THE FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION UK

How can industries reach the next generation in the talent pipeline?

A report for The Fragrance Foundation UK on supporting secondary school students' career ambitions

Kingston University London   **ERIC**   **The British Academy**

March 2024

Foreword

By Linda Key Jackson (CEO) & Roja Dove (Chairman),
The Fragrance Foundation UK

Our vision is to harness the transformational power of fragrance, and our mission is to drive growth and expand the love of fragrance through education, inspiration, and celebration.

As an industry, we are much larger than most people realise. With a turnover in excess of £7.1 Billion and inflow into the Exchequer of over £2.1 Billion (when last valued in 2019), The Fragrance Foundation UK have the desire and ambition to make Britain become a centre of excellence in this globally significant industry, rather than the talent leaving the country[i]. We currently are where the fashion and film industries were years ago, when no-one took Britain seriously in those areas: we need expertise, help, guidance, and endorsement. We are collaborating with universities to ensure students are aware of the opportunities the fragrance industry has to offer, and with AGCAS (The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services), UCAS (the University and Colleges Admissions Service) and UAL (University of Arts London)

We want to further engage with future talent, and the importance of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) learning within our industry, to inspire new talent to want to join us. To do this, we needed to understand what young people look for when considering a career hence we were delighted to have the opportunity to understand their needs with Dr. Otner's Innovation Fellowship grant from the British Academy and the research conducted by ERIC; we are proud to share our findings herein.

THE FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION UK

About The Fragrance Foundation

The Fragrance Foundation UK (hereafter, "TFF UK") is the non-profit body responsible for boosting the reputation of the fragrance industry in the UK, as part of a collaborative initiative "to enhance the image of the fragrance industry and expand the appreciation and use of fragrance in all its forms across all distribution channels globally."

They supply training and continuing professional development, and grant annually both The Fragrance Foundation UK Awards and The Jasmine Awards – major prizes recognising both producers and products.

Education

Leveraging the power of education to ensure consumers and employees see the fragrance industry as a place of lifelong learning. TFF UK is the organisation for education and information on careers within our sector. With the aim of developing links with the education sector, TFF UK will help people forge careers within the fragrance industry in the UK.

Inspiration

TFF UK is the go-to organisation in the fragrance sector for inspiration- helping bring the world of fragrance in all its wonder to its members and fragrance enthusiasts. The foundation seeks out and shares ideas on innovation; motivating individuals; extraordinary brands & services; stories of success; insight into the future; and understanding audiences and the worlds in which they live.

Celebration

The industry is made up of incredible people, ideas, and innovations that The Fragrance Foundation UK celebrate. The industry is a place of enormous diversity and innovations which TFF UK celebrate by developing campaigns, initiatives, and events. The foundation brings forward ideas on ways to connect future talent with the industry.

About
Sarah Otner

Dr. Sarah M. G. Otner is a British Academy Innovation Fellow and Senior Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour at Kingston Business School. She is an expert on innovation management, networks, and careers.

Her work uses a variety of methods, spanning from experiments to archival analysis. Dr. Otner has collaborated extensively with Challenge Works (previously, Nesta Challenges), and consulted for a range of organizations (most recently, Innovate UK).
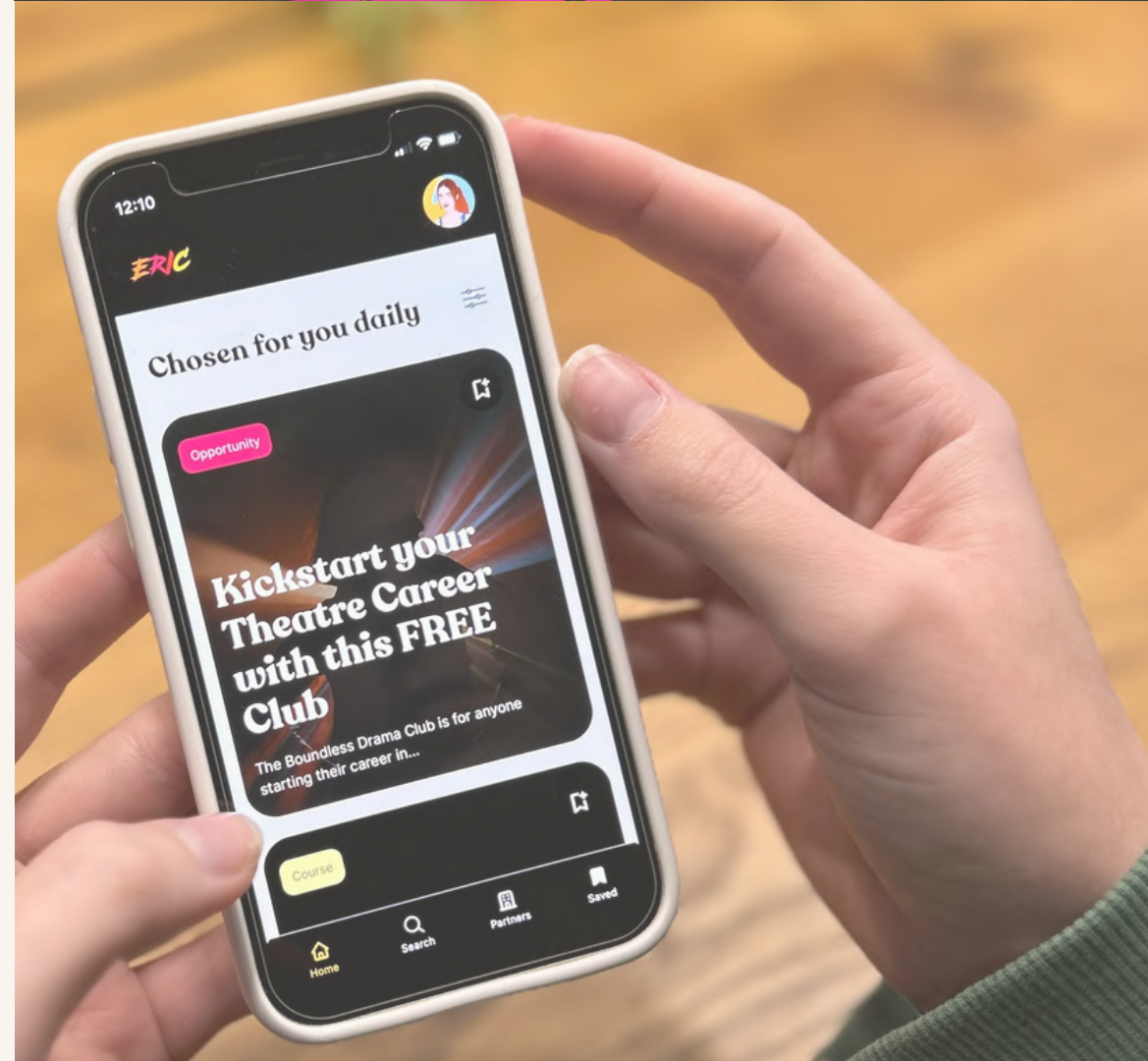
About
ERIC

ERIC is a free careers app, aimed at young people who want to connect with career experiences and opportunities in the creative working world.

ERIC's overall aim and purpose is to increase the connection between industry and young people, thus eliminating skills gaps, talent shortages and overall futureproofing the UK economy.

With over 100,000 app users and heavy influence on social media, ERIC are uniquely placed to gather insights and data from their audience of young people about how they perceive careers in the creative industries. This information is then used to help organisations market their careers more effectively to the next generation of the workforce.

Executive Summary

Young job seekers have a clear picture of a "Good Job" as competitive, exciting, and well-paid – while having detailed expectations for salary, stability, and satisfaction. They feel they should get a "return on investment" for choosing the "right" exam subjects, degree, and institution.

Young job seekers are anxious about the impact of AI and the robustness of the labour market. They have an appetite for roles that combine creativity with STEM – and for occupations & industries outside of the typical professions.

They are eager for industry engagement, live in schools – not online. Good industry engagement is seen as proactive, inclusive, and authentic.

Unfortunately, they receive limited support and poor guidance about careers from their schools. This is compounded by the ostensible collapse of Work Experience (due in Year 10).

Introduction

This section explains the project's purpose, our specific focus, the data collection methods we used, and the limitations to our results.

Purpose

In 2022, the British Film Institute and ERIC published a report[ii] on the state of careers education generally and specifically, Screen Industries-related careers information. Their work found that schools-based careers advisors – where they exist – have no time, no budget, and no idea of how to support young job seekers' ambitions to join the Creative Industries.

Following from that, and as part of their commitment to increasing diversity in the UK talent pipeline, The Fragrance Foundation UK were keen to identify young job seekers' needs from and expectations for their future careers. They had a particular interest in occupations with technical inputs and creative outputs, and in understanding how to design ideal industry engagement.

Through their partnership in The British Academy Innovation Fellowship, TFF UK worked with Dr. Sarah Otner and ERIC to author this report.

Focus

We chose to focus on young job seekers (aged 14-16) for two reasons. First, this age range overlaps with The Department for Education's "Skills for Life" campaign. Second, TFF UK will collaborate with The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)[iii] to understand graduate job seekers' needs.

Our secondary school students are on the precipice of choosing GCSE or A-level subjects; many students equate these decisions with selecting an eventual career:

"There is a lot of encouragement for arts at A-level – photography, art, design & technology – but not too much focus on it actually being a career." (P4)

"It's about getting University places because of your Options, rather than making a career out of it." (P3)

"My peers and I feel pressure to know exactly what we want to do, but most of us are unsure because there is so much variety." (P2)

Equally, most are still open-minded about their futures:

"Sometimes I feel pressure, from teachers and family, to decide early. But I didn't want to set myself onto a certain career and constrict my options." (P3)

Some students have fixed their destination:

"My friends all want to be doctors … I think they want to have an impact on the next generation, and doctor is quite a prestigious role to have." (P11)

if not their path:

"I see myself staying in education, to get a qualification; I expect to work a part-time job, too." (P9)

Our investigation focuses on what these young job seekers identify as the ideal job, the ideal industry engagement – and the gaps to both.

Method: Survey

In Phase 1, we designed a survey[iv] to understand 1) the existing state of careers planning and advice, 2) specific needs of the Fragrance Industry, and 3) ideal careers guidance. We placed untargeted ads on TikTok, asking young people aged 14-16 to contribute their "thoughts about careers education". The survey required 5-10 minutes to complete, and participants were compensated £5 for their time.

We tested the survey with the first 30 respondents, before distributing it more widely; then, we received 270 responses within 3.5 hours. Following this, we analysed respondent characteristics (particularly, geographic location) and deployed purposeful sampling to attract the remaining respondents in order to balance the panel.
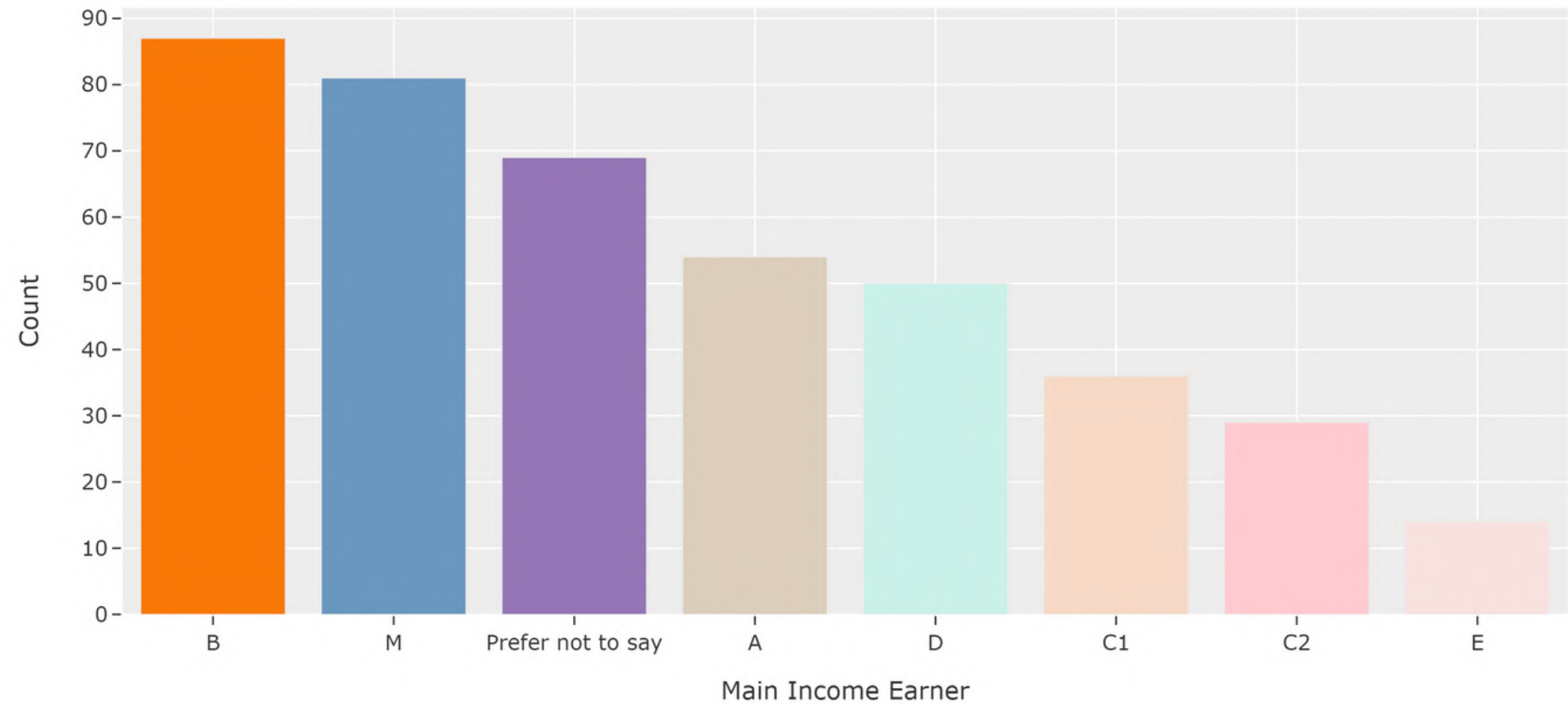
Overall, we received 420 valid responses. More than 67% of respondents attended state-run or state-funded schools, and only 10% attended independent or fee-paying schools.

