



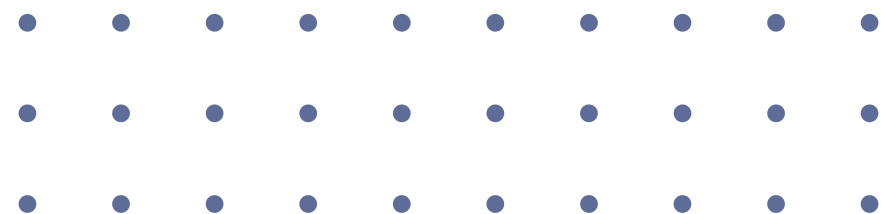
GROW Development Programme

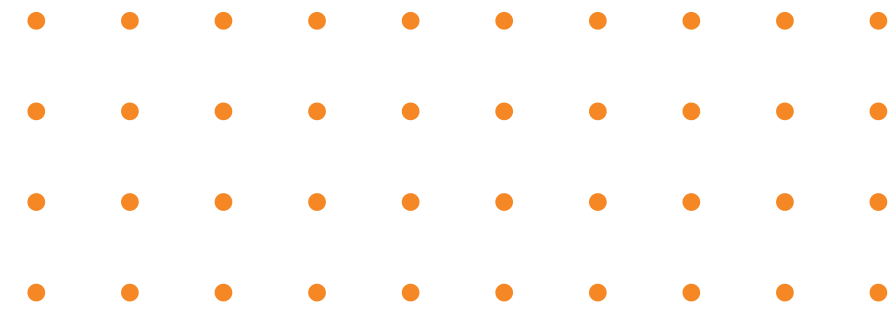
November Club Freelance Survey Key Findings
June 2023



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01. INTRODUCTION

In February 2023 November Club launched a survey for North East theatre freelancers at all stages of their career, working across performance, creative and production roles. We wanted to better understand the barriers to starting, developing and sustaining a freelance career in the North East, and the types of opportunities they felt would help support them.

Respondents represent a broad range of experience, from individuals who are new to the sector and those who have been working in theatre for 20+ years. This document summarises key findings and the data is stark; 75% of respondents feel that there are insufficient development opportunities in the region, relevant for their stage of career. The most significant barriers to career development are financial, compounded for those with protected characteristics.

What would help? Alongside more paid freelance work, respondents told us that professional development bursaries and access to opportunities such as mentoring, coaching and facilitated introductions with the sector would help support their career development.

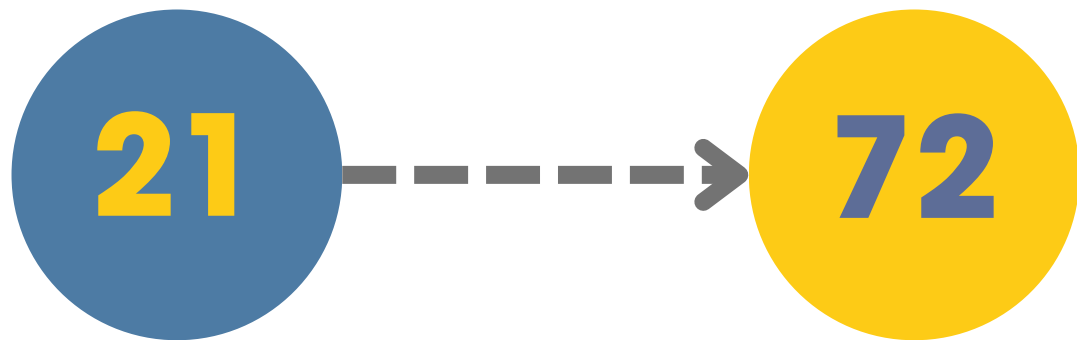
We would like to thank all the individuals who took the time to complete this survey and share their experiences with us. Not only has this data helped us shape our GROW offer, it will also help us make a case for ongoing funding to help us better support the development of freelancers that work with November Club.

