FUTURE TALENT: UN⚡WRAPPED

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

BRIXTON FINISHING SCHOOL

BARRIERS TO ENTRY

The education hurdle

When we started this survey in 2019, 11% respondents highlighted **a lack of formal educational qualifications** as a key barrier to entry – fast forward three years and this has soared to **25%**, with **not being able to afford to study** rising from **11%** to **15%**.

As Brixton Finishing School founder Ally Owen states:

❝ A university-style education and advertising schools are financially inaccessible for the socially mobile. Debt racks up over the years. I know talent that's been working for five years in marketing at a big brand (so had 'success') and managing small loan repayments **– their debt has risen from £48k in 2017 to £53k in 2023."**

It's all about who you know – or who you don't

Remember that uncle you had that worked in advertising? Well lucky you – this didn't seem to be an uncommon route into the industry in the past and **50% of our respondents still flag knowing the right people** (or in many cases, not knowing the right people) as a key barrier to entry. Additionally **41% flagged getting the right experience** – again a seemingly insurmountable barrier for those without existing connections in the industry.

WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES

Witnessed:

1 in 4 (24%)
have witnessed inappropriate behaviour from colleagues

1 in 3 (34%)
have seen others treated differently at work because of how they look / who they are

Experienced:

1 in 5 (21%)
say they have been treated differently by others at work because of how they look /who they are

Top inappropriate behaviour witnessed: (36%)

Race related

INDUSTRY PERCEPTIONS

Despite the early experiences, 73% of those surveyed would like to make a long-term career in the industry and **69% believe they can thrive** in the industry.

Others are motivated by the culture and development opportunities within the industry.

❚❚ I can see that this industry is very dynamic and I am very keen to grow with it. My previous job was very monotonous with very little development opportunities so I really feel now that I progress with every month, it's motivating."

❚❚ Because my current career allows me to adapt, I can fully get used to the work here, including the working environment, working conditions and colleague relations, which is the source of motivation for me to stick to it for a long time."

Diversifying the industry

73%

think more should be done to attract more diverse groups to the creative / media / advertising industries
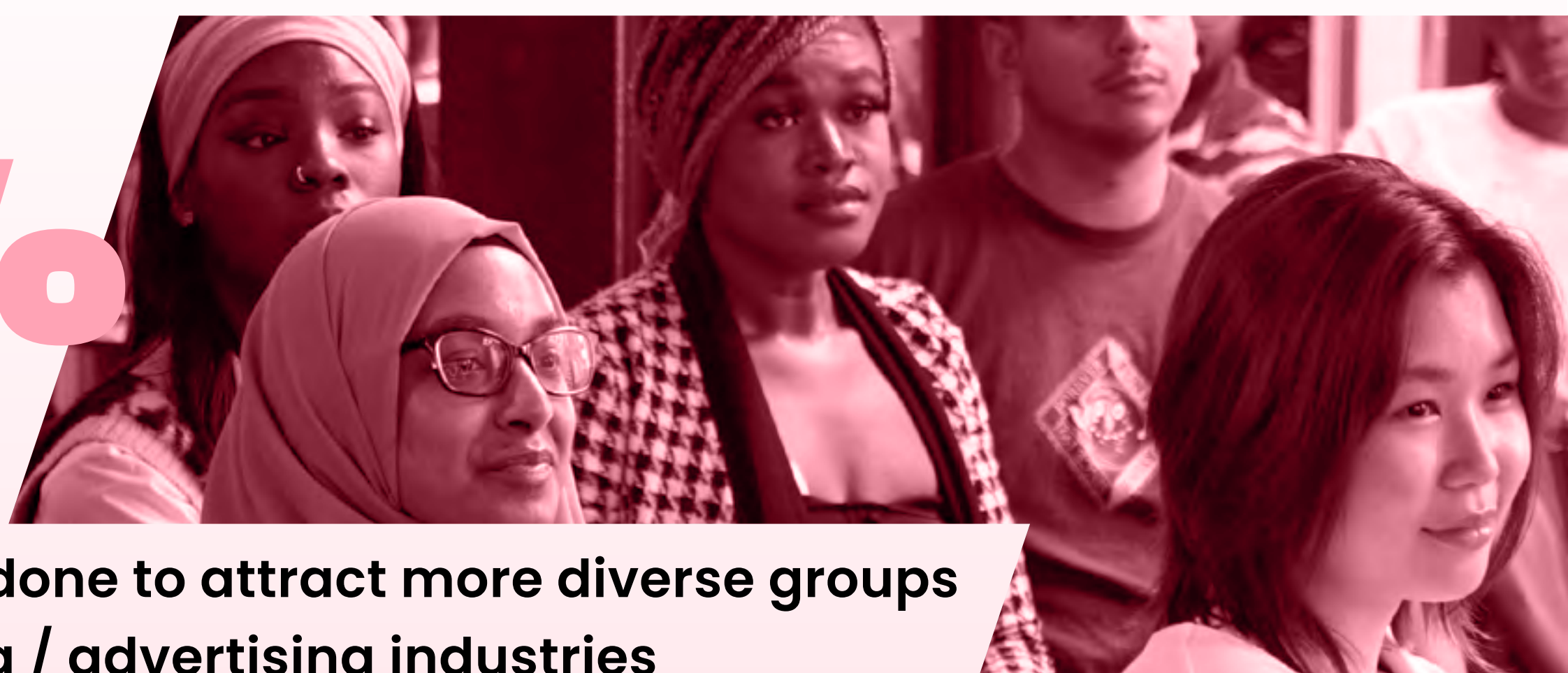
❚❚ There are more and more events and interview days and things that are actively trying to educate people and hire. Whether these are actually working is another question. But the effort is there by the wider bodies."