Distribution of Survey Respondents Across UK Cities
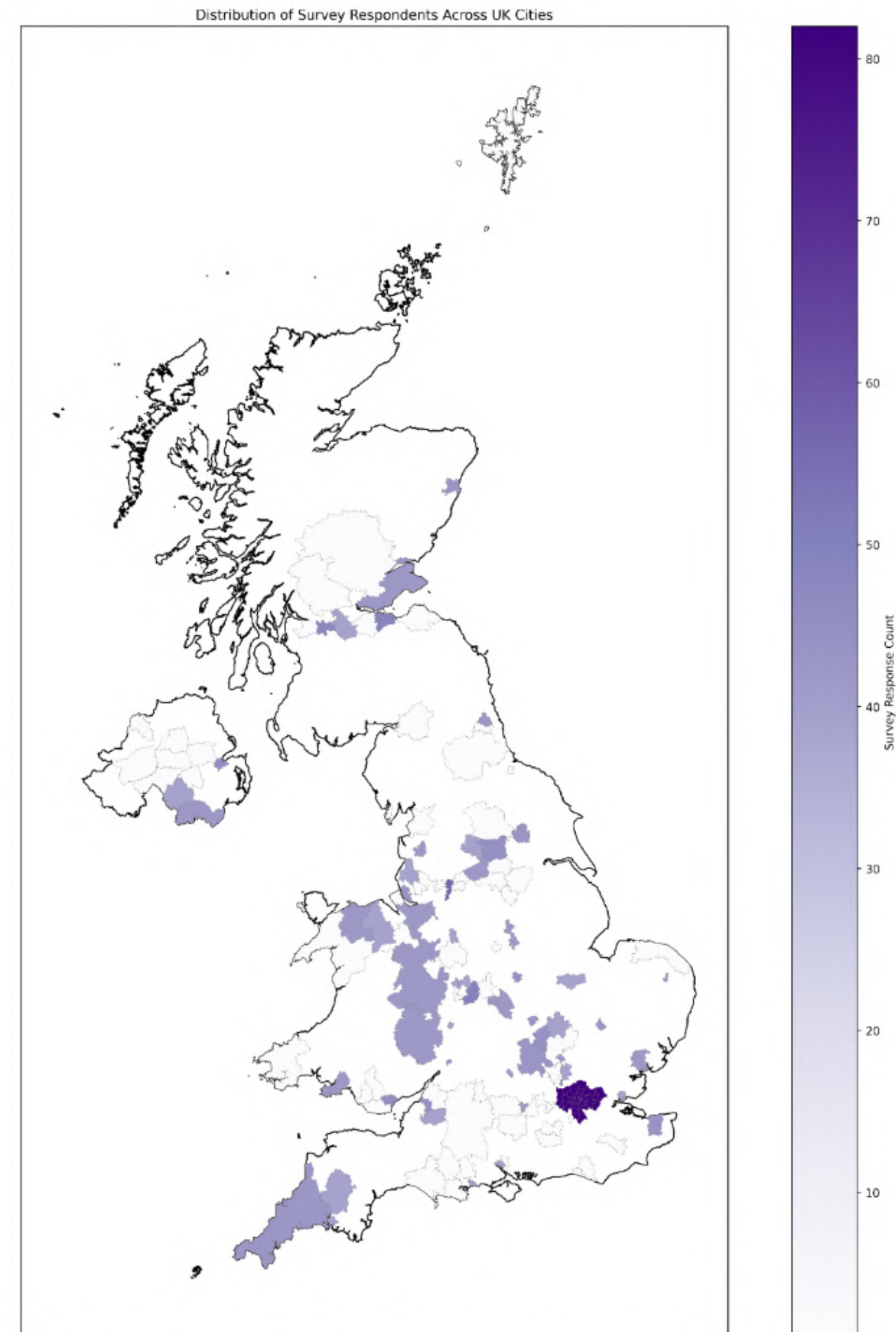
Method: Survey

Distribution of respondents' main income earner

B: Traditional professional occupations (e.g., accountant, solicitor, scientist, medical practitioner) & Middle or junior managers (e.g., office manager, warehouse manager, restaurant manager)
M: Modern professional occupations e.g., teacher, nurse, social worker, artist, musician, software designer
A: Senior managers and administrators e.g., finance manager, chief executive
D: Routine manual and service occupations (e.g., van driver, cleaner, porter, waiter/waitress, bar staff) & Semi-routine manual and service occupations (e.g., postal worker, security guard, machine worker, receptionist, sales assistant)
C1: Clerical and intermediate occupations e.g., secretary, nursery nurse, office clerk, call centre agent
C2: Technical and craft occupations e.g., fitter, plumber, printer, electrician
E: Unemployed/never worked/long term sickness & Care experienced
Source: NRS Approximated Social Grades

Method: Interviews

We intended Phase 2 to conduct follow-up interviews with the survey respondents who consented to further contact. We produced a stratified random sample of this sub-group to invite to interview. Unfortunately, this procedure attracted no interviewees. We drew a further, random sample from the same eligibility pool but excluding already-invited participants. Unfortunately, again this procedure did not secure any interviews. Instead, we decided to revise the interview protocol for an entirely new and independent pool of participants.

To secure our interview sample, we advertised to TikTok for young people aged 14–16 to share their "thoughts on the careers advice you currently receive". After their parents provided their informed consent, potential participants self-arranged interview appointments; successful participants were compensated £30 for 30 minutes. After the first half of the interviews were conducted, we balanced the sample by re-advertising to target non-female identifying respondents. Overall, we completed 11 interviews.

As with Survey respondents, the young job seekers in Phase 2 ranged in age from 14–16 years old. Interviewees demonstrated good variety of school types and geographic breadth – from Washington and Middlesbrough to Ashford and Addlestone, with only three interviewees from Greater London.

Limitations

As explained previously, this investigation is not an academic research project. Thus, it necessarily is small and statistically underpowered. Both methods involved self-reported information, and both lacked triangulation especially to parent and/or school counsellor impressions.

In addition, the wider, contemporaneous social context featured the announcement of economic recession, the build up to a general election, and two ongoing wars abroad.

Together, these factors might have contributed to respondents' feelings of uncertainty – or instead, these might be part of the "permacrisis"[v]. Nevertheless, our findings are indicative of the cohort. Future work should expand this investigation in both scale and scope.

Careers Guidance

This section reveals what young job seekers want from their future work, what careers advice they currently receive, and their ideal careers preparation. We performed a gap analysis, through which we identify areas for improvement.

"Good Advice"

The graph below shows the increase in the likelihood of pursuing employment opportunities in a given industry given reliable information and good advice (compared with receiving no such information).

The industry clusters with the greatest potential to attract talent are Fragrance, Beauty, & Wellbeing; Creative Arts & Design; Media & Internet; and Leisure, Sport, & Tourism.

The industry clusters that are more attractive without detailed information are Energy & Utilities; Transport & Logistics; and Law Enforcement & Security.

Increase in likelihood to work in given industry if given good advice
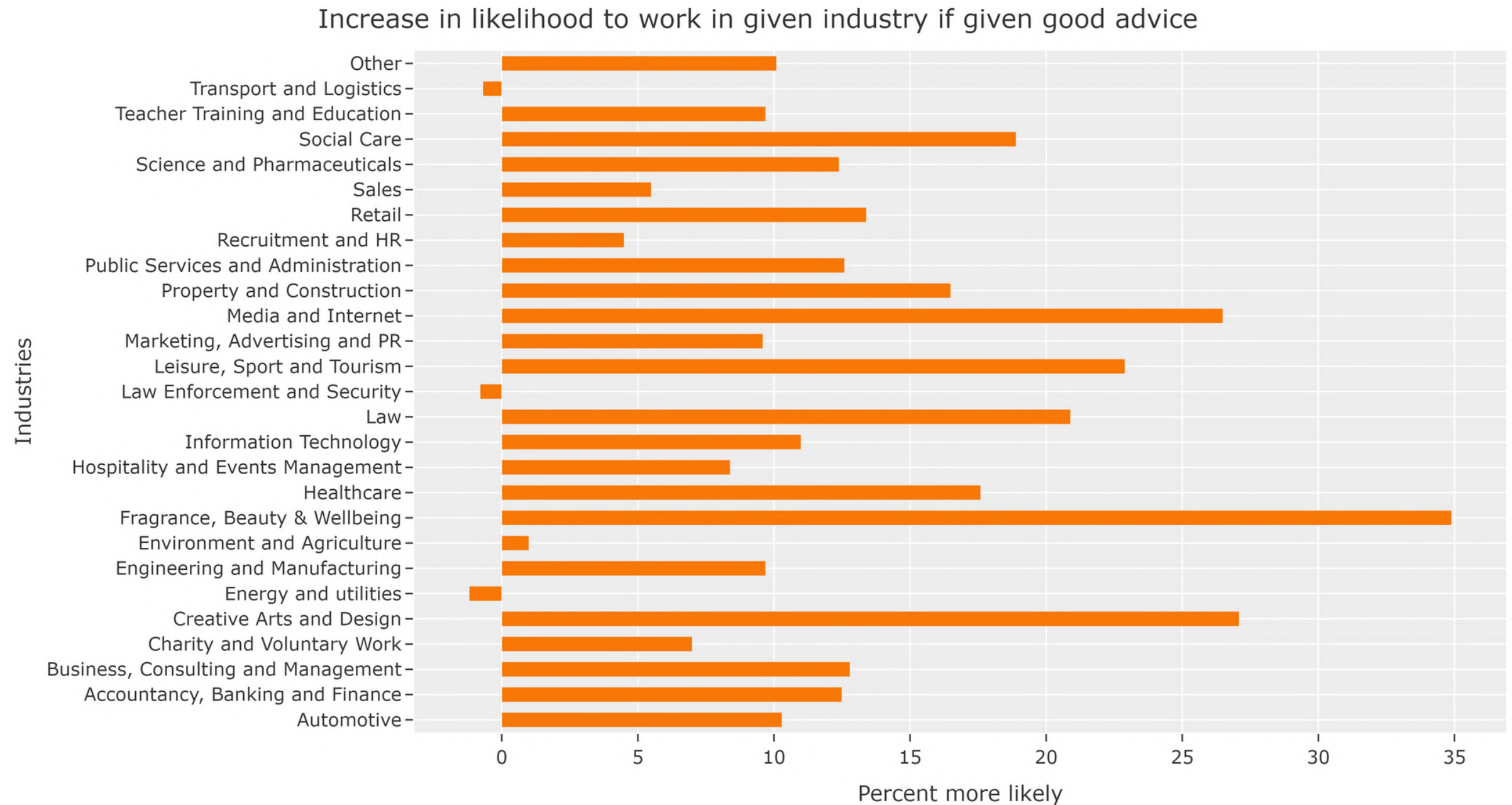
"A Good Job"

Some combination of terms using "good job" featured in all our young job seekers' careers research. During interviews, we probed the meaning of this, and identified the following attributes:

1) Competitive to get into; Well-known / Good reputation

2) Difficult/Challenging/Interesting work

3) Well-paid/Financial Comfort

4) "Be in a position where I can afford things, without having to cut out other things." (P2)

5) Excites you/Makes you passionate about it

6) Working Conditions (Hours; Location; Hybrid & WFH)

"Younger people (my generation) are leaning towards hybrid with flexibility and the office environment, which helps concentration and helps you focus more." (P6)

A "good job" is also front of mind as young job seekers parse the options:

