MERAKI: Design to Change the Status Quo of Asian Female in the Film&TV Industry

A digital platform that embraces challenges and thrives for a fairer future.

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Abstract

The screen industry has been a significant cultural force shaping society since the day it was born. And every single piece of work plays in how the people, culture, and places involved are imagined and experienced. However, it has also been a space in which deep social inequalities have been produced and sustained. A range of evidence points to how these structural inequalities have also been systematically racially marked. This has included the denial of opportunities for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic writers, directors, producers, and other key positions in the Film&TV production process and an absence of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic acting and presenting talent that fully represents the racial and ethnic heterogeneity of contemporary society.

What is worse is that females suffer even more in this current situation. Thus, causing many of them to find it hard to pursue their passion. This continues to drive civil society in a wrong and unhealthy direction. The systemic bias, both conscious and unconscious, leads to an imbalance in the industry and is also affecting people's state of mind and ideology. To correct these and form civil society in a healthy direction for the current and future generations, efforts have to be made.

This thesis consists of three main parts: literature review, design research, and design solution outcome. Every part will contribute to the goal of changing the formerly discussed phenomenon in the Film&TV industry, especially for Asian females. It will explore the facts that contribute to the problem and opportunities where solutions can be provided.

As a designer, I always wish to leverage my knowledge and skills to do something good and meaningful. I see this thesis as a good opportunity to put myself into my fellows' shoes and empathise with their true feelings. So that I can see through their eyes, understand their status quo and mindset, and potentially provide them with a truly feasible solution.

Astratto

L'industria cinematografica è stata una forza culturale significativa che ha plasmato la società sin dal giorno in cui è nata. E ogni singolo pezzo di lavoro gioca nel modo in cui le persone, la cultura e i luoghi coinvolti vengono immaginati e vissuti. Tuttavia, è stato anche uno spazio in cui si sono prodotte e sostenute profonde disuguaglianze sociali. Una serie di prove indica come queste disuguaglianze strutturali siano state anche sistematicamente contrassegnate dal punto di vista razziale. Ciò ha incluso la negazione di opportunità per scrittori, registi, produttori e altre posizioni chiave di etnia nera, asiatica e minoritaria nel processo di produzione di film e TV e l'assenza di talenti di recitazione e presentazione di etnia nera, asiatica e minoritaria che rappresentano pienamente la razza e l'eterogeneità etnica della società contemporanea.

Quel che è peggio è che le donne soffrono ancora di più in questa situazione attuale. Pertanto, molti di loro hanno difficoltà a perseguire la loro passione. Ciò continua a guidare la società civile in una direzione sbagliata e malsana. Il pregiudizio sistemico, sia conscio che inconscio, porta a uno squilibrio nel settore e sta influenzando anche lo stato mentale e l'ideologia delle persone. Per correggerli e formare la società civile in una direzione salutare per le generazioni attuali e future, è necessario compiere sforzi.

Questa tesi si compone di tre parti principali: revisione della letteratura, ricerca progettuale e risultato della soluzione progettuale. Ogni parte contribuirà all'obiettivo di cambiare il fenomeno precedentemente discusso nell'industria cinematografica e televisiva, in particolare per le donne asiatiche. Esplorerà i fatti che contribuiscono al problema e le opportunità in cui è possibile fornire soluzioni.

Come designer, desidero sempre sfruttare le mie conoscenze e abilità per fare qualcosa di buono e significativo. Vedo questa tesi come una buona opportunità per mettermi nei panni dei miei colleghi ed entrare in empatia con i loro veri sentimenti. In modo che io possa vedere attraverso i loro occhi, capire il loro status quo e la loro mentalità e potenzialmente fornire loro una soluzione veramente fattibile.

Part One Literature Review

1.1 Historical and Current Situation of the Unbalanced Composition in the Film&TV Industry

The film and television industry has been a significant cultural force shaping society for over a century. Throughout this time, the industry has been marked by the pervasive influence of male dominance. Male dominance in film and television has historically manifested in a variety of ways, including the marginalisation of female characters, the underrepresentation of female filmmakers, and the perpetuation of patriarchal norms and values. This influence is evident in the portrayal of women on screen, which has often been limited to narrow, stereotypical roles such as love interests or objects of male desire. Additionally, the industry has been slow to provide opportunities for women to take on key creative roles such as directors, producers, and writers, resulting in a lack of diversity both on screen and behind the scenes.

