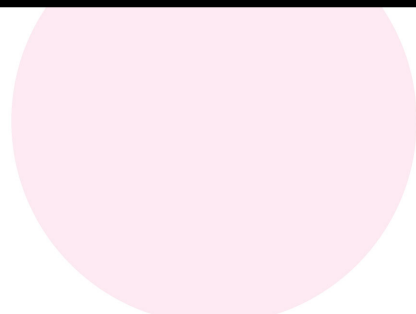


Trait Sorting

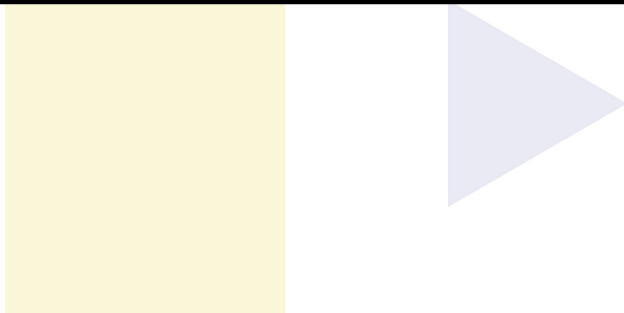
Talent



Graft



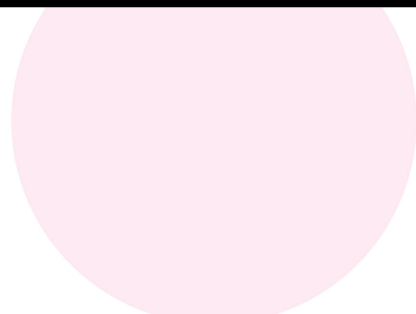
Confidence



Charisma



Chutzpah



Pushiness



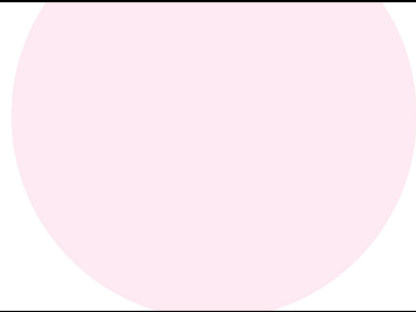
Laddishness



Tenacity



Passion



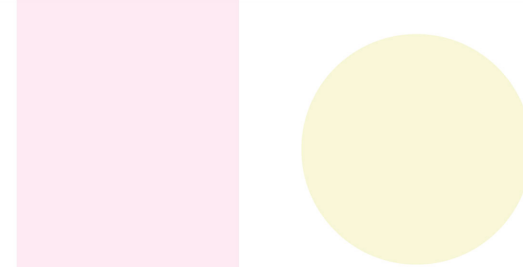
Strength



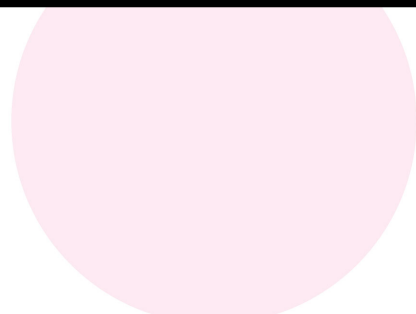
Aggressiveness



Competitiveness



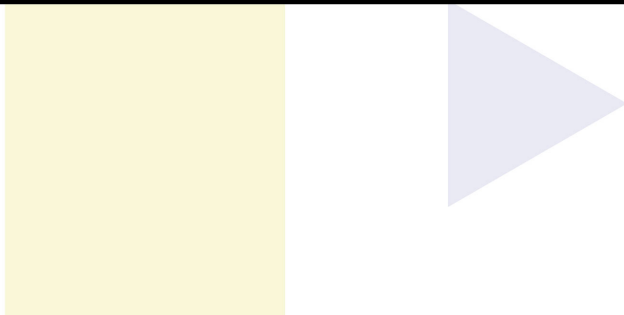
Good sense of humour



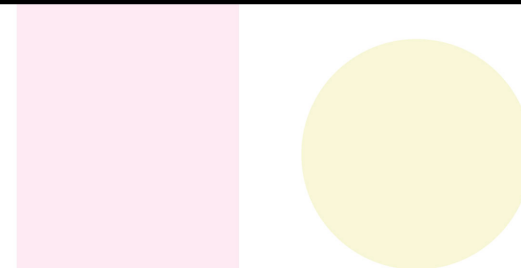
Control



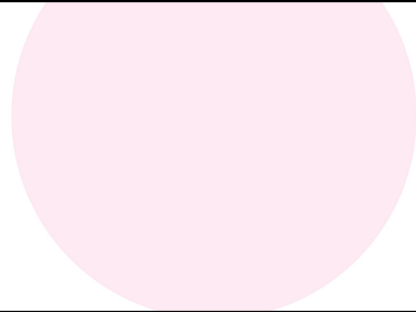
Entrepreneurship



Sociability



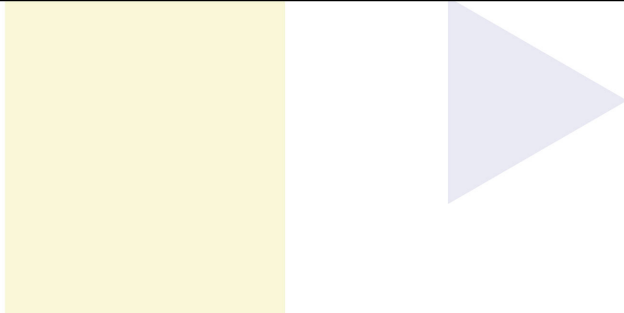
Toughness



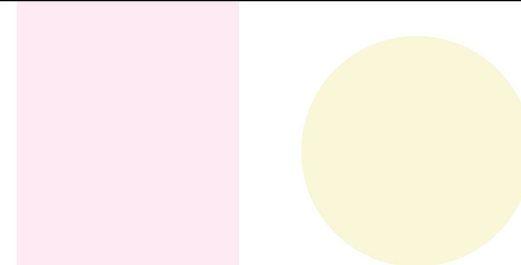
Decisiveness



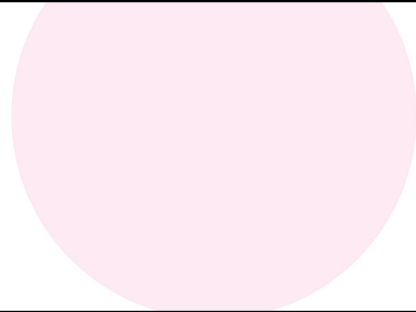
Capacity to set aside personal and emotional considerations