When thinking about your future career, what do you look for?
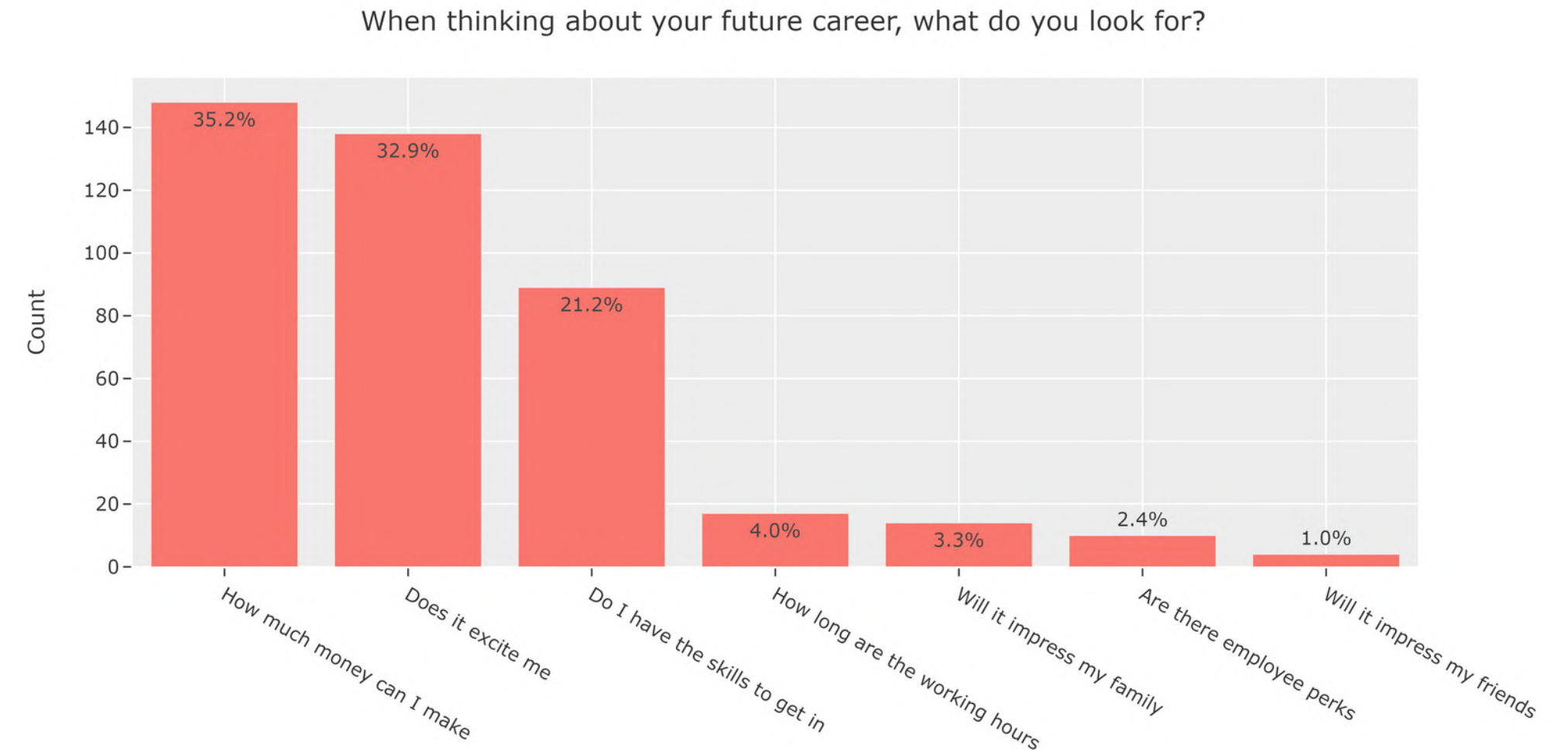
Rather than a specific industry, profession, or occupational rank, we used this definition to focus our conversations.

Current Careers Advice

In a previous report 'What's Stopping Young People Pursuing Careers in the Screen Industries' commissioned by the BFI (2022)[vi] , ERIC identified that young people make careers decisions first about which industries interest them; then about which roles best fit with their skills; and finally which routes into those occupations (e.g., university degree, apprenticeship, technical qualification) will be most successful. At each stage of this "Decision Funnel", existing careers guidance falls short.

The Careers Guidance Decision Funnel

How young people can make educated decisions about their career options.

Industries

Here are the breadth of industries you can work in (choose some industries that interest you)

Jobs

Here are the types of jobs you can do within those industries (choose a career area that fits with your skills)

Pathways

Here are the different pathways into that career area & industry (university/apprenticeships/ straight to work/other)
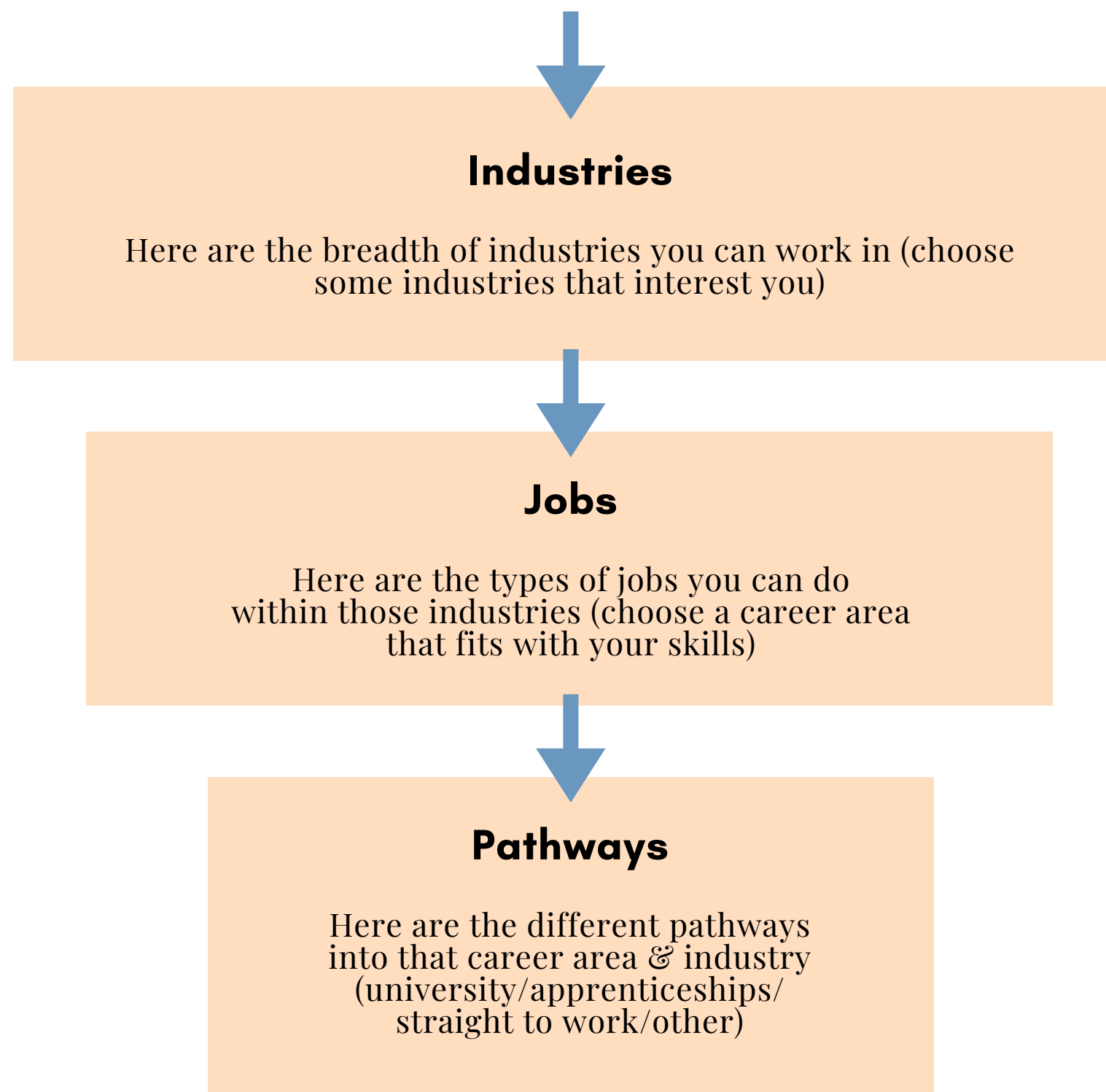
Current Careers Advice: Sources

Who is your most regular source of your careers advice from?

- Careers advisors / leaders at school — 22.5%
- Parent / guardian / extended family — 19.1%
- Social media — 17.1%
- Subject teachers at school — 15.9%
- Online search — 13.7%
- Careers fairs — 8.82%
- Friends — 2.78%
- Other — 0.0991%
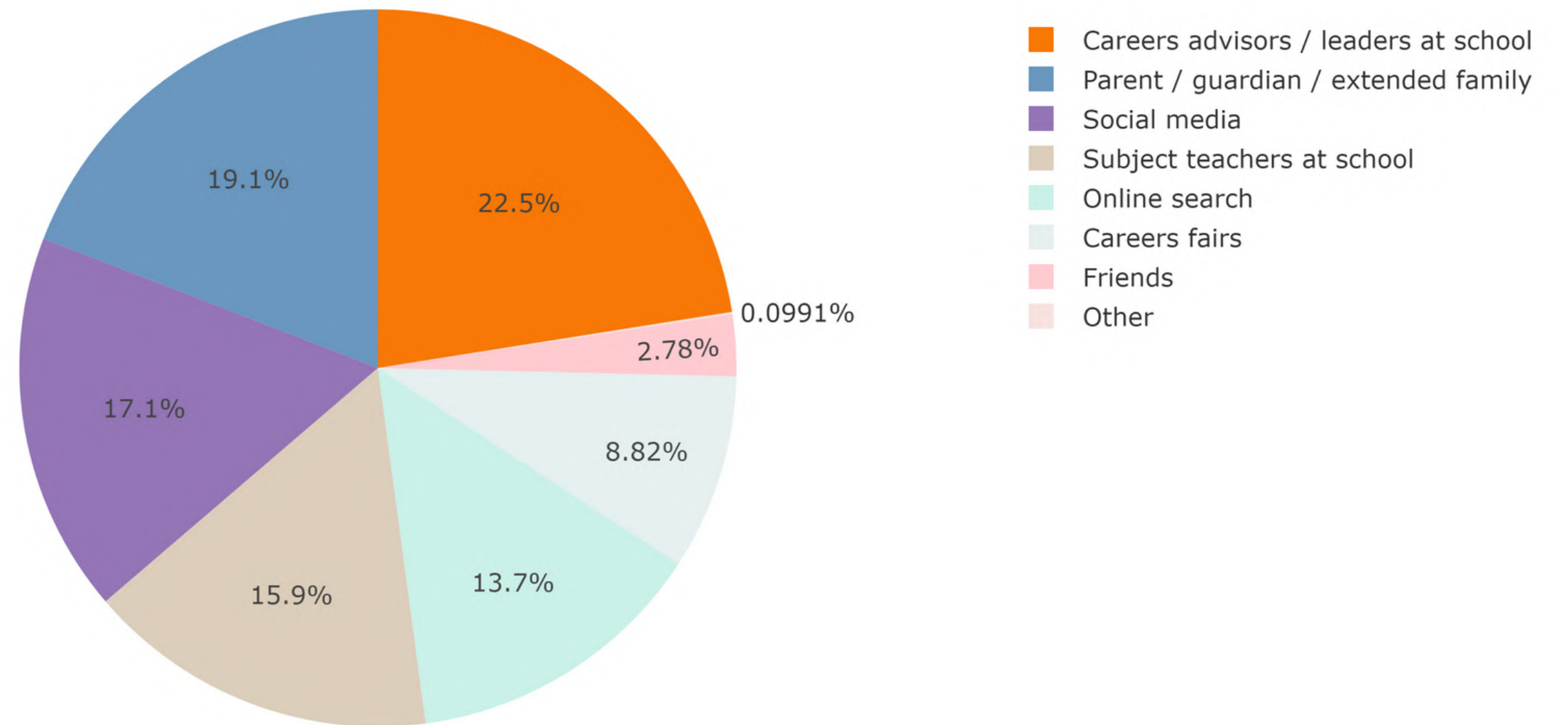
Current Careers Advice: Sources

Taken together, our survey respondents most engage in careers research with their school leaders, their parents and extended family, and social media. However, they believe that the best advice – i.e., the most relevant and most reliable – comes from general social media and specific careers websites (such as the National Careers Service, Prospectus, UCAS, Unifrog, and CareerPilot).

In contrast, our interviewees did not mention careers-dedicated sites[vii]. This is frustrating due to the considerable effort spent developing specific resources, such as Discover Creative Careers[viii].