This historical development of male dominance in film and television has been well-documented by scholars in the field. For instance, Laura Mulvey's seminal essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975) describes the way that the "male gaze" has been central to the construction of Hollywood cinema. Similarly, feminist film theorist bell hooks has argued that male dominance in the industry perpetuates harmful patriarchal norms and values that reinforce inequality both on and off the screen (hooks, 1996).

Recent years have seen some progress towards addressing the issue of male dominance in film and television. The #MeToo movement, for instance, brought issues of sexual harassment and gender inequality in the industry to the forefront of public discourse. In response, there has been a growing push for greater representation of women and other marginalised groups both on screen and behind the scenes. This has included efforts to increase the number of female filmmakers, as well as a greater emphasis on diverse storytelling and representation in film and television.

However, by looking from a closer lens, we can still see the amplified impact of the past. In spite of the 'diversity sells' signal indicated in the film industry these years – that the numbers of acting jobs for women and people of colour are getting closer to being proportionate with the U.S. population overall (Wolf, 2020), the diversity problem is nowhere near to a solution in this industry. Until today, the underrepresentation of female BAME (black, Asian, and minority ethnic) talents in Western TV and Film remains a dimmer picture on the table.

In Britain and Europe, women contributors remain dramatically unseen and unrecognised. One report by Cob and Williams (University of Southampton, 2018) spotlighted in forensic detail the serious underrepresentation of women in British film in the 21st century: there was little change in the number of female directors or cinematographers in the past decade, and only 3% and 5% increase in each group were witnessed between 2003 to 2015. Even when hired in key roles, more than 20% of female cinematographers had at least one man additionally working in the role, while vice versa, only 2% of male cinematographers had a woman working alongside them (British Film Institute, n.d., cited in University of Southampton, 2018). And the situation for BAME groups was even worse: just 10% of directors and 4% of cinematographers were BAME, making up only 1% of all directors and only 0.3% of all cinematographers, regardless of how well-trained, experienced, and talented they were. Many of them had been left aside by the "equality-ideology-lacking" gatekeepers, tastemakers, and financiers when they should have been at the top of their careers (Cobb, n.d., cited in University of Southampton, 2018). The same situation exists in Europe: the weighted average of European female directors for the 2012-2016 period is 19.6 %, with country results varying from 5 % (Latvia) to 30 % (Sweden) (Le Lab 'Femmes de cinema, 2017, cited in Katsarova, 2019, p.4) (Figure 1).
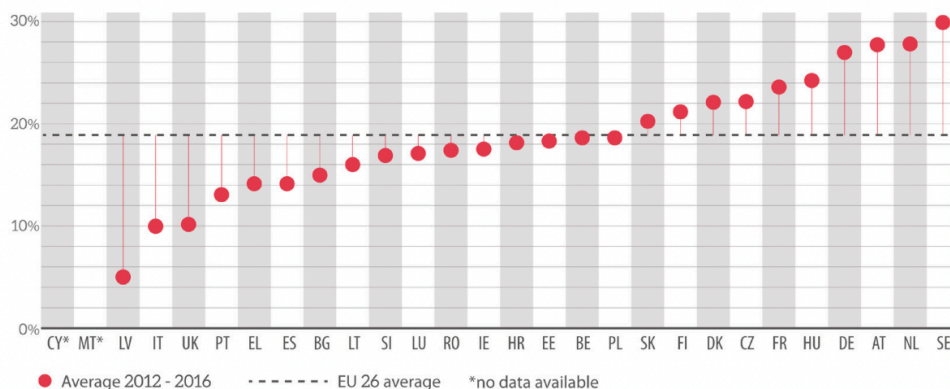

Figure 1 Average percentage of films directed by women in the EU, 2012-2016

In the UK, the unbalanced proportion issue is even worse because even though Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh (known as BESEA British East and South East Asian) have risen to become the second most common ethnic group in the UK over the decade. In contrast, the diversity of Asian workers in UKF&TV does not appear to be in line with demographic trends. Statistics have shown that between 2021 and 2022, only nine films were directed by BESEA directors, accounting for only 0.8% of all releases, and one of them is a documentary. Worth mentioning, these films are all produced with a very low budget. An interview with an Asian director who works in London pointed out (Voice of London, 2022):

1) He felt a lot of "disconnection" in his work.

2) Minority groups were excluded both in front of and behind the scenes.
3) There is formal prejudice (work habits) and "concerns about feeling uncomfortable or out of place", so he often hires Asian crew members, but this is not really the solution to the problem.

