	1.42%	5.85%
Environmental sustainability	3.55%	4.02%

Note: Data is based solely on responses from those who participated and self-identified.

Feedback Provided via INVOKE Survey

INVOKE surveys and surveyors recorded general thoughts and industry sentiments from the crew in an open-ended response section and in person. Below is a selection of answers that were generally representative of wider sentiments.

Diversity and Inclusion

“As a Black man, I often run into cultural issues during production. Those include but are not limited: unqualified people being promoted and placed in charge of shoots which are always White women, a lack of cultural competency, a lack of non-White people on crews, a whitewashing of ideas such as flying in a brown photographer and hiring a local White crew and saying they are diverse, and consistent response of ignoring or failing to

follow through on the feedback and problems up to and including at the VP level.”

“I think inclusion is honoring people's cultures but also thinking of people as multidimensional—outside of stereotypes and perceived notions on how different races and cultures live their lives.”

“On most commercial productions, DE&I is not a thought unless requested. This also applies to the client/agency side. When you take a look into video village and a majority of the decision makers are Caucasian males and females it becomes a trickle down effect on hiring practices for crew members. If it's not on the decision maker's radar, why would a producer call it out?”

“There really is no opportunity for advancement in this role until the people who do the hiring change. It has become the friends of a friend network. There is no diversity in the demographic of producers in this area or the people who hire them. A BiPoc woman who used to be a Production Assistant for many years started her own production company, she was told by a brand that she hadn't had enough clients. How do you get clients if you can't even get a foot in the door? She has since quit freelancing for that brand. If a company wants to be more diverse, then it needs to start at the top with those who do the hiring, proper training, and support while people learn the role. Additionally, there has not been a pay increase for Production Assistants in the 12 + years that I've been doing this job”.

“This is probably the most diverse set I've been on here. There are usually never POC HODs (heads of department), and here we have full departments that are POC and even a female/poc dp. Almost unheard of.”

Work Conditions and Structure

“I wish there was more diversity in the agency rather than the crew. Creative people exist on all levels, but the people with the most creative control in this should look less homogenous. That is the most unfair facet because it appears that diversity inclusion is a finger-pointing out rather than a mirror looking in.”

“This was the most inclusive, friendly, best working environment I have ever worked in. No egos, super inviting. I hope this reins in a new era of filmmaking where everyone is included and treated with respect.”

“Production is more diverse but feels a little classist. Often there’s no managing between people with similar positions/status policing their own to prevent abuse or disrespect to those whose roles are not as high on the call sheets.”

“I love my job, but the rates for commercials haven’t changed in over a decade, the shoot days are often too long with not enough turnaround, and we should be paid more to work nights and weekends.”

Improving Industry Access

“I think there should be a line (budget) for training programs to bring people in. Too many of the same people get hired with no opportunity to bring people in. Train and have the client pay. There should also be a line for roles to shadow someone. All covered by the client.”

“I honestly think a survey isn’t a good use of time or resources. I think this energy could be used for doing outreach to young people in high school and college, informing them about production etc. as a career path, or even setting up field trips to come and visit sets to see what is a possibility. I feel that the major issue in our industry isn’t inclusivity as much as it is access. I went to art school and had no idea about the production industry as a potential career path.”

I cannot say enough that I am very excited about working hard to diversify and be more inclusive in our industry. I just think that this problem is systemic and that systemic change needs to happen responsibly and is not something that can happen in a matter of 6 months. I am very interested in our industry leaders taking initiative in early, high school, and college education to include a younger generation of eager and hard-working freelance workers.

Contextualizing the Data

We compared our data to US Census data, where it was available, in order to compare representation on sets with representation in national and regional populations.

Ethnicity

The US Census does not provide as many options for identifying ethnicity as INVOKE, so we have matched the Census’s data as closely as possible for comparison. The Census has ethnicity categories that did not align with INVOKE survey categories. For example, the US

Census does not have a SWANA (South West Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African) ethnicity category, but we did include it as an ethnic category in our survey, therefore there is no Census data to compare this to. For ethnicities that are similar, we've lined up categories for comparison as closely as possible. For example, we've combined the ethnic categories of Native Hawaiian, Native Alaskan, and American Indian Census to compare to INVOKE's Indigenous Peoples category.