On a scale of 0-10, how good do you think career advice is in general from:
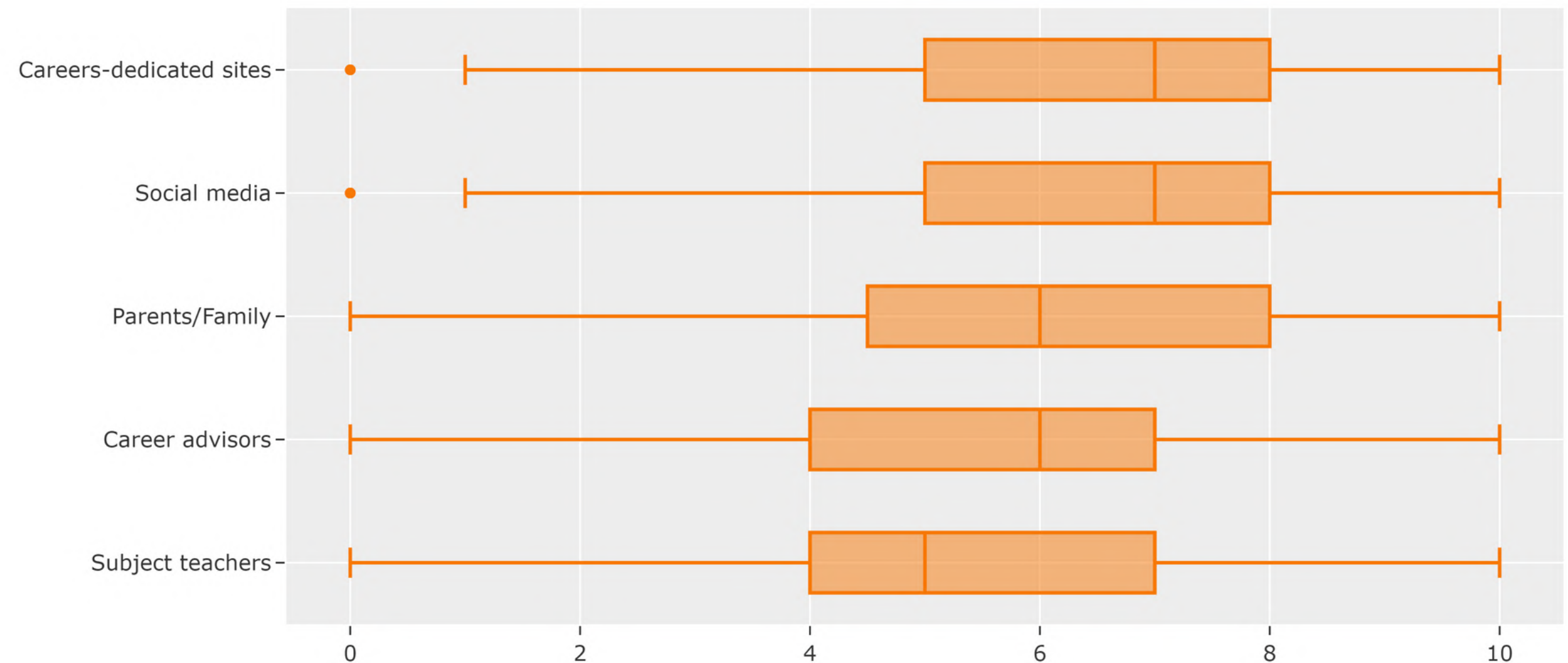
Current Careers Advice: Industries

*Formal advice includes advice from school (i.e., careers advisor, careers fair, assembly talks, etc.) and careers-specific websites. Informal advice includes advice from social media, family, and peers.

Have you ever had formal* careers advice from school about any of these industries
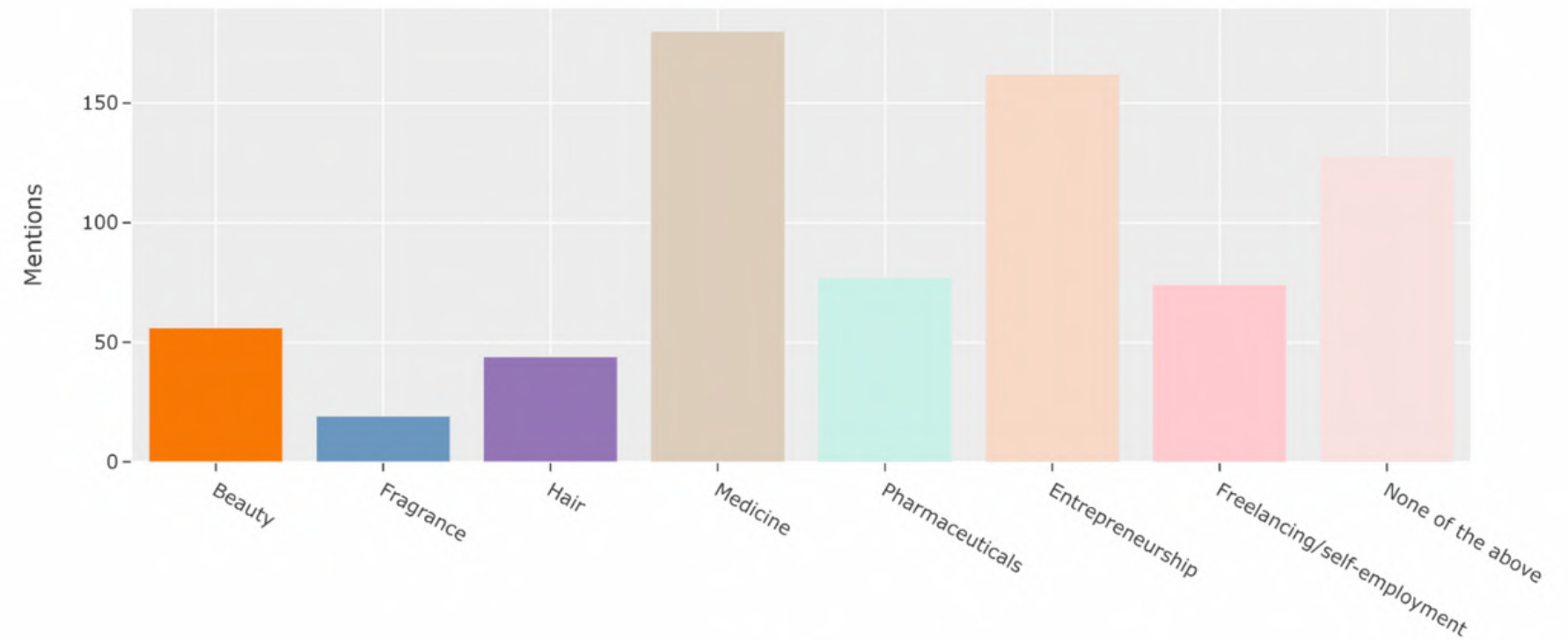
Have you ever had informal* careers advice from school about any of these industries
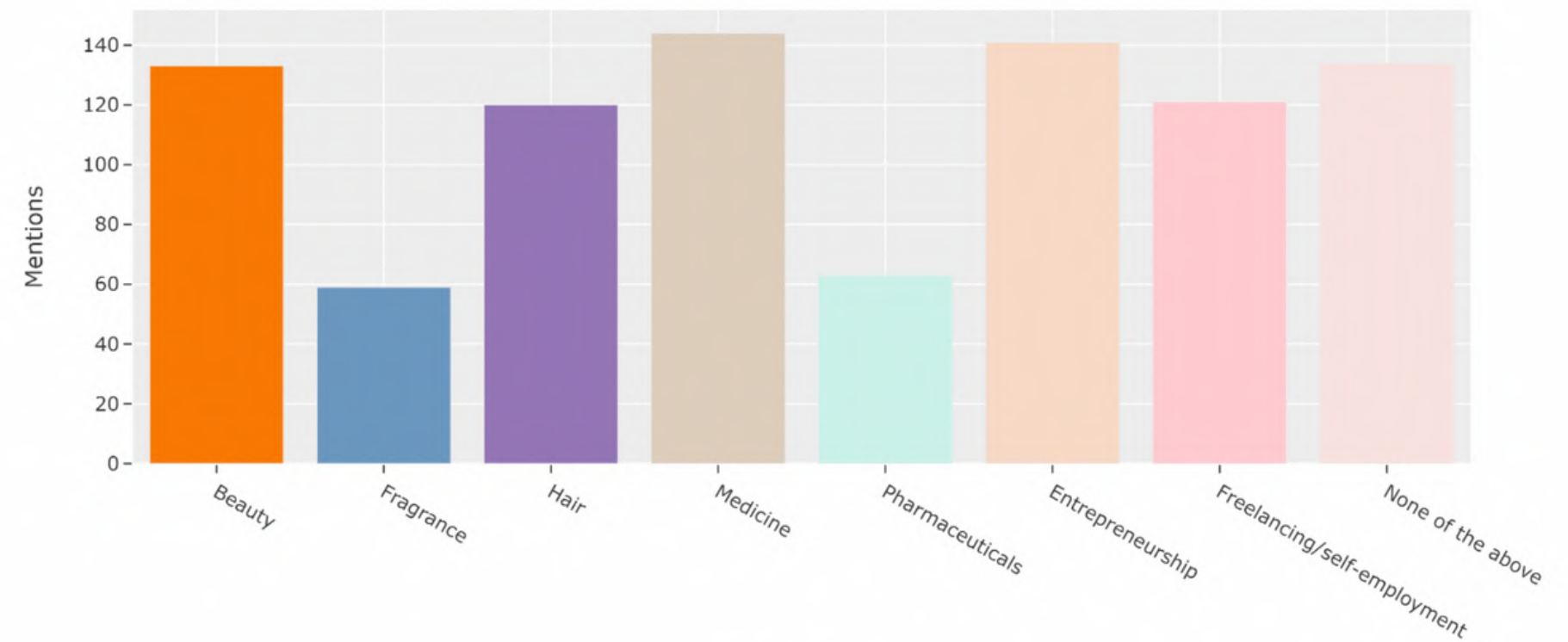
Current Careers Advice: Industries

This heatmap shows the relationship between the likelihood of receiving Formal & Informal Advice about the same industry.

Darker colours indicate industry pairs where one type of advice was more likely to occur with another; for example, informal advice about the Fragrance Industry was most likely received by the same young job seekers who received formal advice about the Pharmaceutical industry.

Lighter colours indicate industry pairs that were less likely to be mentioned to the same young job seeker. For example, candidates who received formal advice about the Pharmaceutical industry were less likely to receive informal advice about Entrepreneurship.
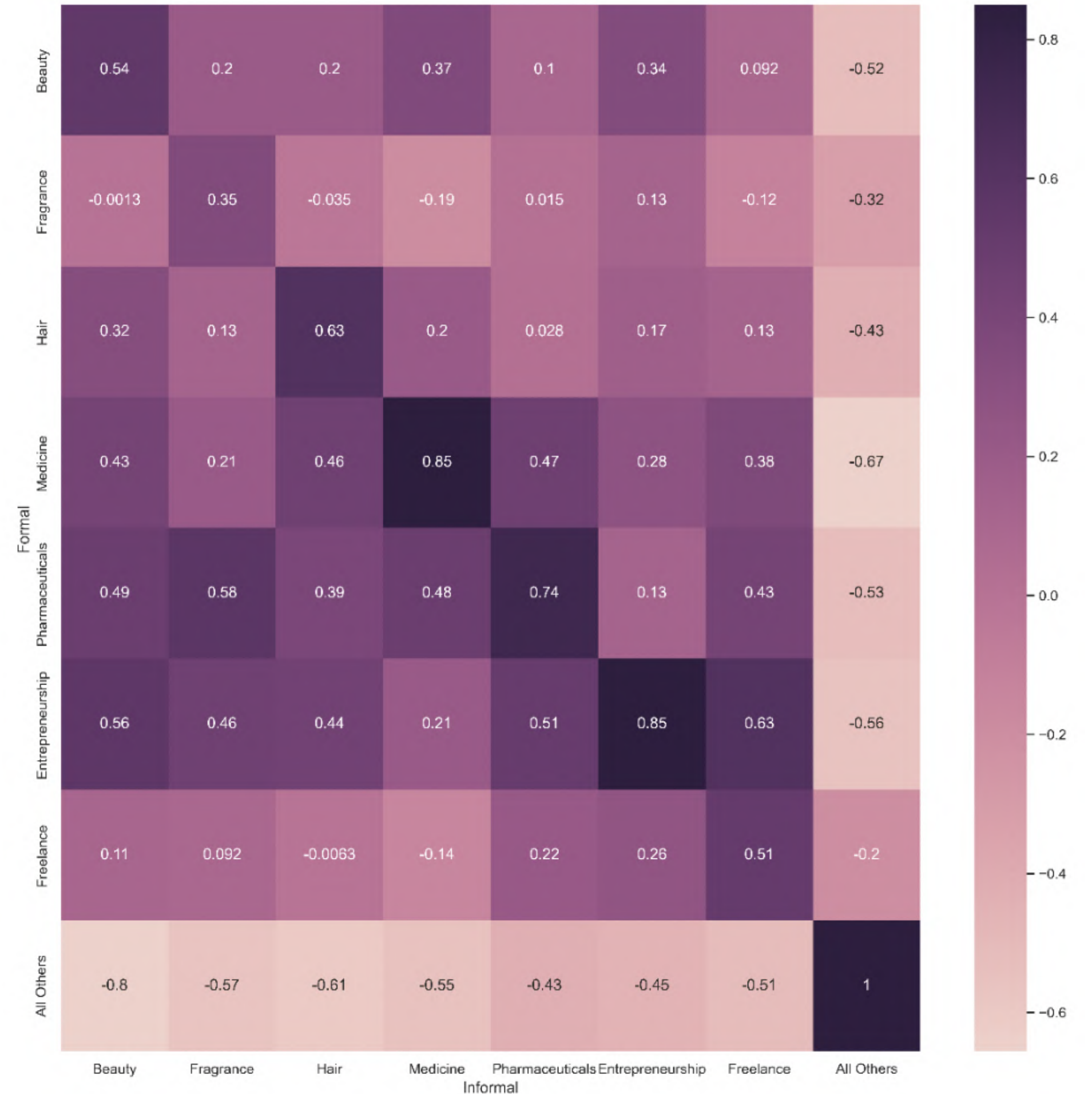
Current Careers Advice: Pathways

Overall, young job seekers know how they would like to spend their working days, but receive either no or poor advice on how to align their educational and occupational choices to get to those desirable positions:

"As we're about to pick GCSE options, school tells us [in assembly] what we can do with each; but otherwise, not a lot of careers information." (P9)