Given the discussed two factors above, there is even fewer opportunities/place for females who identified as British East and South East Asian. In either traditional broadcasting companies or online streaming media companies. Pre-possessed prejudice and ongoing unhealthy development of the phenomenon have greatly influenced young Asian female talents as Yang (2020) puts forward: as an Asian female director who studied directing in the United States, her supervisor did not allow her to make a musical for her graduation thesis film, and her classmates were reluctant to support her because they did not have confidence in her project. Such reactions only cement the stereotypical expectations of Asian filmmakers.

1.2 Design Theories

1.2.1   Feminist Design Framework

Feminist design framework is a concept that has emerged in recent years as a way to challenge the traditional gendered assumptions that underlie many design practices. It is a framework that acknowledges the ways in which gender, race, and class intersect and influence the design process, and seeks to create more equitable and inclusive design solutions. The feminist design framework aims to disrupt the dominant culture of design, which is often rooted in male-centric perspectives, and instead prioritise the perspectives and experiences of marginalised groups.

According to feminist design theorist Mieke Gerritzen, feminist design is not just about creating products that are gender-neutral, but about designing for gender difference (Gerritzen, 2019). This means designing products and services that take into account the diverse experiences of individuals and recognise that gender is a complex and fluid concept. In practice, this might involve creating more inclusive user experiences that account for diverse needs and perspectives, or designing products that challenge gender stereotypes and promote more egalitarian gender roles.

The feminist design framework has its roots in the broader field of feminist theory, which has long sought to challenge gender inequality in all aspects of society. Feminist design theorists draw on this theoretical foundation to critique the traditional assumptions that underlie many design practices, including the notion that design is a neutral process. They argue that design is inherently political, and that designers have a responsibility to create products that reflect their values and promote social justice.

There are several key principles that underlie the feminist design framework. One is the importance of participatory design, which involves engaging users and other stakeholders in the design process. This approach recognises that users have unique insights and experiences that can inform design decisions, and that involving them in the process can lead to more inclusive and effective design solutions. Another principle is the importance of reflexivity, or the ability to critically reflect on one's own biases and assumptions. This involves recognising the ways in which one's own social identity, such as gender or race, may influence the design process.

The feminist design framework represents a critical intervention in the field of design, challenging the traditional assumptions that underlie many design practices and prioritising the perspectives and experiences of marginalised groups. By promoting more inclusive and equitable design solutions, the feminist design framework has the potential to create a more just and equitable society.

1.2.2 Design Justice

Design justice is a concept that has gained increasing attention in recent years as a way to address the ways in which design practices can perpetuate social inequalities. It is a framework that seeks to ensure that design processes and outcomes are equitable and inclusive, and that the voices and experiences of marginalised communities are prioritised. The concept of design justice is based on the recognition that design has the power to shape society, and that designers have a responsibility to use that power in a way that promotes social justice.

The principles of design justice are grounded in the broader field of social justice, and are influenced by a range of academic fields including design, anthropology, sociology, and critical race theory. One key principle of design justice is the importance of centering the voices and experiences of marginalised communities in the design process. This involves actively seeking out and engaging with these communities, and using their insights and perspectives to inform design decisions.

Another principle of design justice is the importance of acknowledging and addressing power imbalances in the design process. This means recognising the ways in which designers may hold more power and privilege than the communities they are designing for, and taking steps to ensure that the design process is transparent, collaborative, and equitable. It also involves addressing the historical and structural factors that contribute to social inequalities, such as racism, sexism, and economic inequality.

The concept of design justice has been put into practice in a variety of contexts, from community-led design projects to large-scale urban planning initiatives. One example is the Design Justice Network, a global community of designers, scholars, and activists who seek to promote more equitable and inclusive design practices. The Design Justice Network has developed a set of ten principles of design justice, which include the importance of valuing the lived experiences of communities, creating spaces for democratic participation, and recognising and challenging structural inequalities.

1.2.3   The Matrix of Domination

The Matrix of Domination is a concept developed by black feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins as a way to understand the complex and intersecting systems of power and oppression that shape social relations. The Matrix of Domination consists of multiple dimensions of oppression, including race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability, which interact and intersect in complex ways to shape individuals' experiences of power and privilege.

According to Collins, the Matrix of Domination is not simply a set of isolated forms of oppression, but rather a complex web of interlocking power relations that shape all aspects of social life. The Matrix of Domination recognises that individuals are not simply oppressed or privileged based on a single axis of identity, but rather experience multiple forms of oppression and privilege that are shaped by their intersectional identities.