And more than a third don't believe that the creative / media / advertising industries are serious about tackling inclusion and diversity.

1/3+

They believe companies only care about diversity for PR purposes and fail to implement actions internally.

It looks good on the outside...

❚❚ It is all about good PR and looking good to new clients. No one actually cares about the staff who are diverse and struggling."

❚❚ Most organisations try to seem like they are to win awards or tick a box without any genuine concern or passion."

...but not so good on the inside.

❚❚ Older employees who have been in the industry for decades are not educated on what is inappropriate today and are not penalised for inappropriate behaviour."

❚❚ Because if they were really that serious, why am I in the office and I can only see two other people of a different race? Why am I the only Muslim in the office? There's no prayer room in the office. You've hired yet another white male creative team?"
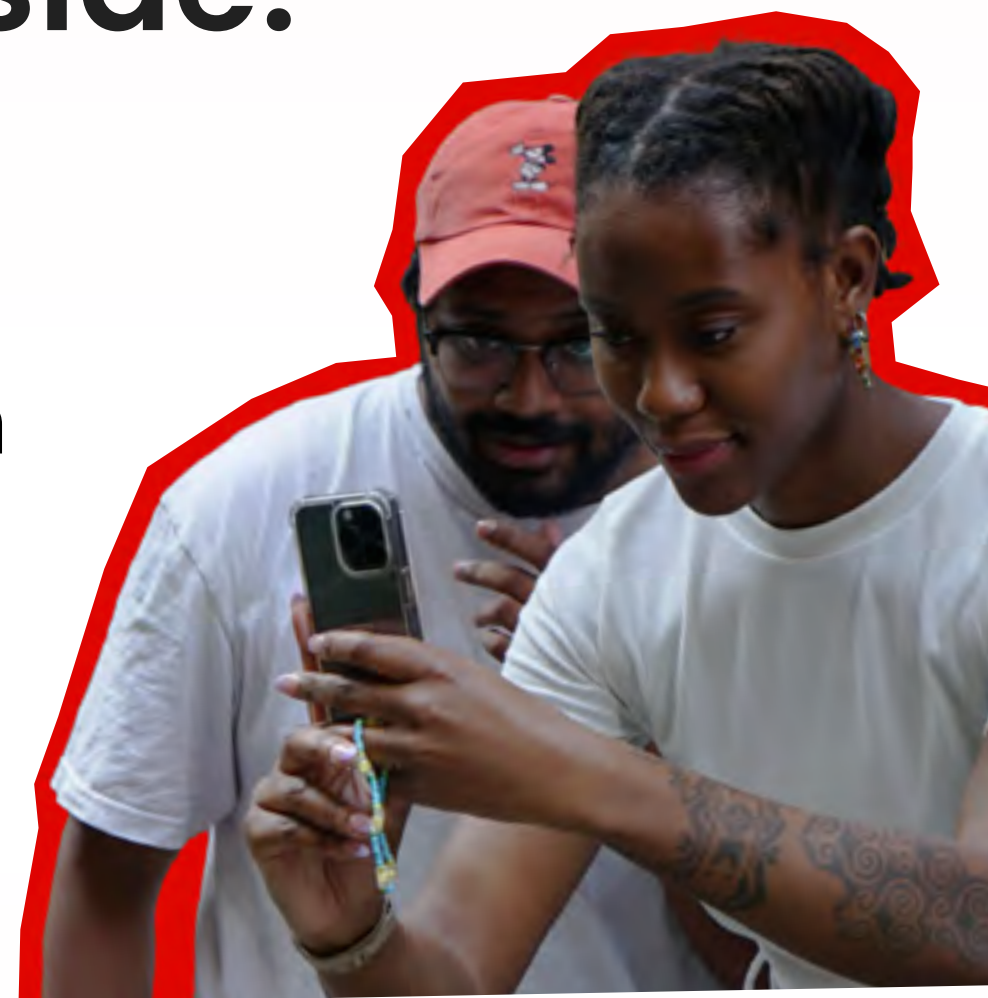
1in4