"Nobody really talked about [careers] before Year 12 because the focus was more on getting the grades to do <u>whatever</u> you want to do later. So, the main discussion has started in sixth form." (P1, emphasis added)

Respondents consistently mentioned a lack of information generally, and especially for specific careers and industries:

"The lack of information; it doesn't really get spoken about. If things aren't directly mentioned to you, and it's not the kind of job that you see day-in and day-out, then it's more uncommon. There's a lack of information both in school and online." (P1)

"I didn't get much information about careers from my school, which I feel like I should have. They haven't given us much information about work experience, and that's coming this year. ... It was a rushed decision." (P5)

"We haven't really been told about things like apprenticeships or things that don't require a degree." (P1)

Students also discussed needing to take it upon themselves to plug this information gap:

"I look up the requirements that I need for each job, vacancies, work experience. ... I'm still browsing, considering all options." (P11)

"I did my own research because we're not really told much, careers-wise. ... Everyone in Year 11 has a 'Careers Meeting', a half-hour slot once every two years. During it, they basically ask you what you what you want to do, copy-paste from Google search results into a letter, then send you away to read it. ... [My friends and I] don't really see the point." (P10)

"I would ask my cousin ... I would maybe ask my teacher, or Google – but I don't know if they are very reliable." (P9)

Ideal Careers Advice

A small minority of our young job seekers do receive good support:

"I quite frequently get careers advice from my Careers Counsellor. We sometimes get assemblies about apprenticeships or work experience. There's also a Google Classroom for announcements, and we can book sessions with the Careers Counsellor, if we need advice." (P4)

"At my school, they give us quite a lot of career advice early on [at the end of Year 9]. So, I have a good idea of what I want to do now. I'm still thinking about it, obviously, because I'm only 16; I know I want to work in [X] but I don't know what specifically." (P8)

For the majority of our young job seekers, in-school careers Presentations and Careers Fairs are still paramount:

"Go into schools more – but don't do the whole entire assembly, because people will not pay attention. Bring a video, with fun music in the background, to explain exactly what you do and what you pay." (P10)

"Loads of different industries come to my school because my Head of Year is really good at making sure that we have careers stuff. Last year, we had a Careers Fair. ... There's loads of stuff representing everyone's interests – including Construction; it's been quite evenly split across all of the [possible] jobs." (P7)

"I think they [Careers Fair organizers] should bring in a lot more, different sectors. Some people might actually really enjoy them, but they will never know because they just don't talk about them." (P8)

"Exposure makes you think of more options; then, the more options that you consider and rule out, the more secure you feel in your choice." (P1)

In comparison to 'A "Good Job"', students want more, detailed, reliable careers guidance:

"If school gave out good information, it would be much easier. For example, who, in my area, was encouraged to do what. We aren't really encouraged." (P5)

- **"Are there different career paths in that one industry?"**
- **"How do employers see your degree choice? Is it useful?"**
- **"Money is generally really important."**

Ideal Careers Presentation: Approach

Universally, our young job seekers want multi-faceted material:

"I think 'A Day in the Life' content, for multiple roles, shared on social media: That would definitely appeal." (P6)

"The kinds of things that you would see on <u>work experience</u>." (P1, emphasis added)

"They explain really well what you will <u>actually</u> be doing in the job. They show <u>everything</u> that you will be doing, instead of just the one thing you see online." (P7, emphasis in original)

"Exactly what it is, from people who actually know about it. What is required of you to succeed in that job." (P2)

Moreover, they want high degrees of authenticity and transparency – "warts and all":

"Pros and Cons – not only the good stuff. I need to know the bad stuff so that I can make a good decision about it. Being honest [and transparent] is really important because you don't want to get people into the wrong industry and then lose them later on." (P5)

"It's important to mention the negatives, but focus on the positives. Be honest and transparent." (P7)

Regarding whom you profile, celebrity is less important than the story:

"Other people's experiences definitely attract me. Hearing from people who have actually been there for a long time, real-life experiences and all the good stuff about it. That works more than just data." (P8)

"One thing I really remember is when the Costume Designer came in, they showed photos of the stuff they've worked on. I really enjoyed that show, so I really remember it." (P4)

Ideal Careers Presentation: Content

Job seekers need specific information from industry engagement:

"People want to see how far you can go; how far you can stretch this career; and how much money you can potentially make." (P3)

The three core themes that emerged from our investigation are Salary, Stability, and Satisfaction.

Salary

We were surprised and encouraged by the clear and consistent message from young job seekers regarding salary. Linked to their perceptions of a "good job" (as detailed on page 16), these independent conversations coalesced around the following expectations:

"I want to start making good money as soon as possible, not in my 30s." (P5)

whereby "good money" is:

£20-27k

Entry-level, Basic, pre-university, no qualifications

£30-35k

Graduate, with university-level qualifications

£35-40k

Respectable, Stable

£40-45k

Comfort

"My friends and I talk about this in our PlayStation party." (P9)

and "good money" enables:

"You need to be able to afford your food shop, insurance, payments on a car and a house, and still have enough left over for an emergency fund and fun spending (e.g., going out to eat) – and do all of that comfortably without having to live paycheck to paycheck." (P6)

This financial anxiety constrains not only career choices, but the educational decisions that pre-date them (because of the perceived link, as discussed on page 9):

"A lot of the time, it's about 'Will this lead me to a financially stable future?' rather than 'Do you really enjoy the subjects that you're doing?'." (P3)

Ideal Careers Presentation: Content

Together, these anchor points direct attention during job seekers' independent research:

"What I don't think is talked about enough is the money side of things. It can be quite a big factor in making decisions about the role. I'm more likely to look into a job if I know roughly what the pay is." (P6)

"We're never really told about salaries. I think we watched one PowerPoint, in Year 9, about income." (P10)

"What's the point in what you do at your job other than to make money?" (P2)

Stability

Even more than their concerns about pay, our job seekers were focused on employment stability:

"If I go there, how long will I be there for? How long will that job stay around? How long will the industry be around?" (P8)

Reflecting the wider social context, much of this anxiety derives from the zeitgeist regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI):

"AI and robots are taking quite a lot of jobs these days. You need to be sure that your job won't be 100% taken over by robots and that, in the future, you will be able to have a job in that area. Knowing this about a job would appeal to me." (P6)

Similarly to the conversations about salary, our separate interviews converged around a five-year horizon for the future of work:

"I definitely think about stability. A lot of jobs are getting taken over by machines, and there is a lot of talk about AI. I need to choose something where only a person can do this job. ... It needs to be a job that won't disappear five years in the future." (P7)

"Technology might advance, and then the job that I'm studying for might already be overtaken by new technology. ... I want to hear some proof that the industry is going to be alive in five years. What is the future?" (P5)

"I want a guaranteed job for a certain amount of years. ... [A starting scheme] would be quite appealing because I would know that in five years, I would still be financially stable. It creates peace of mind, and makes the company look way more enticing." (P6)

Ideal Careers Presentation: Content

Some respondents are planning longer-term than that:

"With the job that I want to go to, thinking about stability is essential because I don't want to suddenly lose that job one day." (P4)

"I think a lot of people are sure [about what they want to do] but also, that the pressure to be sure makes a lot of people not want to admit that they are still unsure. ... Everyone has days where they question 'Am I really sure that I want to commit myself to this forever?'." (P1)

"How will I be able to be stable in this [career choice], knowing that the job might be taken away from me? ... How is this industry going to support me over my whole working life, my career?" (P2)

Within the engagement from industry, young job seekers want clear and consistent signals of stability. To them, these include traditional indicators of full employment (and neither freelancing nor entrepreneurship) – especially, non-contingent salary (as in the previous section) – as well as predictable and sociable working hours, trade union representation, and professional development.

Conversely, resilience was not perceived through learning corporate history:

"I don't really care about history. A job could have already been around for many [100] years; but how am I going to know if that is going to be around in another five years? ... Look what the Gutenberg press did to scribing!" (P5)

Ideal Careers Presentation: Content

Satisfaction

Once the job seeker has clarity on a career's longevity and its remuneration, the third core requirement is that they do not hate the work itself:

"I'd quite like to enjoy my career. I don't want to be miserable at a job that I have to do every day." (P4)

"There's a lot of pressure to choose your subjects that align with your future career. However, we've been told just to take subjects that we enjoy. At the end of the day, you don't want to be in a job that you hate." (P7)

Beyond avoiding misery, our job seekers want to enjoy their work:

"If I'm going to pick a career, it's going to be something that I will be doing for most of my life. So, I need to actually enjoy it, and be happy in my workplace." (P5)

"I want to be the best at what I do. I want to do something and be good at it; I don't want to go after a career that I won't be good at." (P3)

Already at this early stage, they have connected job satisfaction to both performance and eventual impact:

"I don't want to get a job which I don't really like; I'd rather do something that's more open-ended. When you are in a job that you don't enjoy, you put in less effort." (P8)

"I need to get along with my colleagues. I think having friends where you work is an important factor in making your work both good and enjoyable." (P10)

"That sounds quite interesting, and a job that I would actually enjoy. ... I would like to get something out of my work." (P9)

In addition to these pillars, our young job seekers are attracted to ethics and values:

"You need to see what the company is about, its ethics and its values. That can attract you to working in a certain career." (P7)

"I would love to hear the company's history. It wouldn't put me off the company if it were a new company. But I like to know what's behind a company, why was it started (aims, goals, values). It makes you appreciate where the company came from." (P6)

Ideal Careers Presentation: Format

Universally, our young job seekers want to engage with the industry representatives:

"Presentations are really good when they are interactive. The approach matters in terms of how receptive students are." (P1)

"The thing that gets most people the most excited about careers advice is when it involves work experience opportunities, either online or in person. When they are more hands-on, they are more involved." (P1)

"Have the [supplementary / extended] information somewhere that's quick and easy to access. ... Umbrella websites give you more choice, but they need to link out [to detailed industry sites]." (P7)

Cultural & Creative Industries

We applied our expertise in the Cultural & Creative Industries in order to understand how careers education addresses young job seekers' appetites for creativity. We did not provide *a priori* a fixed definition, so our results reveal both perceptions and ambitions.

Cultural & Creative Industries

The above findings are magnified under the lens of Cultural & Creative Industries (CCI). We use the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport's (2016[ix]) definition, as those "which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property."

First, the existing misperceptions[x] persist:

"The inaccessibility of the Creative Industries: It's very much who you know, how you get in. It's very hard to get an entry-level job." (P4)

"There's really not enough money in [creative careers] unless you become super successful and – if you don't – then there's really not much else you can do." (P8)

"A lot of people in my school are really artistic and creative, and they're also really academically smart. But they just disregard their artistic side because they think that there's not many careers for creative sides, other than, you know, being an artist or being a designer. They don't see it much further than that." (P3)

Nevertheless, there is a significant appetite for opportunities at the nexus of technology & creativity:

"In schools, they've never really introduced the idea of combining both creativity and STEM subjects. So, I think it's a perfect middle ground to use to appeal to those students who both have a creative outlet – which they see as a hobby, but could be so much more – and then, combine it with their smarts and their academic [subjects]. I think it should be introduced as a way to combine those two key ideas." (P3)

"I would like to know more about other job opportunities, ones that are not talked about that often. I feel like everyone knows about accountancy, being a lawyer; but there are more options that are just not talked about – and they might even be a better choice for me." (P5)

Cultural & Creative Industries

Despite the opportunities that technical industries and occupations (including "CreaTech") provide:

"[Fear of failure is] what keeps prompting me to choose the same subjects, rather than venturing out and trying new stuff." (P3)

"There's a stigma towards more technical careers. People see them as not as professional." (P6)

Even if a young job seeker were able to see beyond these, the limitations of existing careers guidance (as detailed on page 16) still apply:

"The careers presentations have been more traditional [industries], because they [schools] are trying to cater to what [they think] people at school want to hear." (P1)

"The careers presentations have been more traditional [industries], because they [schools] are trying to cater to what [they think] people at school want to hear." (P1)