The Matrix of Domination has been influential in a variety of academic fields, including sociology, feminist theory, and critical race theory. It has been used as a tool for analysing the ways in which social structures and institutions perpetuate inequalities based on all intersecting identities.

One example of the use of the Matrix of Domination is in the field of education. Researchers have used the concept to analyse the ways in which educational institutions reproduce social inequalities based on race, gender, and class. For example, a study by Adai Tefera and Linda Tillman analysed the experiences of black women faculty in higher education and found that they faced multiple forms of oppression and marginalisation based on their race, gender, and positionality within the institution (Tefera & Tillman, 2015).

The Matrix of Domination has also been used as a tool for activism, particularly in social justice movements that seek to challenge multiple forms of oppression simultaneously. The concept has

been used to emphasise the importance of intersectionality in social justice work, and to recognise the ways where different forms of oppression interconnect and cannot be addressed in isolation.

1.3 Provide Design Solutions – Platforms

Designing a platform or website can be a powerful tool for solving problems and making positive impacts in society. By leveraging the power of design, technology, and user-centered approaches, platforms and websites can enable individuals and communities to connect, collaborate, and engage with complex issues in new and innovative ways.

One example of the power of platforms and websites in creating positive social impact is the website Change.org. Change.org is a platform that allows users to create and sign petitions on a wide range of social and political issues, from environmental conservation to human rights advocacy. Since its founding in 2007, Change.org has facilitated the creation of over 300,000 petitions and has been credited with numerous successful advocacy campaigns, including the reversal of a proposed $5 debit card fee by Bank of America in 2011 (Fiegerman, 2011).

Another example is the website Kiva.org, a microfinance platform that allows individuals to lend money to entrepreneurs in developing countries. Kiva.org has facilitated over $1.4 billion in loans to date, empowering individuals and communities to support economic development and poverty alleviation initiatives around the world (Kiva.org, 2022).

Platforms and websites can also be powerful tools for promoting social innovation and problem-solving. For example, the platform OpenIDEO is a collaborative design platform that brings together designers, engineers, and social innovators to tackle complex social challenges. Through its online challenges and design thinking resources, OpenIDEO has enabled individuals and communities to develop innovative solutions to issues ranging from refugee integration to sustainable food systems (OpenIDEO, 2022).

In conclusion, designing a platform or website can be a powerful tool for creating positive social impacts and promoting social change. By leveraging the power of design, technology, and user-centered approaches, platforms and websites can enable individuals and communities to connect, collaborate, and engage with complex issues in new and innovative ways.

Part 2 Design Research

2.1 Design Methodology

This project follows the Design Council's framework – the Double Diamond Design Process as it helps designers and non-designers across the globe tackle some of the most complex social problems (Hambeukers, 2019). It consists of four phases (Figure 2): Discover, Define, Develop, and Deliver. The first diamond refers to the discovery phase, where designers seek to understand the issue/problem and the needs of the stakeholders involved. This phase involves conducting research, gathering data, and gaining insights to identify the root cause of the problem. The second diamond represents the definition phase, where designers synthesise, the insights gathered in the discovery phase to define the problem statement and establish design criteria and design opportunities. In this phase, designers also brainstorm potential solutions and identify the most promising ones. Then the third phase, develop, involves the prototyping and testing of the chosen solutions to determine their feasibility, usability, and effectiveness. Finally, the deliver phase involves implementing and delivering the chosen solution to stakeholders. The Double Diamond Design Process saves designers from an unstructured chaotic mess and provides a structured approach to design thinking, thus allowing them to approach problems holistically and collaboratively.
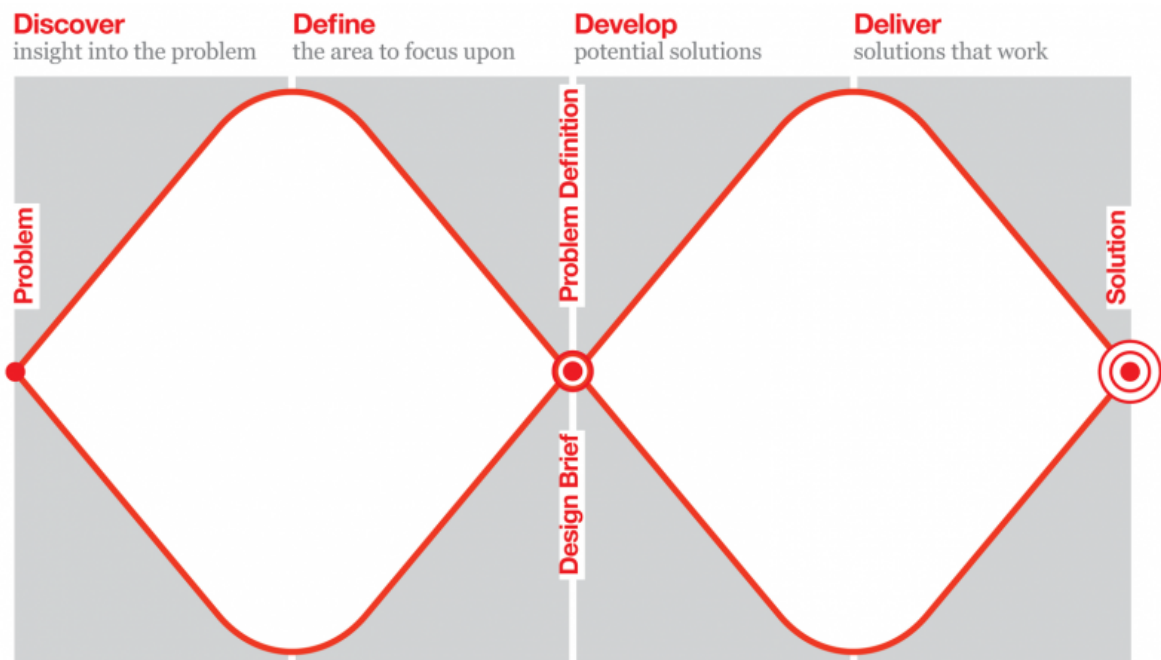