Perseverance



Ability to self-promote



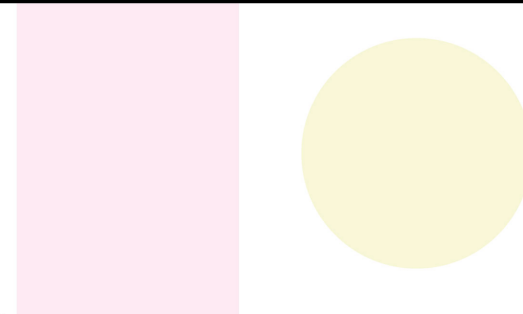
Compliance



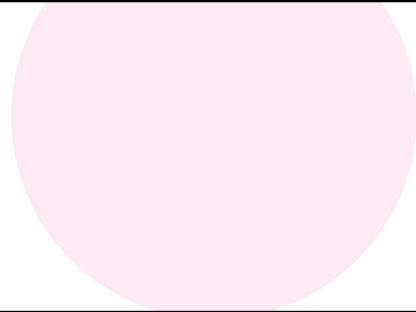
Rationality



Flexibility



Warmth



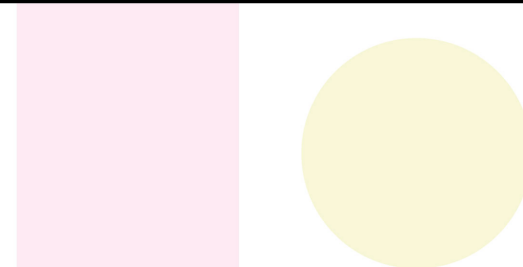
Competence



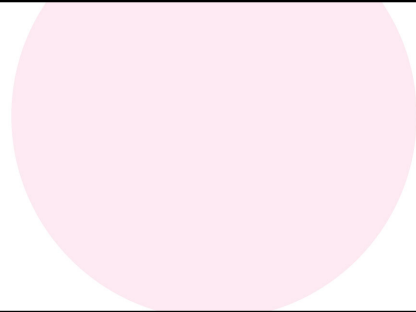
Forcefulness



Authoritative manner



Sensitivity to the needs of others



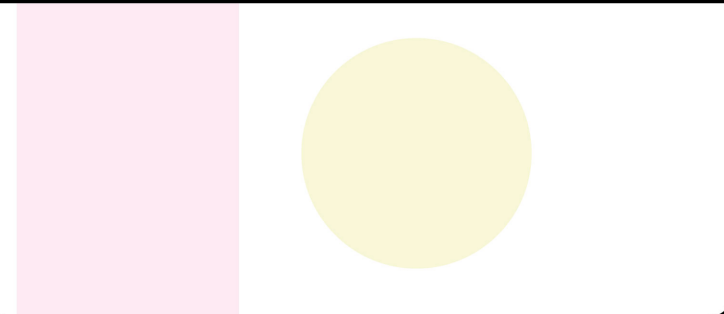
Caring nature



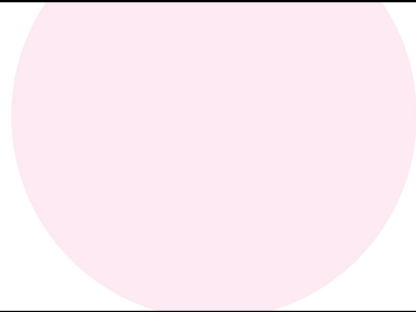
Fairness



Resilience



Brashness



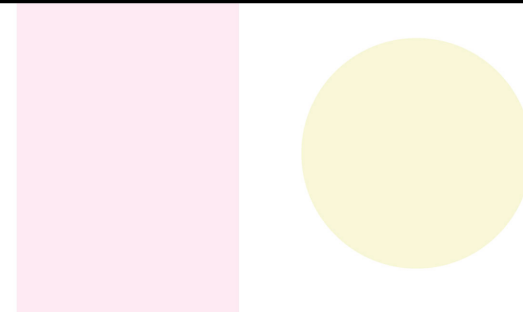
Brilliance



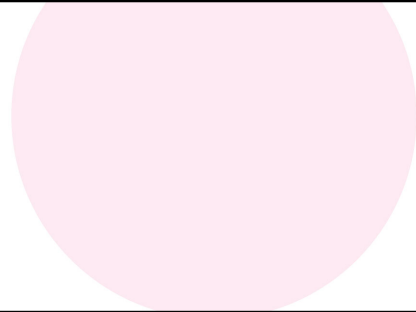
Ambition



Collaborative nature



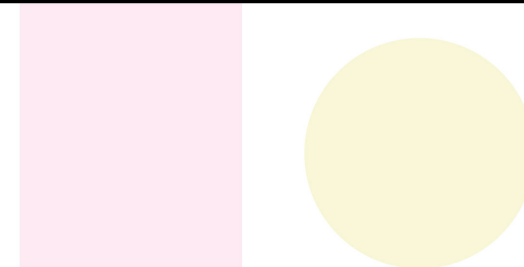
Resourcefulness



Motivation



Commitment



Facts and Figures

40% of females

graduating from creative art and design courses will never get a job in a creative department

61.7% of graduates

from creative art and design course and 66% of advertising agency staff are female, but only 29.6% of staff in agency creative departments are women

11% of creative directors

in London agencies are women

70% of young female

creatives have never worked with a female CD or ECD

40% of females

graduating from creative art and design courses will never get a job in a creative department

61.7% of graduates

from creative art and design course and 66% of advertising agency staff are female, but only 29.6% of staff in agency creative departments are women

Since the 1990s

the number of women in creative departments has proportionally decreased

70% of young female

are working in creative departments that are 75%, or more, male

Cause Cards

Ideal creative worker stereotype

When imagining the ideal creative director, and hence the type of person who would make the best applicant for that role, the stereotype and its traits seems more naturally male. Men are seen as a better “fit” for creative roles.

Hegemonic masculinity

The legitimate and dominant culture in many advertising agency creative departments is often described as similar to a “locker room”, with male bonding, macho behaviour and sexist joking being commonplace. This can be off putting to many females, and less macho men, who do not naturally “fit” this type of environment.

Horizontal occupational segregation

The types of accounts and tasks allocated to young female creatives are often less prestigious and awarded. They are less likely to be put on pitches, and they may often be allocated assignments in gendered sectors like beauty, fashion and food. This can lead to frustration and a lack of job satisfaction.

Homosociability, homophily and hiring homogeneity

We have an unconscious bias to communicate with, socialise with and recruit people who are like us. As most staff in creative departments are male, they are more likely to network with and recruit men. This is commonly referred to as “the old boys club”.

Gender inequality regimes

The pattern of “interrelated practices, processes, actions and meanings” in advertising creative departments maintain gender inequalities. They lead to disparities in power, resources, rewards, opportunities and allocation of work that privilege men and subordinate women.