02. WHO RESPONDED

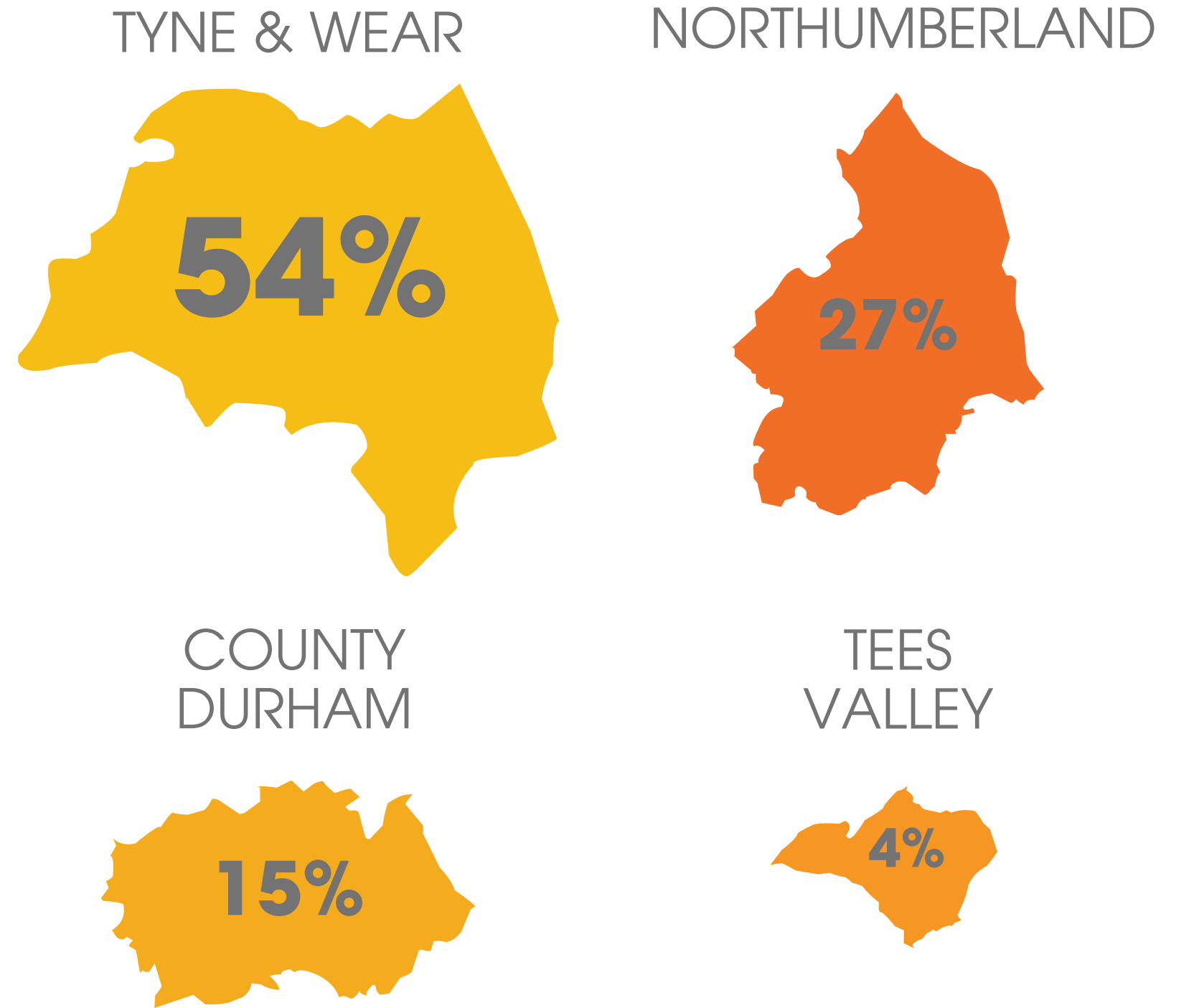
NO. OF RESPONDENTS



Age Range



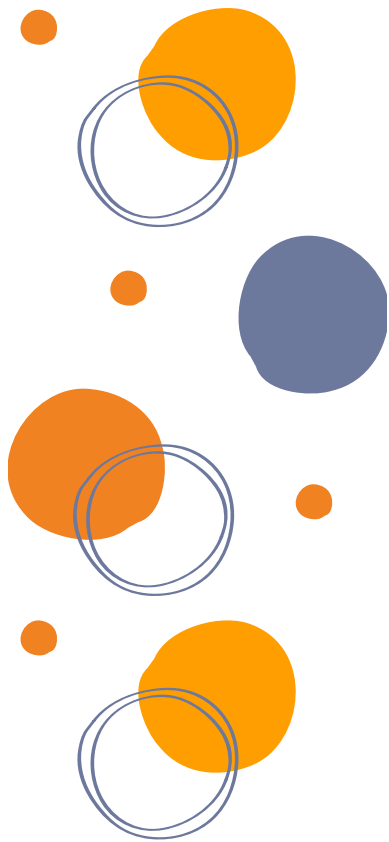
LOCATION



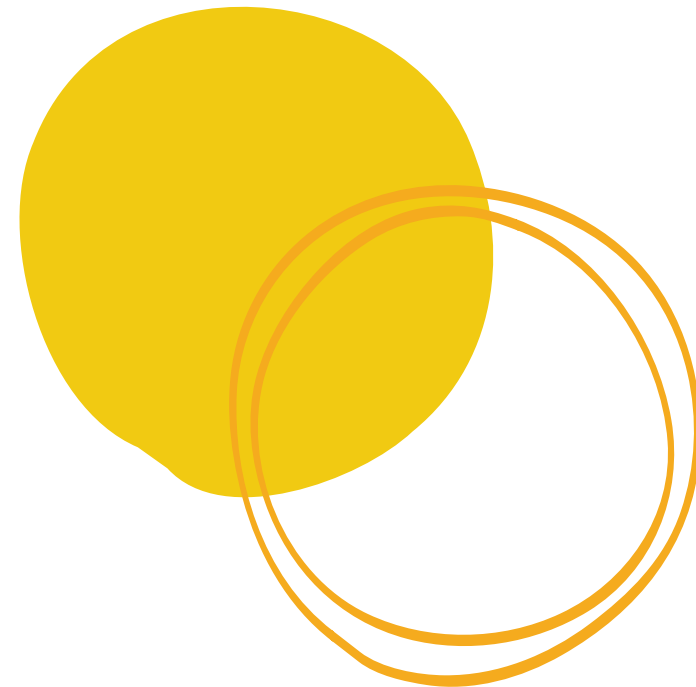


REPRESENTATION

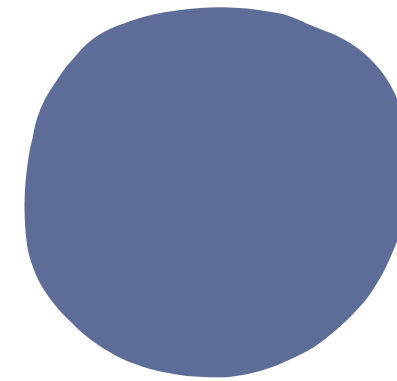
**22% self-identified
as LGBTQIA+**



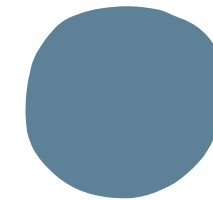
**21% of respondents
are D/deaf,
disabled or living
with a long-term
health condition**