Figure 2 The Design Council's Original Double Diamond Model

But no model is perfect, nor is reality. Therefore, evolvements are necessary. In 2019, the Design Council (2019) extended the original Double Diamond model. The additions tell an interesting story about the changes design has been going through:

- **Design is used more and more for innovation**: Design is a great help when it comes to innovating. This reflects exactly what is happening in the market: businesses that need to innovate turn to design for help, for a more creative model.
- **A singular design process alone will not save you:** four other aspects are added to the model to turn it into an innovation framework. For innovation, one needs a process, but he/she also needs design principles, design methods, engagement, and leadership.
- **Design is not a linear process**: One of the biggest criticisms people have of the original model is that it was basically a linear model. One went from A to B through two diamonds and that's the process. The whole Agile movement and Lean Startup's thinking have made it clear that design is not a linear process. It's iterative. Designers iterate their way as they go forward. The blue circles in the new model indicate the iterative nature of the design.

In the new model, under "design principles", four core principles are outlined for problem-solvers to adopt so that they can work as effectively as possible:
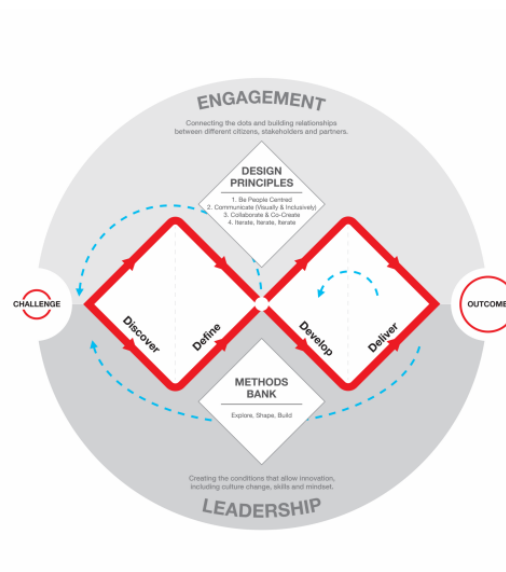

Figure 3 The Design Council's new Double Diamond model: Framework for Innovation

- **Put people first:** designers are suggested to start with an understanding of the people using a service, their needs, strengths, and aspirations.
- **Communicate visually and inclusively:** Designers are suggested to do so to help people gain a shared understanding of the problem and ideas.
- **Collaborate and co-create:** designers are encouraged to work together and get inspired by what others are doing.
- **Iterate, iterate, iterate:** Designers are encouraged to do this to spot errors early, avoid risk and build confidence in their ideas.

In this new model, it is also stressed the engagement and leadership as critical success factors. Leadership is needed to encourage innovation, build skills and capability, and provide permission for experimentation and learning. Strong leadership also allows projects to be open and agile, showing results along the way and being able to change. And engagement is needed with people who are delivering the ideas and receiving them, but also with other partners who might have other ideas. Developing connections and building relationships is as important as creating ideas.