"The career I want to go into is not very talked about, so I don't think I could go to my Careers Counsellor to get sound advice. ... The film industry is very, very different from something like nursing." (P4)
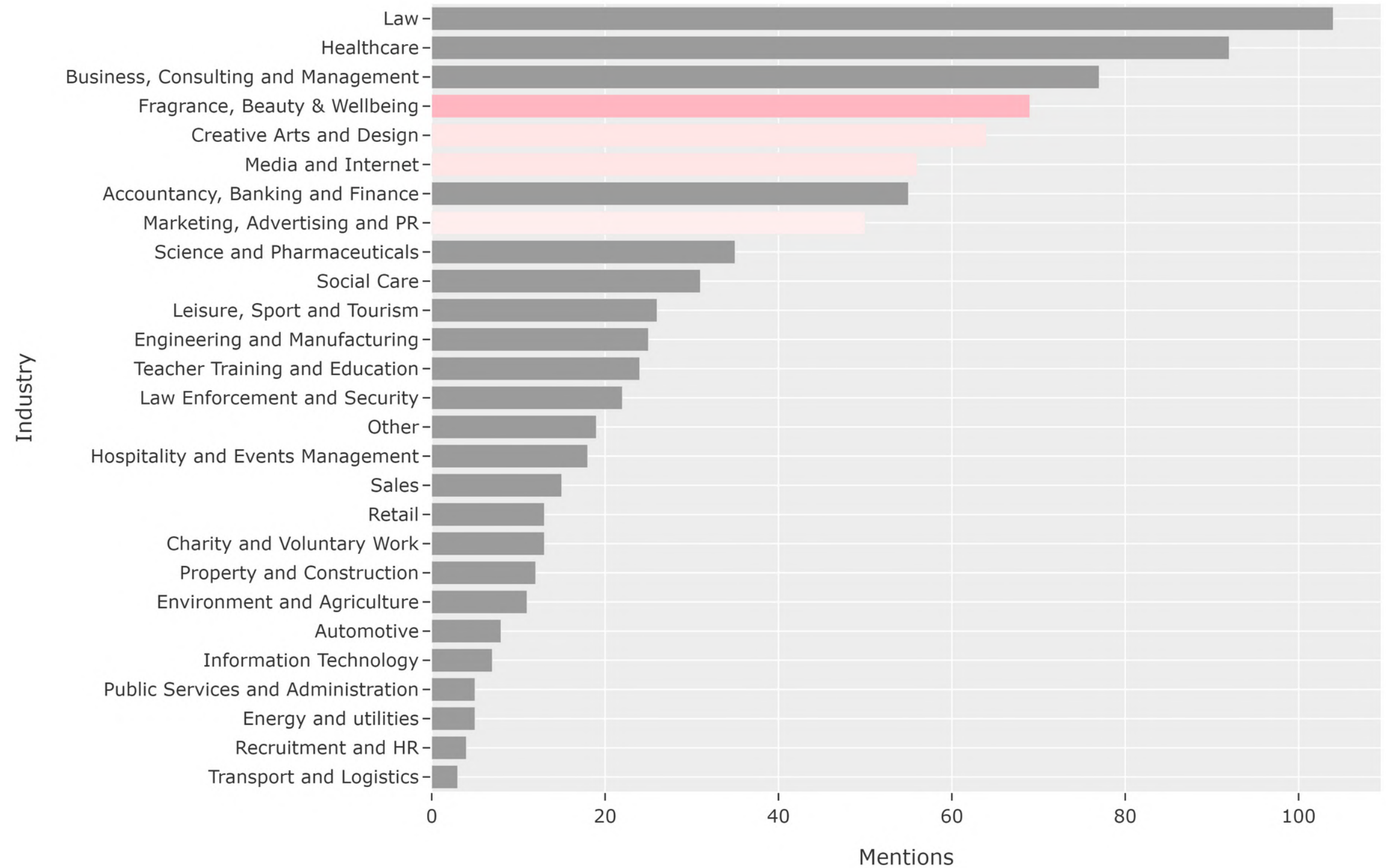
Cultural & Creative Industries

Therefore:

"Someone has to make the message bigger and louder, that there are more than this fixed, few number of industries that people can work for. These would attract people, but they don't know enough about them. ... It might just change someone's life." (P2)

If you could work in ANY industry, what would you choose?

Case Study: The Fragrance Industry

TFF UK tasked us with understanding how to attract and retain within their talent pipleine competitive candidates from diverse backgrounds. To do this, we had to make visible the Fragrance Industry. Our simple intervention and our findings can be applied widely.

Case Study: The Fragrance Industry

The fragrance industry produces, distributes, and sells fragranced products – including personal fragrance (i.e., perfume and aftershave), grooming, ambient fragrance, and scented household products. In 2018[xi]. the fragrance industry contributed more than £7.5Bn to the UK economy. Despite this, there is substantial lack of awareness of the fragrance industry among the UK public, including young job seekers. 53% reported no knowledge of the industry:

"Obviously, I know that they sell fragrances, but it never really came to mind that somebody has to sit down and actually formulate it." (P1)

"I've heard of people who test perfumes, and I've seen people who spray them in shopping centres – but that's literally all I know about the [fragrance] industry." (P8)

"I'm pretty sure a lot of people don't even know that there is a fragrance industry because of how under-rated it is." (P2)

"Normally [in shops], you see fragrances from different countries – especially France and Italy. So, a UK Fragrance Industry is new to me." (P9)

Case Study: The Fragrance Industry

According to Otner (2022)[xii], "Fragrance occupies "'the space between' STEM and SHAPE discipline research, which can be where innovation occurs" (British Academy Place-Based Funding Report, 2021)"[xiii]. Thus, the fragrance industry is an ideal context in which to examine careers education and industry engagement because it uses cutting-edge science and next-generation technology to produce exceptional creative outputs and experiences:

"Fragrance would fit into both [creative careers and science-based careers]; it's 50-50." (P9)

Encouragingly, a further 25% thought that the industry sounded "really exciting":

"That [the Fragrance Industry] is in every UK household is really cool. I wonder if we have it in our house?" (P6)

"That [the Fragrance Industry] is in every UK household is really cool. I wonder if we have it in our house?" (P6)

"I think working in the Fragrance Industry would be quite interesting. You would get to use different types of chemicals, plants … I want to know how you get different smells like Oud, Oakwood…" (P9)

"Fragrance is something that's quite uncommon, and it's a bit of a niche area. I feel like it could be fun [to work in the Fragrance Industry]!" (P1)

"No one's ever talked to me about [the Fragrance Industry] – even though they're such big parts of our lives – so it didn't even seem like an option." (P3)

Case Study: The Fragrance Industry

To this end, we shared The Fragrance Foundation UK's range of careers:

Fragrance Creation

Perfumer/The Nose
Apprentice/ trainee
    Perfumer
Development/ Formation
    Chemist
Evaluator
Lab Technician
Odour Evaluator
Chemist
Process Technician/
    Operator
Supply Chain
    Coordinator
Process Engineer
Fragrance Technical
    Manager
GCMS Technician
Scent Design Specialist

Fragrance Development

Toxicologist
Patent Chemist
Technical Manager
R&D Project Manager
Consumer Market
Research Analyst
Technical Sales
Logistics Manager
Process/Production
    Chemist
Quality Assurance
    Manager
Regulatory Chemist

Operations

Buyer-Purchasing
    Manager
Packaging Technologist
Product/Brand Manager
Advertising Manager
Production Manager
Warehouse Manager
Supply Chain Manager
Packaging Technologist
Factory Manager
Head of Operations

Marketing

Marketing Assistant
Marketing Analyst
Public Relations
Product & Packaging
    Designer
Digital Media Manager
Marketing Researcher
Merchandiser
Social Media Manager
Event Manager
Marketing Director

Sales

Head of Sales
Internal Sales
New Product
Development Manager
Account Manager
Country Manager
Key Account Manager
Area Manager
Business Development
    Manager
Counter Sales
Sales Analyst
Brand Ambassador

Management & Finance

Managing Director
HR Manager
Bookkeeper
Accountant
Personal Assistant

Case Study: The Fragrance Industry

Through this simple intervention, we changed our young job seekers' perceptions of the industry:

"Now that I think about it, fragrance is used all around; it's everywhere. It's huge! But not everyone is aware of it. … It would reach an audience, but perhaps not as huge as [the traditional professions]." (P4)

"I thought it would be more chemistry, mixing stuff and making nice smells … Now that you've [listed the variety of career roles], it makes sense that there are so many other jobs included." (P3)

Together, our findings indicate that although the industry is as invisible as scent itself, there is enormous potential for growth and appetite for engagement. In order to harness this enthusiasm, the same needs for careers guidance support and pathways discussed above persist:

"We've not been taught about the Fragrance Industry at all. It's one of those careers that goes overlooked; it hasn't had enough recognition. … There isn't information about it." (P11)

"Show how important fragrance is to a lot of things besides perfumes and candles – like medicine, I never thought about that before. It's really important, but I don't think there's much of a focus on that; I think it really just slips by people." (P4)

"I've certainly given it [a career in the Fragrance Industry] slight thought, but I wouldn't know where to start with it." (P6)
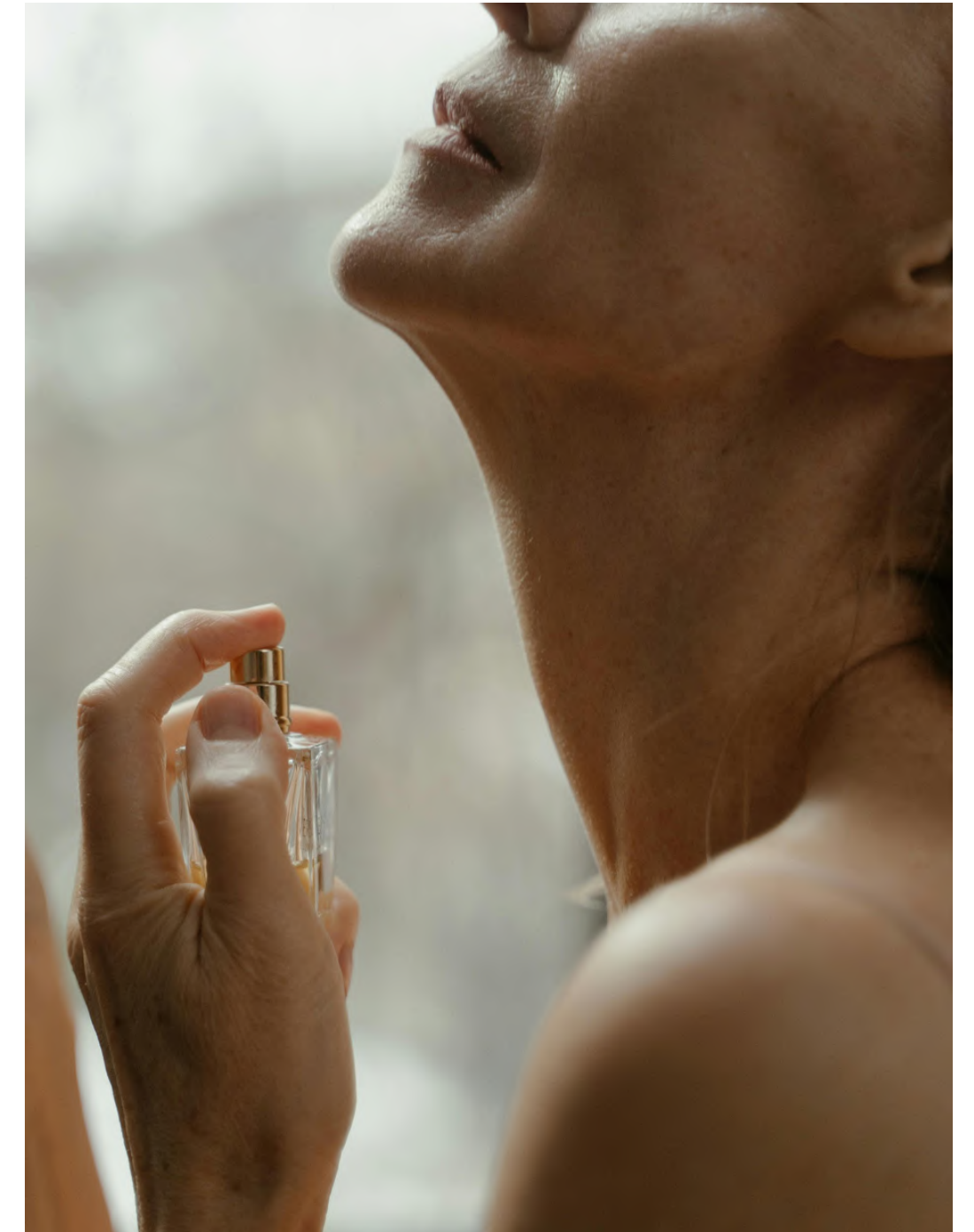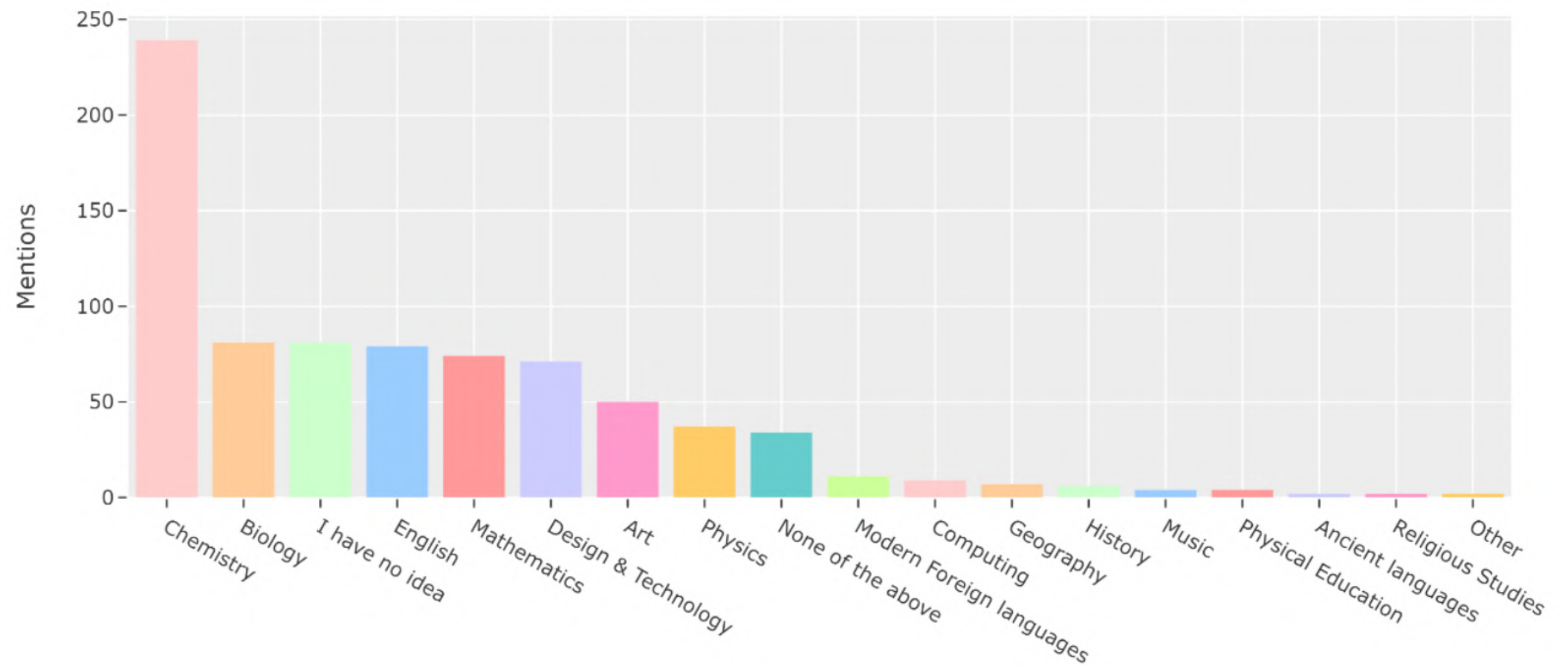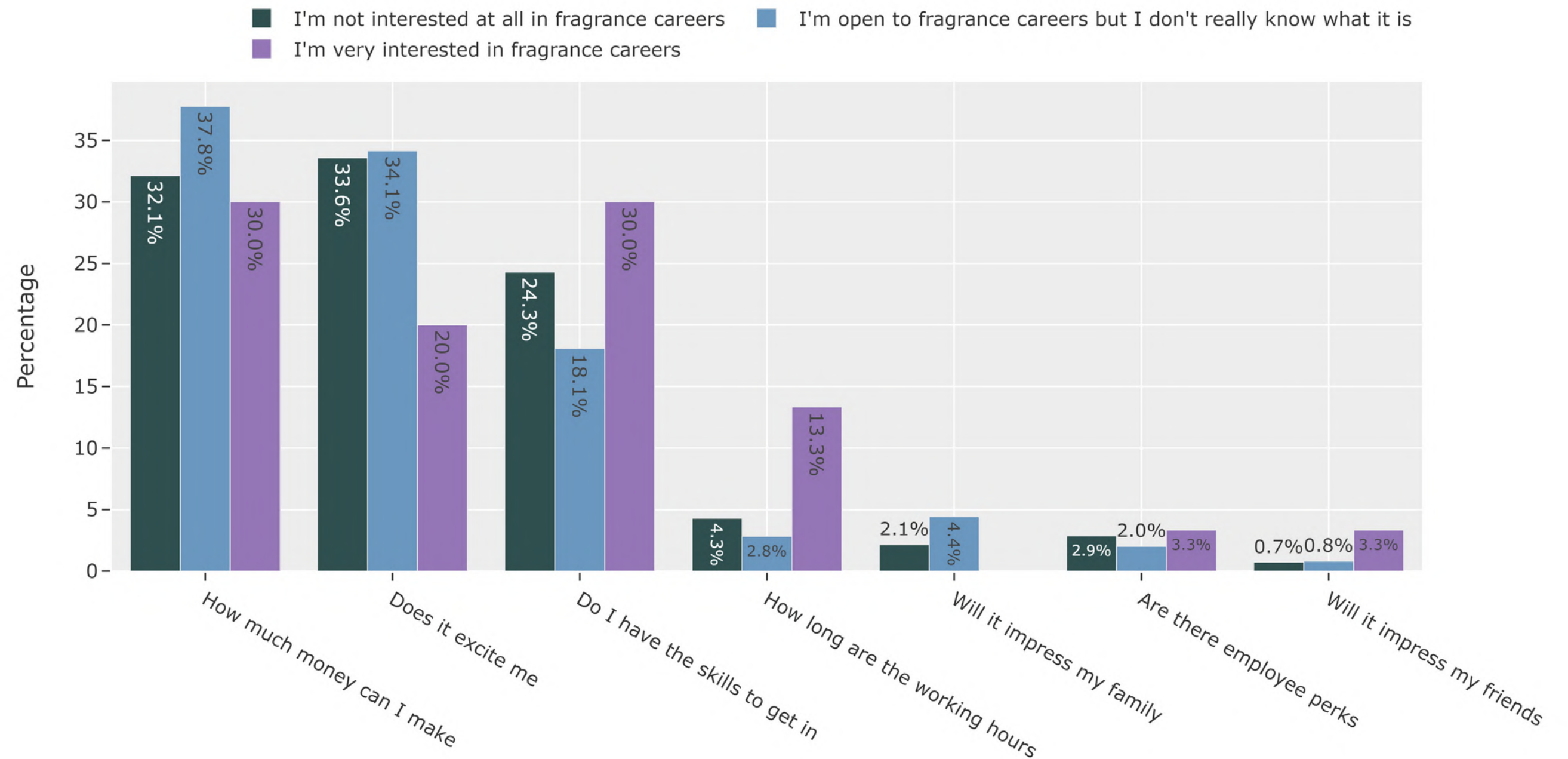
Case Study: The Fragrance Industry