Gender



77% Female



19% Male

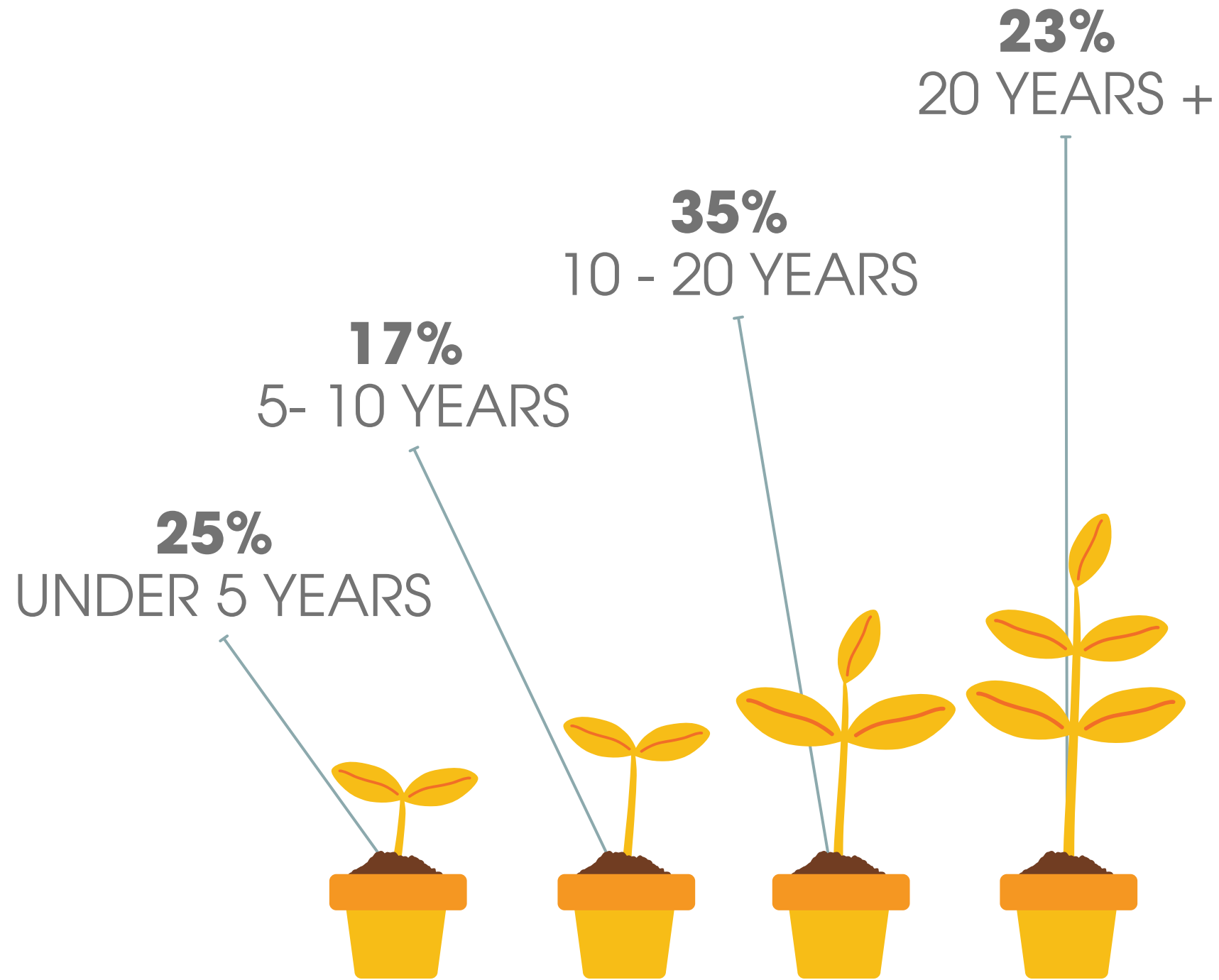


**4% prefer
not to say**

**8%
FROM GLOBAL
MAJORITY
BACKGROUNDS**