As a consequence, one in four like the industry, but can't see long-term opportunities for themselves at the moment.

Furthermore, some see no hope in career progression for people of colour.

❚❚ I don't have enough faith in progression in the industry for people of colour to believe that I could ever be in a senior position."
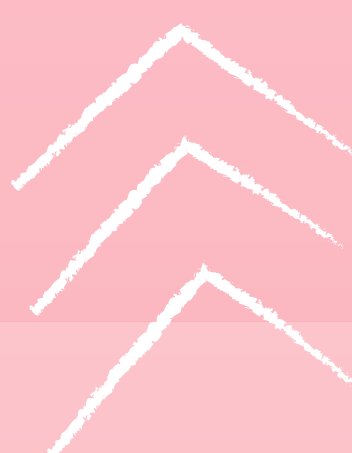
THE EMPLOYEE WISHLIST

The young people surveyed have a very clear wishlist for companies wanting to attract them and help them thrive. And despite the economic headwinds, salary doesn't quite come out in the top spot - a clear career path is the key factor.
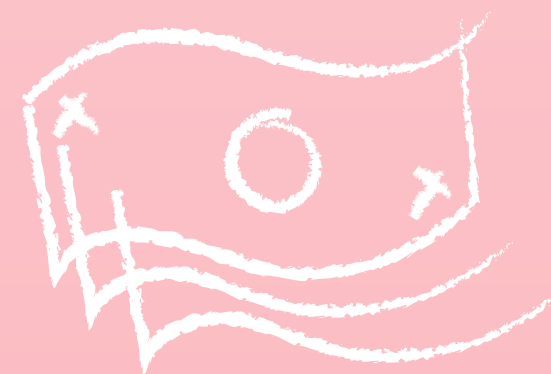
The top five are:

#1 Clear career progression: **55%**

#2 Competitive salary: **54%**

#3 Strong training programmes /Emphasis on personal development: **51%**
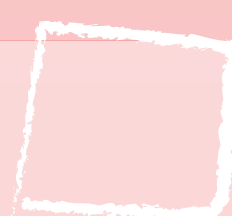
#4 Good corporate culture: **50%**

#5 Diversity of current employees: **48%**

60% agree their employer supports communities from diverse backgrounds.

40% have seen an increase of ethnic minorities within their organisation.

**However, companies can be better at hiring neurodiverse and disabled people.**

TODAY'S LEADERS SUPPORTING THE NEXT GEN

Helping to diversify the talent pipeline begins with supporting the schemes that genuinely access those that would not have stumbled across the industry via a pre-existing connection.