2.2 Research Goals

Literature review and desk research has made it clear the main design direction for this platform, but the focus of the functions of this platform are yet to be set, therefor I raise the following questions:

A. **How big/diverse is out user group and how can the platform help them as a universal service/content provider?**

It is important to know the user segments. Because by identifying and segmenting users based on their needs, goals, behaviors, and preferences, I can create tailored experiences that resonate with each group. This understanding will allows me to create user-centered solutions that are intuitive, effective, and delightful to use. Additionally, by designing for specific user segments, I can reduce the risk of creating products or services that are too general or unfocused, which may not appeal to anyone.

B. **Are there any existing products/services in the market and how is this platform different ?**

Competitive analysis is a crucial step in the design process because it helps designers understand the current market landscape and identify opportunities for differentiation and improvement. By analysing competitors' products or services, designers can gain insights into what is working well in the market, what features and functionalities are most valued by users, and what areas are ripe for innovation. This knowledge can inform key design decisions such as feature prioritisation, user experience design, and product positioning.

In this case, the competitive analysis will also help me to anticipate and prepare for future iterations and developments. I can leverage the advancement of technology to design and realise unique functions that no one to compare in the market.

C. How to make good and meaningful long-term influence by creating this platform?

This project is unique and of significance because the literature research has revealed a deeper ideology-level problem against Asian females. So, I really want to correct that misunderstanding and advocate something good for the group. To make that happen, it is not only about creating a platform that solves a real problem for a specific target audience. The platform should provide a unique value proposition that is not easily replicable, and it should be designed with scalability in mind to accommodate future growth and expansion. Aspects including fostering a sense of belonging and having a revenue strategy in place also require careful consideration.

2.3 Research Plans and Results

2.3.1   Questionnaire

Questionnaires are a valuable tool in this project as it allows me to gather data-based feedback and insights from a large number of users in a structured and standardised way. I designed a list of questions on a wide range of topics, including user profiles, experience levels, needs, preferences, behaviors, attitudes, and so on. This questionnaire provides me with a more comprehensive understanding of the target users.

The questionnaire is named A survey on the status quo of Asian women working in the Film&TV industry and it was distributed for one week via social media platforms including WeChat, WhatsApp, Red, Weibo, etc. A total of 43 responses were received and they were all valid ones. The first sets of questions are set to understand the composition of the users. Among all participants who identified as Asian females engaged in the Film&TV industry, 37 (86%) of them are actively participating in the industry, while the rest 6 (16%) of them have chosen to leave the industry. Occupations identified include producers, directors, scriptwriters, photographers/videographers/cinematographers, video editors, VFX artists, make-up artists, art directors, clothing designers, actresses, event organisers, gaffers, production coordinators, and so on. Of which producers and directors have the highest proportion, 55.81%, and 46.51% (includes overlapping). The distribution of participants aligns with a decreasing trend – more in junior level and less in experienced level. Students account for the largest proportion (41.81%), and most of them have had some working experience.
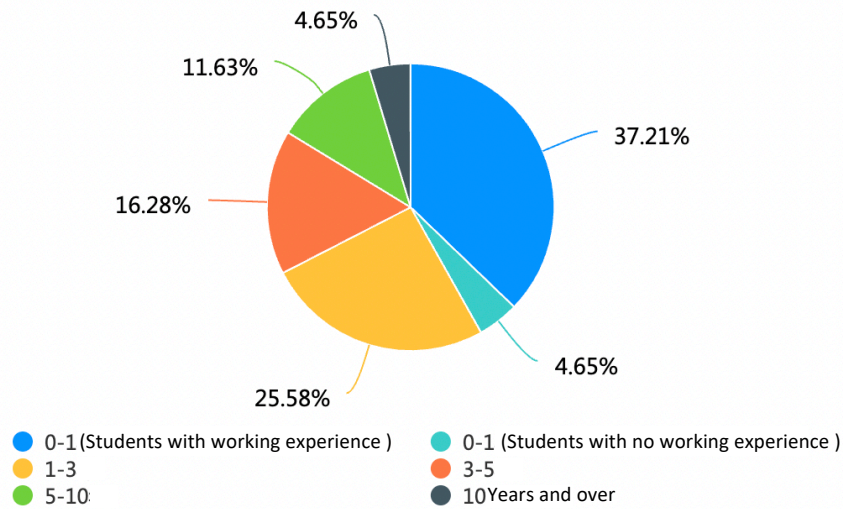
Figure 4 Distribution of participants according to experience level

The second part investigates how the participants find their pathway into this industry.