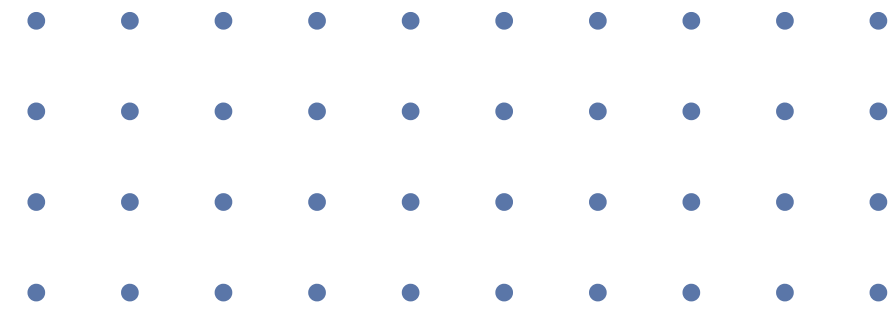


CAREER STAGE

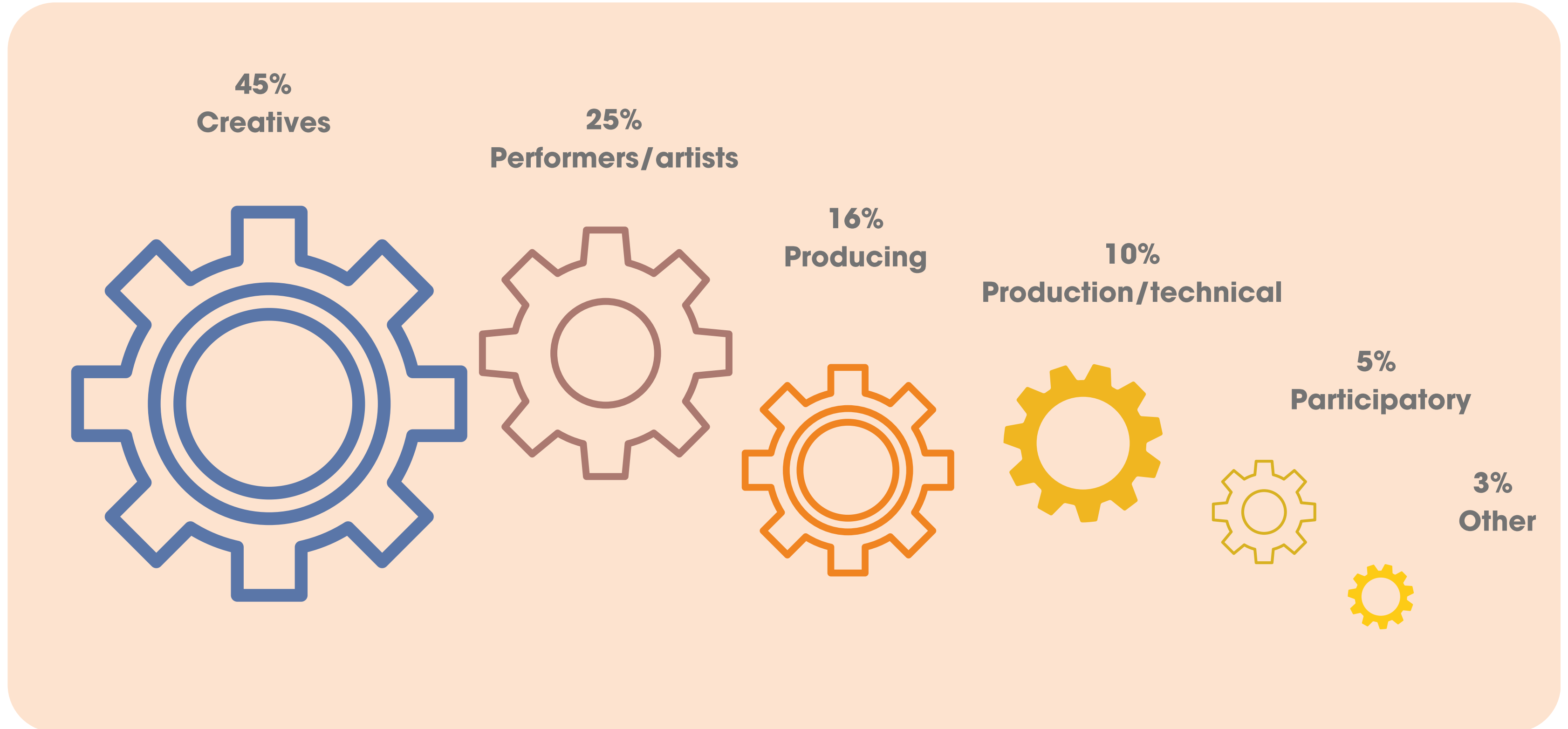


EMPLOYMENT STATUS

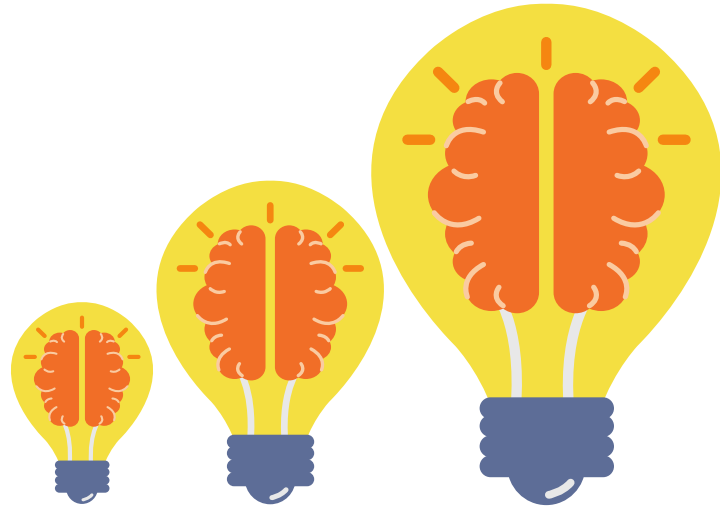