Brixton Finishing School has over 50 employer partnerships – ranging from big name brands, agencies, tech and media companies. We work together to provide crash courses in the industry that prepare talent for entry level roles across these companies and beyond.

74%
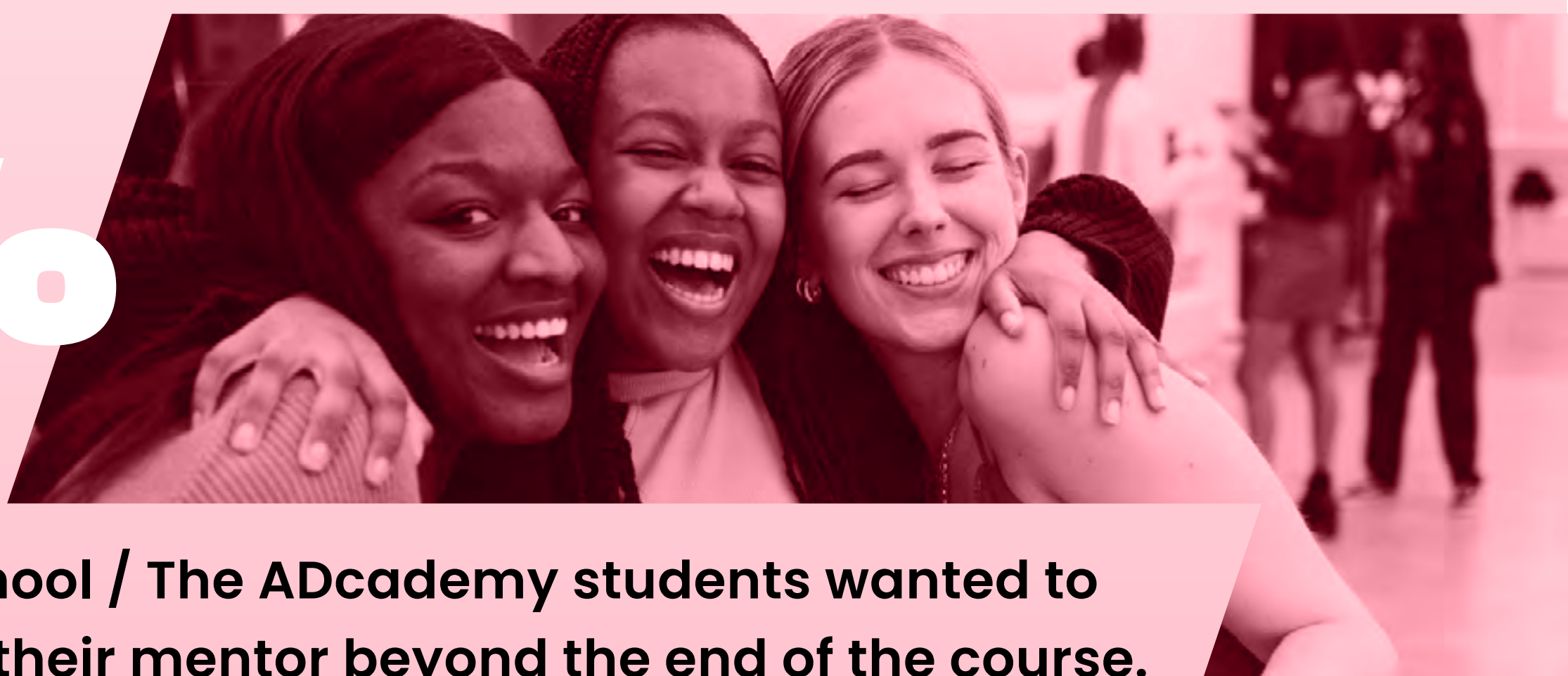
of Brixton Finishing School / The ADcademy students wanted to continue to meet with their mentor beyond the end of the course.
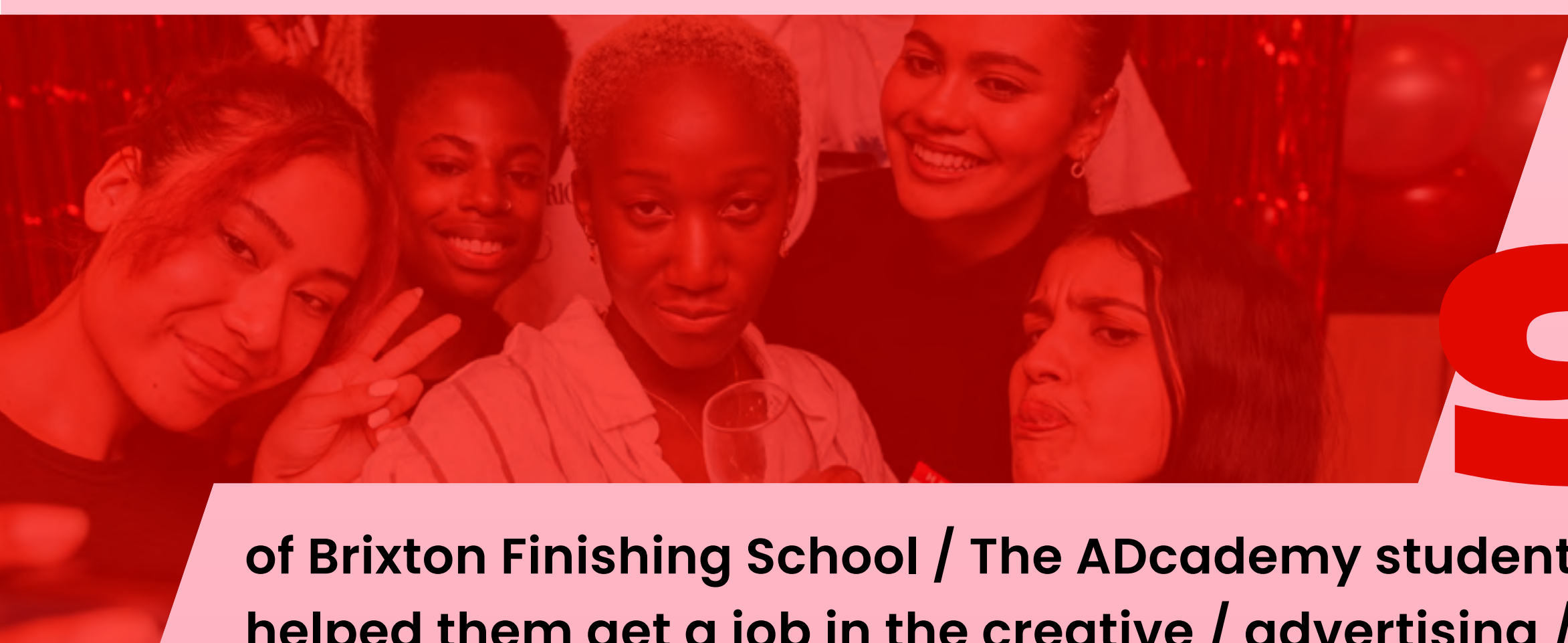
94%

of Brixton Finishing School / The ADcademy students believe the courses helped them get a job in the creative / advertising / media industry

Previous students who have been hired in the creative /advertising/media industry have also brought so much awareness and different perspectives to their employers.

▌▌ A unique perspective and experience – not coming from a traditional ad school background."

▌▌ Diverse mindset, youth feeling, creative fresh mind.

▌▌ Difference of thinking, especially when it comes to the interpretation of briefs. I don't think traditionally, I think socially. And my diversity shines through in my ideas, that is strikingly different to my peers."

HOW YOU CAN HELP?

As Brixton Finishing School Founder Ally Owen comments:

▌▌ Adland knows that it has a diversity issue, and young people can see straight through the tick-box PR stunts. They want a real sense of belonging and to work in companies where leaders aren't taking a performative approach to DE&I and instead are fostering inclusive cultures which they know makes best business sense."

Interested in working with us? Get in touch today at info@brixtonfinishingschool.org

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