Table 20
Overall US Ethnicities INVOKE vs Census Comparison

INVOKE Ethnicities	% of Responses (INVOKE)	Census Ethnicities	% of National Population (Census)
White, European Origin	44.78%	White	57.84%
Hispanic/Latinx	18.33%	Hispanic or Latino	18.73%
Multi-racial	9.93%	Population of two or more races:	4.09%
Black/African Origin	9.84%	Black or African American	12.05%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.61%	Asian	5.92%
Prefer not to say	6.39%		
Jewish	2.38%		
Indigenous Peoples	0.88%	American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian	0.87%
SWANA (South West Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African)	0.63%		
Not Listed	0.22%	Some Other Race	0.51%

Gender

The US Census only provides gender options for Male or Female gender identity. The Census also provides an estimate for the national percentage of Transgender people

(0.6%). We have compared the Census data to INVOKE’s self-identified data, where applicable.

Table 21
Overall US Gender Identity INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Gender	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of National Population (US Census)
Men	55.69%	49.6%
Women	38.44%	50.4%
Prefer Not to Say	3.57%	
Nonbinary/Gender Non-Conforming	2.60%	
Transgender	0.31%	0.6%
Intersex	0.06%	
Not Listed	0.03%	

Note: US Census data does not include nonbinary, gender non-conforming, or Intersex folks in its gender breakdown data.

Sexual Orientation

The US Census provides the percentage of the overall population that identifies as Lesbian or Gay combined. For comparison, we have added the percentages of crew members who self-identified as Lesbian or Gay together. The Census also provides a percentage of “all other sexual orientations” that are not straight, lesbian or gay, or bisexual. For comparison, the percentages of crew members who self-identified as Queer, pansexual, asexual, or a not listed sexual orientation have been combined.

Table 22
Overall US Sexual Orientation INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Sexual Orientations	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of National Population (US Census)
Straight	73.30%	88.3%
Prefer not to say	9.58%	

Bisexual	6.91%	4.4%
Lesbian or Gay	5.84%	3.3%
Other Sexual Orientations (Queer, Pansexual, Asexual, not listed)	6.78	4%

Disability Status

The US Census does not provide a “prefer not to say” answer option.

Table 23
Overall US Disability INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Disability	% Roles (INVOKE)	% National Population (US Census)
Not Living with a Disability	86.74%	86.6%
Living with a Disability	8.01%	13.4%
Prefer Not to Say	5.25%	-

Veteran Status

The US Census does not provide a “prefer not to say” answer option.

Table 24
Overall US Veteran INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Veteran	% Roles (INVOKE)	% National Population (US Census)
Not Veteran	94.53%	93.8%
Veteran	2.53%	6.2%
Prefer Not to Say	1.85%	-

Diversity by Region Comparisons

We broke the country down into three regions to get a more granular look at set diversity. Across ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, people in the Central region were significantly (~2x) more likely to choose “prefer not to say.” This may be because there is less familiarity with our organization and INVOKE, or it could be that in the region with the least amount of production work available, people are wary of reporting data that they think could put them in danger of losing work in the future. The East and West are generally more diverse than the Central region in populations and on sets.

West: (1770 responses): Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, Utah, Washington

Central: (207 responses): Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, Wyoming

East: (230 responses): Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

Ethnicity

West

Table 25
Western US Ethnicity INVOKE vs Census Comparison

INVOKE Ethnicities	% of Responses (INVOKE)	Census Ethnicities	% of Region's Population (Census)
White, European Origin	40.94%	White	45.71%
Hispanic/Latinx	20.96%	Hispanic or Latino	30.85%
Multi-racial	10.46%	Population of two or more races:	4.89%
Black/African Origin	10.64%	Black or African	4.41%

		American	
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.68%		
Prefer not to say	5.74%	Asian	11.86%
Jewish	2.43%		
Indigenous Peoples	0.89%	American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian	1.74%
SWANA (South West Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African)	0.79%		
Not Listed	0.33%	Some Other Race	0.53%

The overall % of Black people in the West is an average among geographical areas with large disparities. About 9% of Los Angeles County, where most of the production industry is concentrated, is Black.