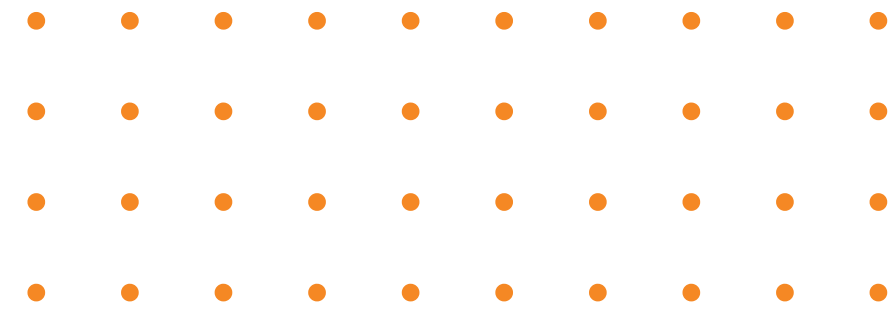




ROLES

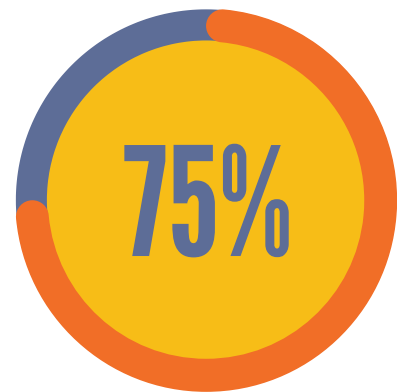
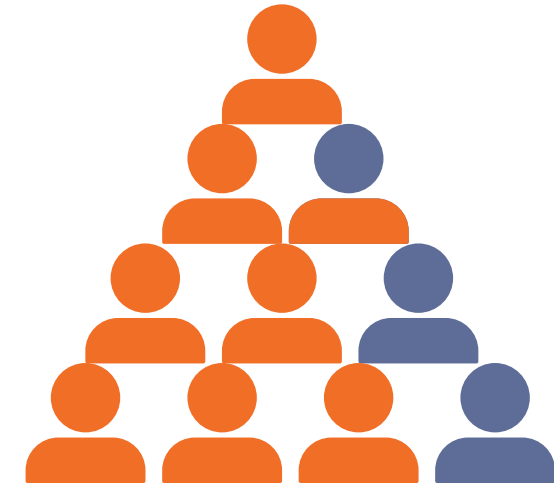