Our survey respondents also expressed uncertainty about entry points. 65% did not know the skills required for a career in the fragrance industry; more than half (58%) assumed that a degree in Chemistry would be vital for a career in fragrance:

Do you think a degree in any of these subject areas would be vital to go into a career in fragrance?

Case Study: The Fragrance Industry

Related to their expectations of a "good job" (as detailed on page 16), compared to those currently uninterested in fragrance industry opportunities, respondents open to these were more likely to be concerned about income potential, excitement, and reputation – but less likely to be concerned about required skills and working hours:

Legend:
- I'm not interested at all in fragrance careers
- I'm very interested in fragrance careers
- I'm open to fragrance careers but I don't really know what it is

Chart data (Percentage):

Category	Not interested	Open	Very interested
How much money can I make	32.1%	37.8%	30.0%
Does it excite me	33.6%	34.1%	20.0%
Do I have the skills to get in	24.3%	18.1%	30.0%
How long are the working hours	4.3%	2.8%	13.3%
Will it impress my family	2.1%	4.4%	
Are there employee perks	2.9%	2.0%	3.3%
Will it impress my friends	0.7%	0.8%	3.3%

Recommendations

This section shares our primary suggestions for action. We highlight some best practices from which to learn, and recommend some directions for future research.
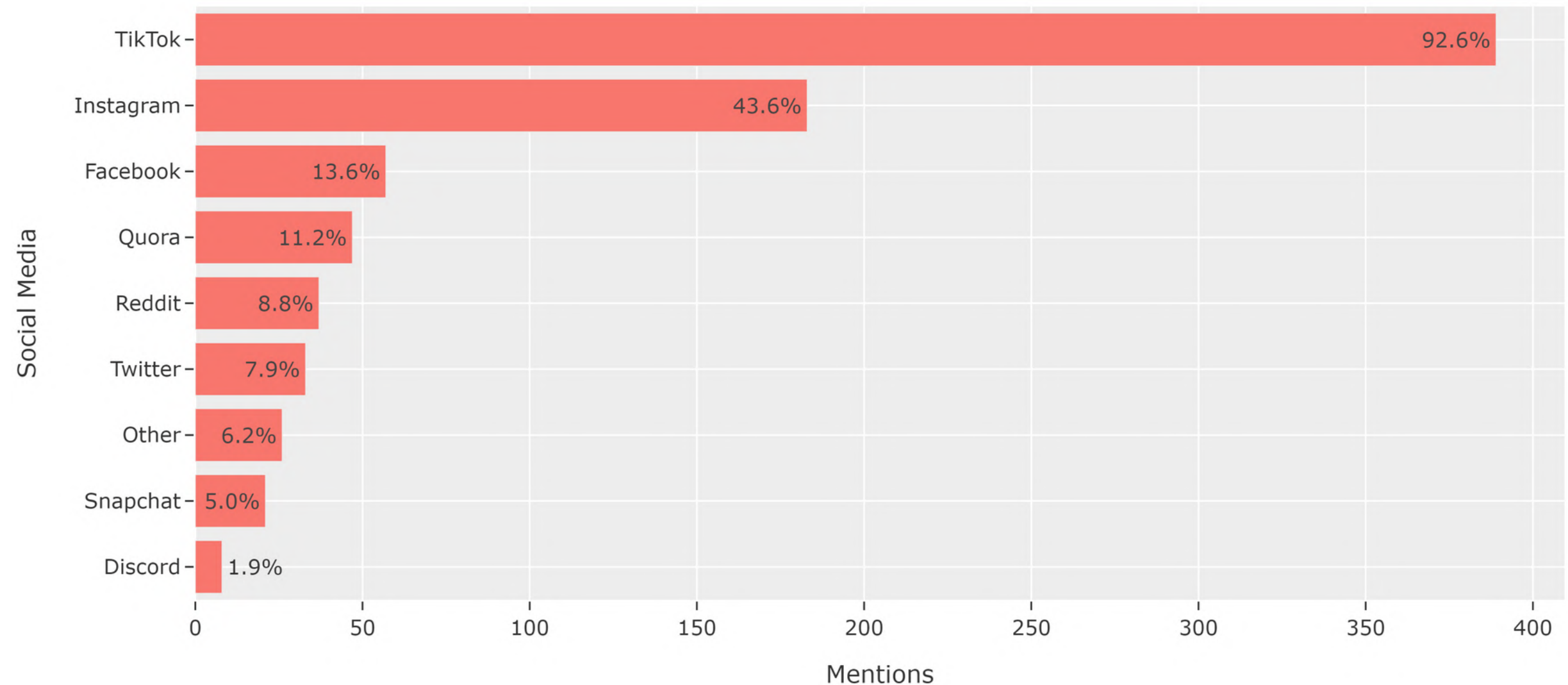
"Schools, Not Socials"

One surprising discovery during our investigation was how valued are the in-person engagement opportunities. Regarding social media, it remains a source of inspiration – a starting point:

"There's a lot of careers stuff on TikTok, where people advertise – and that inspires [the viewers]." (P10)

"My first port of call is usually the internet just to see what stuff there is out there. And then if there's something that sounds vaguely interesting, I'll do like a deep dive into that." (P3)

Which social media platform do you find most useful for careers information?

Social Media	
TikTok	92.6%
Instagram	43.6%
Facebook	13.6%
Quora	11.2%
Reddit	8.8%
Twitter	7.9%
Other	6.2%
Snapchat	5.0%
Discord	1.9%

Mentions

"Schools, Not Socials"

However, our typical job seeker has become suspicious of social media because it has become less reliable for them:

"If it's not something that you have seen before, or it's not something you were actively looking for, then it's too easy to scroll past on social media and engagement will not be as high." (P1)

"I searched 'Chemical Engineering' on my phone, and then my Instagram got full of Mechanical Engineering. I was quite confused." (P9)

"My 'For You Page' [on TikTok] has lots of GCSE [information] and lots of random stuff – loads about sharks." (P10)

Instead, our young job seekers want rich, interpersonal connections:

"Students take the advice more seriously when it comes in-person at school." (P1)