Q5 How do you enter the Film&TV industry? (Multichoice)*
  a.   *Via studying majors related to film and television*
  b.   *Via independently produced works*
  c.   *Via channels such as internet platforms*
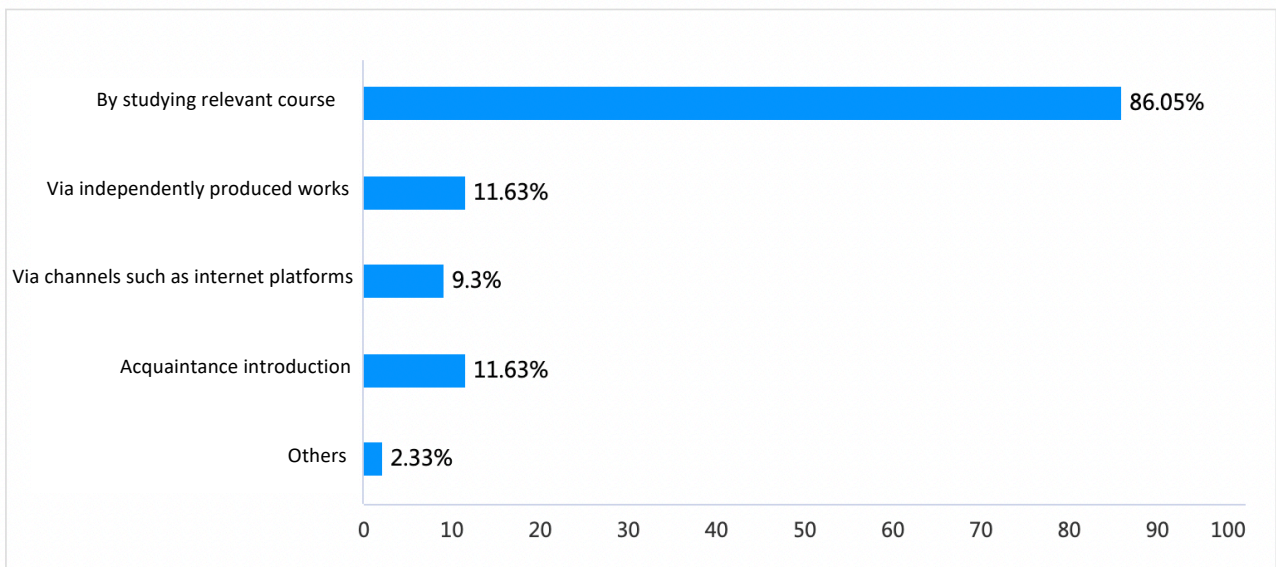 d.   *Acquaintance introduction*
  e.   *Others _____ **

Figure 5 Questionnaire Q5

Q6 Do you have any education and training in film or television production?