Central

Table 26
Central US Ethnicity INVOKE vs Census Comparison

INVOKE Ethnicities	% of Responses (INVOKE)	Census Ethnicities	% of Region's Population (Census)
White, European Origin	62.55%	White	62.26%
Hispanic/Latinx	6.86%	Hispanic or Latino	17.33%
Multi-racial	6.86%	Population of two or more races:	3.90%
Black/African Origin	6.67%	Black or African American	11.55%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.73%	Asian	3.58%
Prefer not to say	10.59%		

Jewish	1.18%		
Indigenous Peoples	1.18%	American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian	1.03%
SWANA (South West Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African)	0.20%		
Not Listed	0.00%	Some Other Race	0.36%

East

Table 27
Eastern US Ethnicity INVOKE vs Census Comparison

INVOKE Ethnicities	% of Responses (INVOKE)	Census Ethnicities	% of Region's Population (Census)
White, European Origin	48.92%	White	58.57%
Hispanic/Latinx	12.23%	Hispanic or Latino	14.65%
Multi-racial	8.27%	Population of two or more races:	3.88%
Black/African Origin	11.87%	Black or African American	16.70%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7.55%	Asian	5.23%
Prefer not to say	6.47%		
Jewish	3.24%		
Indigenous Peoples	0.72%	American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian	0.32%
SWANA (South West Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African)	0.36%		

Not Listed	0.00%	Some Other Race	0.65%
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Gender

The US Census only provides a regional breakdown of the population by male and female and not the greater variety of gender identities that INVOKE provides to participants.

West

Table 28
Western US Gender Identity INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Gender	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region's Population (Census)
Man	60.08%	50.19%
Woman	34.87%	49.81%
Prefer not to say	2.99%	-
Non-Binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gender-Queer	2.19%	-
Transgender	0.23%	-
Intersex	0.09%	-
Not Listed	0.05%	-

Central

Table 29
Central US Gender Identity INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Gender	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region's Population (Census)
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Man	41.57%	49.79%
Woman	46.47%	50.21%
Prefer not to say	7.65%	
Non-Binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gender-Queer	3.33%	
Transgender	0.20%	
Intersex	0.00%	
Not Listed	0.00%	

East

**Table 30
Eastern US Gender Identity INVOKE vs Census Comparison**

Gender	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region’s Population (Census)
Man	49.28%	49.09%
Woman	47.12%	50.91%
Prefer not to say	1.44%	
Non-Binary/Gender Non-Conforming/Gender-Queer	2.16%	
Transgender	0.36%	
Intersex	0.00%	
Not Listed	0.00%	

Sexual Orientation

The data we are using to provide a comparison is from the Movement Advancement Project. This data only provides a rolled-up estimate of LGBT population density by region.

For comparison sake, we provided INVOKE’s data as the Historically Underrepresented LGBTQIA+ rollup.

West

**Table 31
Western US Sexual Orientation INVOKE vs Movement Advancement Project
Comparison**

	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region’s Population That ID’s as “LGBT” (Movement Advancement Project)
Not Underrepresented	75.86%	-
Historically Underrepresented	16.01%	4.48%

Central

**Table 32
Central US Sexual Orientation INVOKE vs Movement Advancement Project
Comparison**

	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region’s Population That ID’s as “LGBT” (Movement Advancement Project)
Not Underrepresented	64.71%	-
Historically Underrepresented	17.25%	3.63%

East

**Table 33
Eastern US Sexual Orientation INVOKE vs Movement Advancement Project
Comparison**

	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region’s Population That ID’s as “LGBT” (Movement