03.OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS

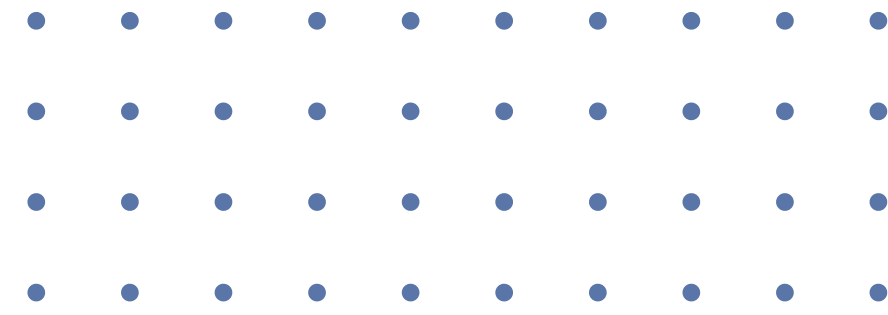


Respondents accessed, on average,
2 - 3 career development
opportunities in the last 5 years.

Nearly **a quarter** of respondents
hadn't engaged in any career
development opportunities in the last
5 years.



75% of respondents feel that there
currently aren't sufficient
development opportunities in the
North East, relevant for their stage of
career.



FINANCIAL BARRIERS



“The barriers that I come up against regularly are a lack of freelance work in the region and the low pay offered on the few available positions isn't enough to live on.

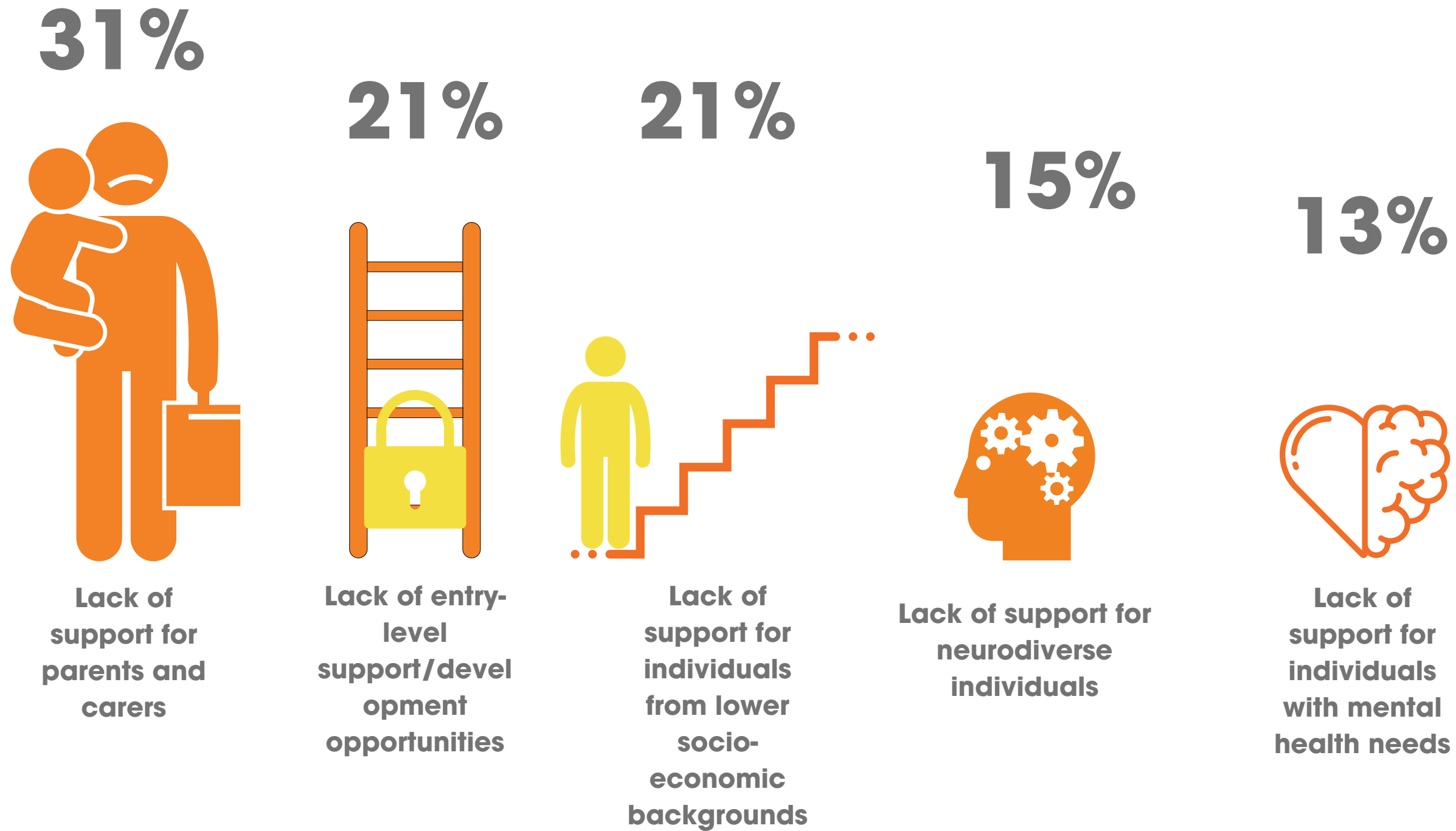
When I try to increase my skills in order to diversify the range of positions I can apply for; the training available is often too expensive and based far away from the North East.”