Masculinist creativity

There is no truly objective standard when it comes to assessing creative work. As men hold the majority of senior positions in creative departments they are the ultimate gatekeeper for any output. Their judgements often favour a masculine style of work which can involve masculine humour and unrealistic and unrelatable representations of women. This style of work is more often produced by male creatives, and hence their work receives prominence. This can be undermining and demotivating for female creatives.

Paternalism

Senior male creatives often see young female creatives in need of protection, not championing. Hence, they do not put them forward for more risky or demanding assignments, which can often be the ones that are most awarded and recognised.

Lack of visible females

Only 11% of creative directors are female. Females are less awarded and credited in industry press. There are few senior female role models and mentors, so young female creatives find it difficult to be what they cannot see.

Unspeakable inequalities

Women in creative departments experience the gender gap, gender inequality and sexism often, but do not have the language to discuss it. In our post-feminist age, many assume that the battle for gender inequality has been won, especially in meritocratic and progressive industry like advertising. They often dismiss inequality or unfair treatment and blame it on another factor, like their age or experience.

Sexist texts

Female graduates do not see advertising texts as representing them, and some seem sexist. As they do not aspire to the women in advertising, they do not feel the creation of advertising is a desirable career for them.

Poor work life balance

Many young women cannot see how they would juggle the demands of a role as a successful creative director, which involves long and irregular working hours, tight deadlines and complete dedication, with the demands of a family in later life. So, some rule it out as a viable career early on.

Manageable inequalities

Advertising is a neoliberal industry made up of small entrepreneurial businesses. This means gender inequalities that exist are not tackled with formal legislation and industrywide initiatives. Often pay, maternity policies and ratios of women in senior roles can look unfavourable versus other professions where diversity is more formally enforced.

Suggested Strategies



Senior female sponsors
and mentors



Senior male sponsors
and mentors



Female creative buddies



More visibility for successful female
creatives – dedicated awards and
positive trade press






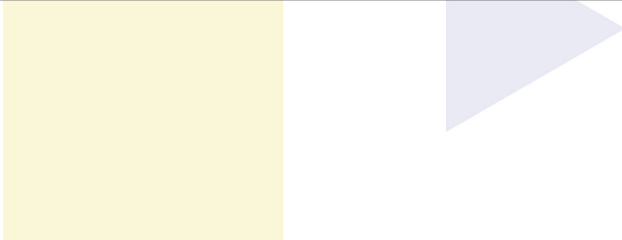
Creative female
networking events



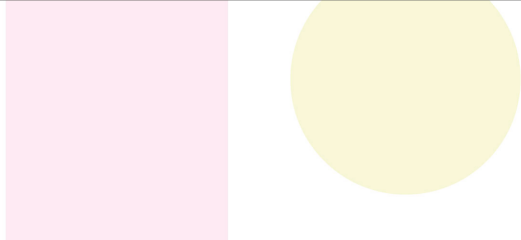
Bursaries for female
internships



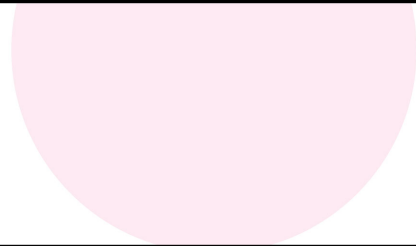
Personal skills training offered
on creative arts and media
courses on areas like resilience,
confidence, self-promotion and negotiation



Dedicated diversity discussion and
modules integrated into creative arts
and media courses



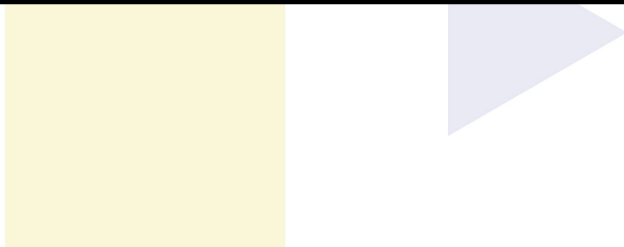
Better career advice for female students



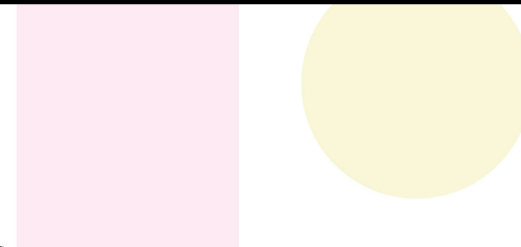
50-50 gender targets for entry level creative recruitment



50-50 gender shortlists for roles



Female only portfolio reviews



Female creative online
communities