		Advancement Project)
Not Underrepresented	73.74%	-
Historically Underrepresented	19.06%	4.05%

Disability/Veteran Status

West

Table 34
Western US Disability INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Disability	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region's Population (US Census)
Not Living with a Disability	87.11%	87.43%
Living with a Disability	7.89%	12.57%
Prefer Not to Say	5%	-

Table 35
Western US Veteran INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Veteran	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region's Population (US Census)
No Veteran Status	95.19%	94.32%
Veteran Status	2.24%	5.68%
Prefer Not to Say	2.57%	-

Central

Table 36
Central US Disability INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Disability	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region's Population (US Census)
Not Living with a Disability	84.12%	86.16%

Living with a Disability	8.04%	13.84%
Prefer Not to Say	7.84%	-

Table 37
Central US Veteran INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Veteran	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region's Population (US Census)
No Veteran Status	91.37%	93.57%
Veteran Status	2.75%	6.43%
Prefer Not to Say	5.88%	-

East

Table 38
Eastern US Disability INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Disability	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region's Population (US Census)
Not Living with a Disability	87.05%	86.46%
Living with a Disability	10.43%	13.54%
Prefer Not to Say	2.52%	-

Table 39
Eastern US Veteran INVOKE vs Census Comparison

Veteran	% of Responses (INVOKE)	% of Region's Population (US Census)
No Veteran Status	94.24%	93.65%
Veteran Status	4.32%	6.35%
Prefer Not to Say	1.44%	-

Conclusion & Considerations

Leveraging a principle commonly attributed to Peter Drucker — "You can't change what you can't measure" — this INVOKE report outlines a framework for employing self-reported demographic data to drive workforce initiatives across the industry. Utilizing this anonymized data, we aim to enhance skill development programs, pipeline initiatives, and networking opportunities that address actual needs rather than assumed deficiencies. Although this report may not capture the full extent of industry production, it sheds light on the potential of voluntary demographic surveys to foster greater transparency, accountability, and impactful change.

INVOKE is committed to supporting organizations that create essential tools for entry, advancement, and sustained success in both the professional and academic spheres. We hope to amplify these organizations' efforts to develop exceptional talent across all levels and roles by providing them with valuable data. Our role is crucial in strengthening the support system that promotes industry growth and diversity, ensuring that the right resources are allocated to those laying the foundations for the future workforce.

The effectiveness of any production hinges on the collective talent and excellence of its team members. Through our support and the sharing of our data, we are dedicated to nurturing an inclusive and dynamic industry ecosystem where every individual has the opportunity to excel and make meaningful contributions.

By establishing educational pathways in production for historically underrepresented communities, we're investing directly in the diverse talents that will define the future of entertainment.

Appendix

Methodology

Procedures & Data Collection

Brands support INVOKE through access to their productions and through financially supporting the overall effort. INVOKE operates as a separate entity and is guided by each production's stakeholders.

Our data is collected, and the survey is administered in three different scenarios:

Proactive scenarios are cases in which INVOKE has been invited by partners/production companies to administer the survey to crew members on set and in person.

Bidding scenarios are cases in which surveys are distributed among creators bidding for an upcoming production job.

Retroactive scenarios are cases in which we distribute surveys among individuals who worked on a project after it wraps.

In all cases, the survey hyperlink is shared via email, allowing crew members the opportunity to take the survey on their own time and at their own discretion. The platform used to administer the survey is a custom-built and encrypted surveying platform exclusive to INVOKE.

For proactive scenarios, to ensure crew members can learn about our organization and objectives before agreeing to participate in the survey, we share a short introduction of INVOKE, clear information regarding anonymity and the voluntary nature of the survey, FAQs, and contact info for FTW along with the survey link. We explain that we are a 501c3 nonprofit and a separate entity from the production company, brand, or studio and provide links to the INVOKE and FTW websites.