"[The Fragrance Industry] should be targeting schools so that more people are aware, because this might actually be something that they want to do – but they don't know how to get started." (P11)
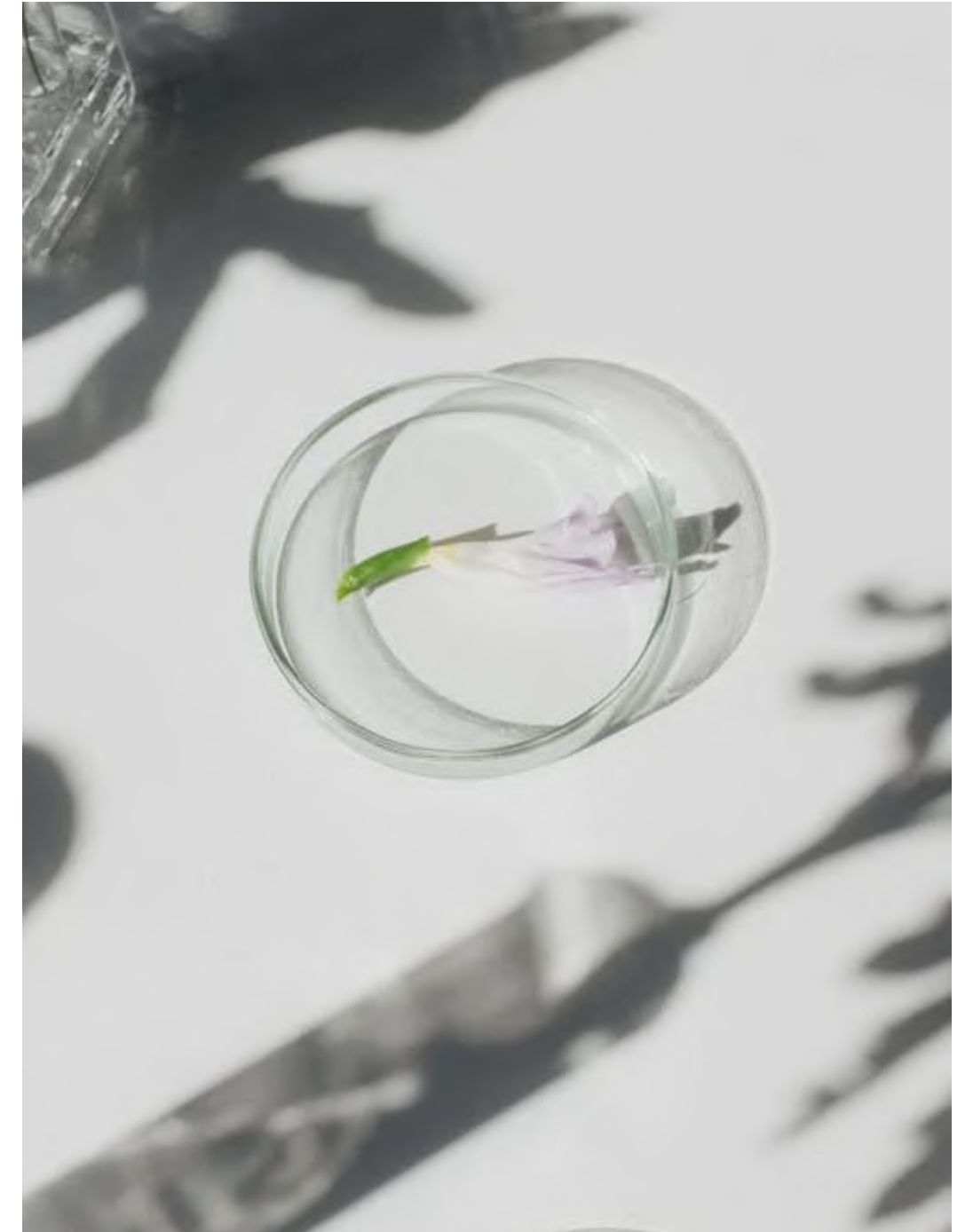
Best Practices to Borrow

One way to start is to "stand on the shoulders of giants" – that is, to build on others' endeavours and apply best practices. From our research, we identified that the most successful industry engagement was Proactive (i.e., highly visible, often delivered without having to be asked); Inclusive (with considerations of equality, diversity, and even intersectionality integrated throughout); and Authentic (i.e., sharing a comprehensive yet detailed picture of working life).

Some examples to commend:

1) Policing, for deploying surprise and delight:

"The police presentation was quite interesting because it was unexpected (I expected doctors, lawyers, and similar); so, that was quite different. ... The presentation really resonated with me, it was quite engaging. The presenter was really willing to answer questions, and encouraged us to want to join him. It might be something that I would consider, if X doesn't work out for me." (P11)

2) The Department for Business & Trade's "Made in the UK, Sold to the World" campaign[xiv], for blasting stereotypes through highlighting architect Simone de Gale[xv].

"I've heard a lot of good stuff about architecture, but I've also heard a lot of bad stuff. [It's hard. The pay isn't good. You have to do a lot of education.] I feel like that industry is really honest." (P5)

3) Clwstwr[xvi], for its efforts to enable – and then to monitor – equitable access to its projects.

4) The Royal Opera House, for its range – especially its National Apprenticeship Week series[xvii]; its Masterclass with the British Fashion Council[xviii]; and encompassing all of its roles (including junior creators[xix] & the operations[xx] teams)

"'A Day in the Life' videos, of what you do all day and how the day flows, would be really useful." (P7, emphasis added)

Best Practices to Borrow

5) The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)

Research conducted by the Construction Industry found that although those internal to the industry considered it positively regarding salary, stability, and satisfaction, those external to the industry – especially young job seekers – held perceptions influenced by negative, outdated stereotypes.

To address these, the CITB developed a two-pronged approach of improved careers information ("Go Construct"[xxi]) and expanded workplace experience ("Talentview Construction"[xxii]).

These efforts already are making an impact: Two of our interviewees proactively, positively mentioned the Construction Industry for its engagement efforts.

"It frustrates me that, for people who are interested in careers like these [that combine creativity with technology], schools and careers advisors don't focus on them. So, they remain 'down low' and less known about." (P3)

To this end, we are encouraged by new, joint initiatives – such as The Creative Industries Property Summit[xxiii] and Kingston University's Future Skills[xxiv] programme.

Top 10 Future Skills [xxv]

In 2023, the top skills business leaders said they most valued were:

1   Problem Solving

2   Communication Skills

3   Digital Skills

4   Critical Thinking

5   Analytical Skills

6   Adaptability

7   Initiative

8   Resilience

9   Building Relationships

10   Creativity

These skills cut across both occupations and industries – exactly as our young job seekers need.
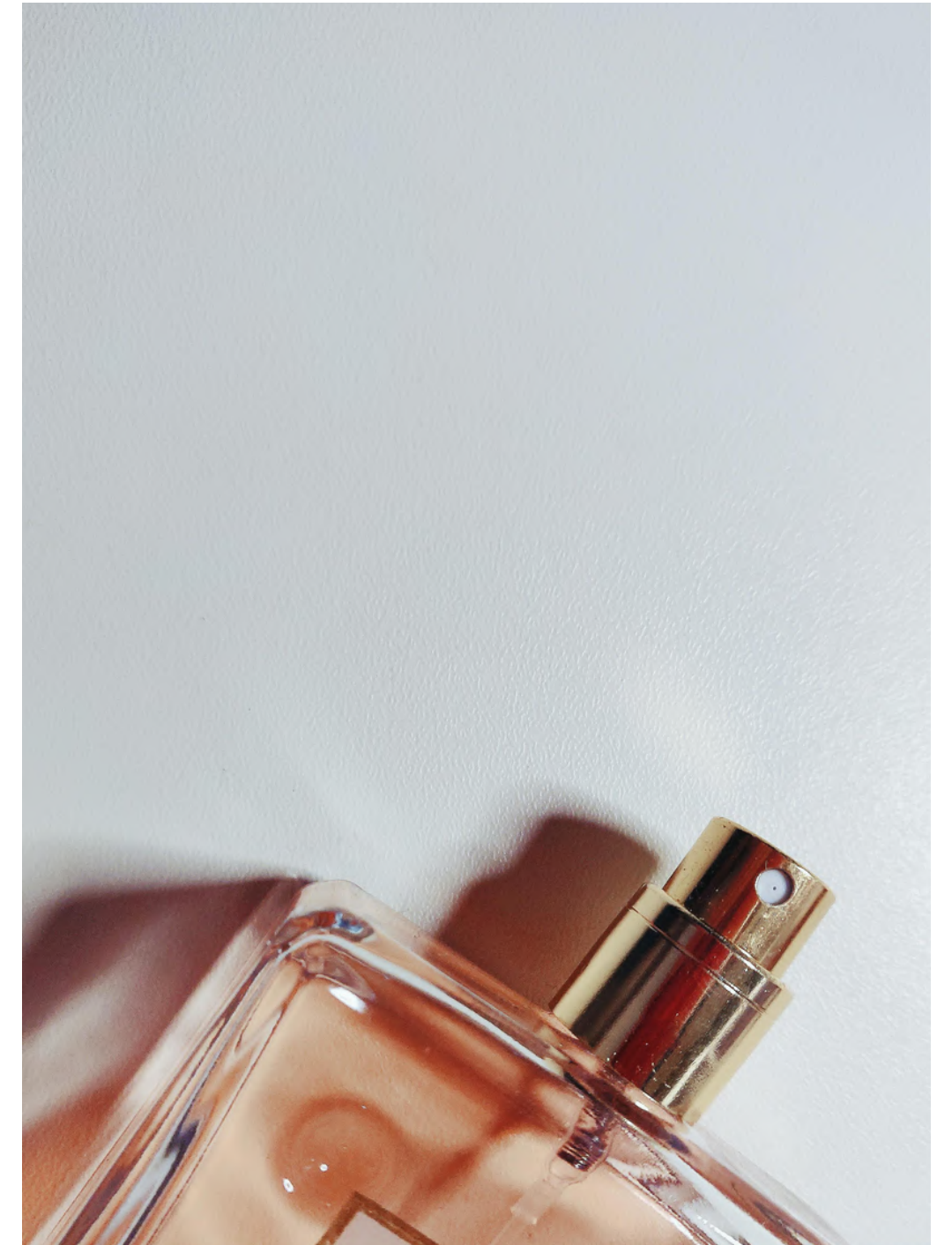
Future Directions

The natural evolution of the existing work to expand Creative Industries is to develop what Sharon Koppman (2016)[xxvi] terms "creative occupations" (i.e., where more than 30% of the workforce is engaged in creative activities). Otner (2022)[xxvii] juxtaposes the two, and proposes this classification (see diagram to the right).

This is similar to how Bakhshi & Dorsett (2023)[xxviii] segment the "creative economy workforce".

We encourage future research to focus on highlighted individuals, whose roles are simultaneously integral to and detached from their industry and its culture.

Creative Industry
Non-Creative Occupation

e.g. Art Sales,
Film Budgeting

Creative Industry
Creative Occupation

e.g. Screenwriting,
Music Composing

Non-Creative Industry
Non-Creative Occupation

e.g. Welding,
Farming

Non-Creative Industry
Creative Occupation

**e.g. Creative Fragrance
Director**

Conclusion

Conclusion

We endeavoured to understand young job seekers' career aspirations and the necessary support to achieve them. Through surveys and interviews with a diverse range of participants, we learned that secondary school students have clear expectations for the salary, stability, and satisfaction that their future careers will feature – and that existing careers education does not prepare a pathway to those.

We trialled simple interventions that increased both visibility and positive regard for our focal industry; we share suggestions for how to expand this elsewhere. We encourage attention to occupations as much as to industries, and we propose future research to develop this area.

"Someone has to make the message bigger and louder, that there are more than this fixed, few number of industries that people can work for. These would attract people, but they don't know enough about them. ... It might just change someone's life." (P2)

Endnotes

i   Wallis, R. & van Raalte, C., (2022) "Britain's Got Talent? A Critique of the "Talent Pipeline" Crisis in the UK's Film and Television Industries", Media Industries 9(1). doi: https://doi.org/10.3998/mij.282

ii   "What's Stopping Young People from Pursuing Careers in the Screen Industries?" (ERIC & BFI, 2022): https://www.bfi.org.uk/industry-data-insights/reports/bfi-eric-screen-careers-research

iii   https://www.agcas.org.uk/

iv   https://bit.ly/TFFERIC-Survey

v   https://theconversation.com/permacrisis-what-it-means-and-why-its-word-of-the-year-for-2022-194306

vi   https://core-cms.bfi.org.uk/media/22249/download

vii   See detailed examination in "What's Stopping Young People from Pursuing Careers in the Screen Industries?" (ERIC & BFI, 2022)

viii   https://discovercreative.careers/

ix   https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/499683/CIEE_Methodology.pdf

x   See more in ERIC & BFI (2022), as well as ERIC's ongoing work increasing the accessibility of the creative industries: https://www.meet-eric.com/

xi   Oxford Economics (2019). The Economic Impact of the Fragrance Industry. Report commissioned by The Fragrance Foundation UK.

xii   Otner, S. M. G. (2022) *Enigma, or Elysium? Identity tensions and the talent pipeline in the UK Fragrance Industry.* British Academy Innovation Fellowship (IF2223\230012).

xiii   https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/3242/Place-Based-Approaches-Research-Funding.pdf

xiv   Refers to the publicity attached to this programme: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/export-strategy-made-in-the-uk-sold-to-the-world/made-in-the-uk-sold-to-the-world-web-version

xv   https://youtu.be/oOb5Tn50q0U

xvi   https://clwstwr.org.uk/themes/equality-diversity-and-inclusion & https://clwstwr.org.uk/diversity-within-clwstwr-programme

xvii   https://www.instagram.com/reel/C29fjRismrN/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

Endnotes

xviii   https://youtu.be/Mlpc MMo8XEo?si=x8IKroW3r8lzzOjd

xix   https://youtu.be/bObjwnh1Eyw?si=MYyvfftd-UsvW6RF

xx   https://youtu.be/NEzjUyRBzqI?si=HS5WaeBm8Vhz5HUk

xxi   https://www.goconstruct.org/

xxii   https://talentview.org/construction

xxiii   https://www.moversandshakers.uk.com/events/the-creative-economy-a-key-driver-for-uk-growth-the-power-for-better-places-and-lives

xxiv   www.kingston.ac.uk/futureskills

xxv   https://www.kingston.ac.uk/documents/user-upload/kingston-university-83c0c7036df-kingstonreportv2odigital-final-.pdf

xxvi   Koppman, S. (2016). Different Like Me: Why Cultural Omnivores Get Creative Jobs. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 61*(2), 291-331. https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839215616840

xxvii   Otner, S. M. G. (2022) Op cit.

xxviii   "The creative economy workforce can be thought of as having three segments: creative workers in a creative industry (specialist creatives); creative workers in a non-creative industry (embedded creatives), and non-creative workers in a creative industry (support workers)." In *Job Mobility in and Around the Creative Economy (ESCoE DP 2023-18)*, available at https://escoe-website.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/18094956/ESCoE-DP-2023-18.pdf

THE FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION UK

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The
British
Academy