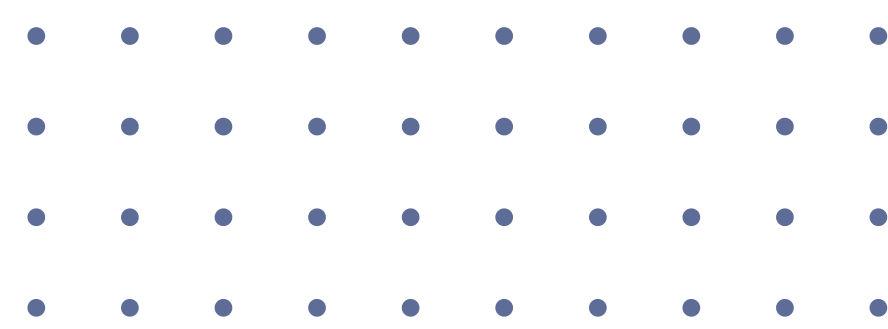




LACK OF SUPPORT

As a percentage of all 48 respondents





LACK OF SUPPORT

8%

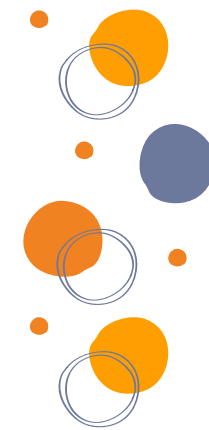
Cited a lack of support for Black, Asian and/or Ethnically Diverse individuals



25%

10%

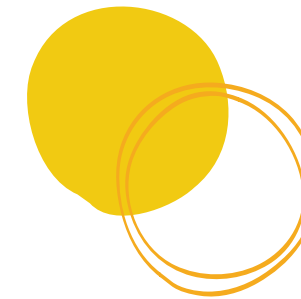
Cited lack of support for LGBTQIA+ individuals



50%

19%

Cited lack of support for D/deaf, disabled individuals (including long term health conditions)



80%

Of whom identified with this characteristic.



Invited to share more about their experiences, recurring themes included:



Expectation to
volunteer/work for free



Lack of networking
opportunities



Age restrictions for
opportunities



Limited acknowledgement of
freelancers

**“Tag your freelancers and
celebrate them on social
media! It’s often the only way
they are seen.”**



**“Many development
opportunities are for under
30s, which doesn’t apply to
many people who could
benefit.”**



**“Often feels as though there is an
expectation of working for free in order
to know the right people. I can’t afford
to work for free. And coming back to
the region after training it feels like
there are barriers in terms of not
knowing the ‘right’ people.”**



04. SUPPORT



85%

Paid freelance opportunities



77%

Creative/ R&D bursaries



71%

Fixed term associate roles



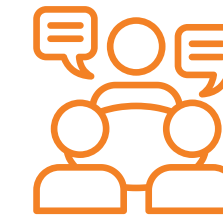
67%

Professional development bursaries



63%

Coaching



56%

Intros & facilitated meetings with NE organisations



54%

Mentoring

Opportunities respondents felt would support them to start, develop or sustain a freelance career in the North East