When possible for proactive scenarios, INVOKE sends trained survey administrators to sets. These surveyors are individuals with previous production experience who understand how to navigate a set and interact with an active crew. The production team introduces survey administrators at the beginning of the shoot to familiarize the crew with INVOKE and FTW.

While on set, surveyors engage with the crew who are not actively working, offering the option to take the survey in person and answer any questions. The survey is administered via tablets preloaded with the survey hyperlink and handed off to participating crew members to fill in their responses. QR codes of the survey hyperlink can also be scanned by crew who might prefer to participate later on their own devices.

In proactive scenarios, survey links are always shared with the call sheet for the duration of a production. On a small number of shoots, where there is no on-set surveyor, the survey is shared only in this way.

Potential respondents/participants are always informed that their participation is completely voluntary and that they can opt out of the survey at any time. “Prefer not to say” is a response option on all required questions, so participants can share only what they are comfortable with. Potential participants are given verbal and written reminders that their responses will remain entirely anonymous and confidential. Neither surveyors nor staff members can see their answers.

Survey Design & Measures

In designing the survey, we:

- Reviewed surveys from sources like the US Census and for-profit data companies to understand standard practices.
- Conducted several A/B tests with community members to understand how best to ask the questions.
- Conducted several rounds of feedback and research to determine proper demographic labels.

The survey questions aim to gain the best picture of industry representation, practices, accessibility, and sentiment.

The survey asks 19 questions and takes about three minutes to complete. The survey is organized into four main sections: Industry Sentiment, About You, Role and Travel Logistics, and an open feedback question. Insights from the questions help guide what industry culture and practices we should address with our donor partners when strategizing for industry improvements. Certain categories (role/travel logistics) are not included in this report and are used for internal guidance on advocacy.

The Industry Sentiment section is intended to capture a participant's feelings/thoughts on working in the production industry. There are two multiple-choice questions included in this section: "What do you care about?" and "How important is sustainability on set?" These questions help us when partnering with industry leaders to create space and suggestions to improve work environments and practices for artists.

The About You section contains 11 multiple-choice and/or multi-select questions about the participant's age, ancestry, ethnicity, birth nation, immigration status, languages spoken, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, and veteran status. This information provides a picture of the various demographic identities that comprise the crew members on sets. Questions on gender, sexual orientation, disability, and veteran status provide overall industry representation data that can help direct training or upskilling programs needed, help partners improve their representation numbers, and provide FTW with evidence for our advocacy efforts.

The Role and Travel Logistics section contains five multiple-choice, multi-select, and fill-in-the-blank questions regarding role, experience level, travel logistics, and job referrals. This information allows us to show how roles are filled across age/gender/ethnicity/sexual orientation/disability status/veteran status and fairness across roles and role levels. As part of the consideration for expertise level, we ask for the other roles a creator may perform. Knowing if a creator had a reference is useful for determining if there is a correlation between a reference received and the sway it has on hiring practices. This data aids advocacy strategy for equal pay and fair hiring practices.

The last section is an open-response question ("Any additional thoughts or feedback?") that gives crew members an anonymous space to share their feedback on their jobs, the production, the survey itself, and/or the state of the industry.

The final question asks: "**How do you feel about INVOKE being on this production?**" So far, we have an average score of 4/5 stars.

INVOKE Survey

What do you care about?

What do you care about most? _____

How much do waste (food, materials, etc) and emissions associated with production, and their environmental impact concern you? _____

About you

I am _____* years old.

I was born in *Enter birth country* _____*

My immigrant status is _____

My ancestry is _____*

My primary language is _____*. I also speak _____

In terms of ethnicity, I identify as _____*.

I _____* identify as a person living with one or more disabilities.

I _____* identify as a military veteran.

In terms of gender, I identify as _____*.

In terms of sexual orientation, I identify as _____*.

About this project

I am the *Enter role* _____* on this project.

To ensure anonymity, role data will not be shared unless aggregated across multiple productions.

I have _____ years of experience in this role.

Other roles that I perform regularly include: _____.

I _____ local to the city of this production.

I was referred for this job by _____.

Ok, last question...

How do you feel about INVOKE being on this production?

I don't like it Indifferent Love it!
Hope to see you again.

Any additional thoughts or feedback?

Analysis Techniques

INVOKE's survey data is stored in an SQL database. Collected data is encrypted and password-protected. Access to the database is limited to the product engineers and data analysts. Survey responses are fully anonymous, as no identifying information is requested at the time of submission. In addition, a user can select to save their responses to a phone

number to be able to pre-fill the survey the next time. The phone number is used as a hash function to ensure protection and continued anonymity, and the pre-filled data cannot be traced back to the user who saved answers via their phone number. The survey has also been vetted for CPRA and GDPR compliance. CSVs were pulled from the SQL database in order to process the data.

Data Cleaning and Initial Processing

To thoroughly examine the anonymous aggregated data, we used Python's Pandas library. To aid with any data cleaning and to detect outliers, code was written to find accidentally written-in answers – e.g., some people wrote in "Middle Eastern" instead of selecting the option we already provided which is "SWANA (South West Asian/ North African), MENA (Middle Eastern/North African)." When this occurs, these kinds of answers are grouped together with the pre-provided options. Code was also written to find and flag invalid answers, (such as "pineapple" for sexual orientation).

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed in Google Sheets to analyze the survey data. Initially, calculations included determining percentages for all categorical variables. These percentages were calculated by dividing the number of responses for each categorical variable by the total number of responses (n), using the formula: $(\# \text{ of responses per variable} / n) * 100 = \%$. This process provided a clear view of data distribution across different categories, such as year, role level, and various intersections of identity. The total number of responses per question (n) was identified as the number of unique response IDs representing the individuals who submitted valid responses.

Notes on the Data

- The data presented only reflects crew members who took and submitted the INVOKE survey and had valid responses. Not all members of each production participated.
- We took the 50 states and broke them out into three regions. We have defined the regions as follows:
 - **West:** (1770 total participants): Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, Utah, Washington
 - **Central:** (207 total participants): Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri,

Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, Wyoming

- **East:** (230 total participants): Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia
- Roles on set were grouped in the following levels:
 - Key/Senior Roles (486 total participants)
 - Mid-Level Roles (968 total participants)
 - Assistant/Entry Level Roles (1063 total participants)
- We suspect that our data is skewed toward historically underrepresented groups. Although INVOKE has nothing to do with hiring practices, some who have refused the survey have expressed worry to administrators that DEIA measures will make it harder for them to get or keep jobs. This reflects a growing trend of backlash toward DEIA efforts across industries, built around misconceptions of DEIA's impact. Another contributing factor could be that people already familiar with FREE THE WORK may be more likely to be part of an underrepresented group. That familiarity simply makes them more likely to participate in the survey.
- The percentages reported in the survey results reflect the proportion of selected responses to each option. For questions allowing multiple responses, such as those concerning gender or sexual orientation, respondents could choose more than one option. Therefore, the calculated percentages indicate the frequency of each option's selection relative to the total number of choices made rather than the total number of respondents. This approach provides insight into the popularity or commonality of each response, even when respondents have the option to select more than one answer.

References:

National and Regional Demographics (US CENSUS)

Ethnicity

- <https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALDHC2020.P9?q=ethnicity&g=010XX00US>

Gender

- <https://data.census.gov/table?q=gender>

Veteran:

- <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2022.S2101?q=veteran>

Disability Status:

- <https://data.census.gov/table?q=disability>

Black Population of LA County:

- <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/losangelescountycalifornia/HSG010222>

National and Regional Demographics for LGBT People

National LGBT Population

- <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity.html>

Regional LGBT Populations

- https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/lgbt_populations

National Transgender Population

- <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/trans-adults-united-states/>

Brand Social Value and Consumer Purchase Choices

New York University, School of Professional Studies

- <https://www.sps.nyu.edu/homepage/communications/press-releases/2022/brand-social-value-greater-drivers-of-consumer-purchase-decisions-new-2022-corporate-social-value-index.html>