   a.   Yes

   b.   No
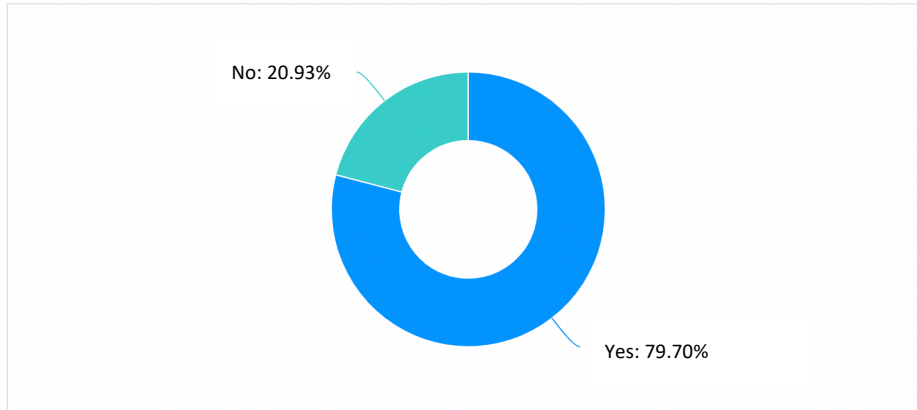
Figure 6 Questionnaire Q6

Q7 How do you learn skills in film or television production? (Multichoice)*

   c.   By self-learning and practicing

   d.   Via training courses and studios

   e.   Via internship/work experience

   f.   Others _____ *
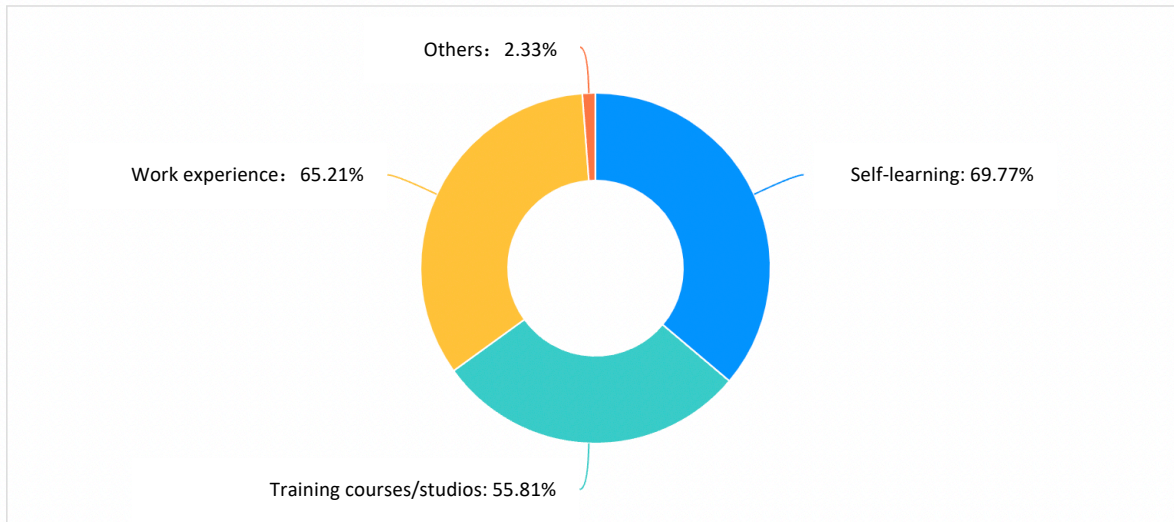
Figure 7 Questionnaire Q7

Q8 Do you think your previous education and training in film or television production is sufficient to support you in working in this industry?

   a.   Totally, enough.

   b.   Somewhat no, but it doesn't affect me at work.

   c.   No, I need further study/training.

   d.   I have not received any relevant education or training.
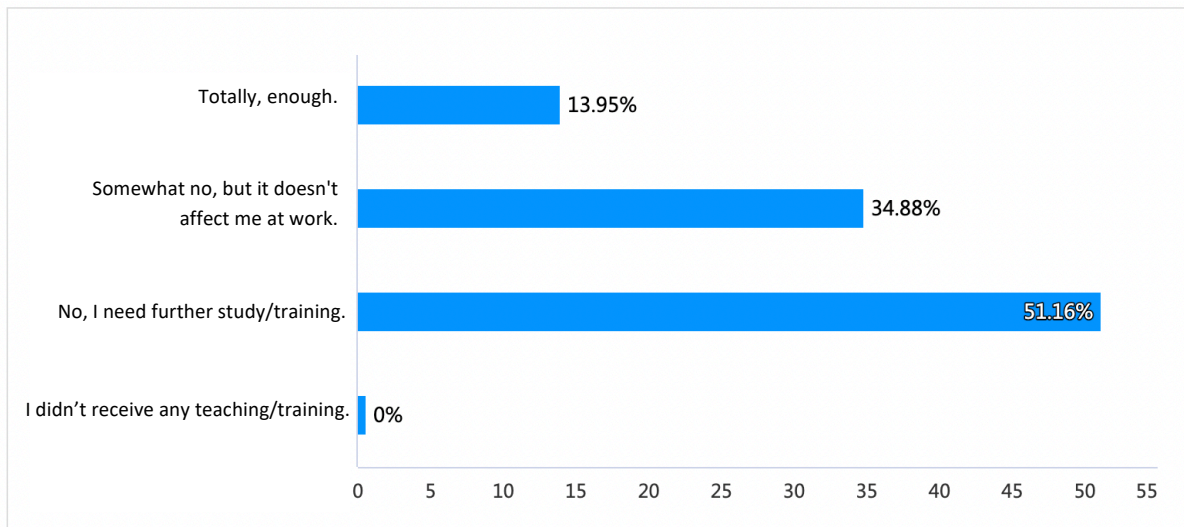
Figure 8 Questionnaire Q8

Q9 Have you received additional study or training to improve your capabilities in film and television production?

    a. Yes

    b. No
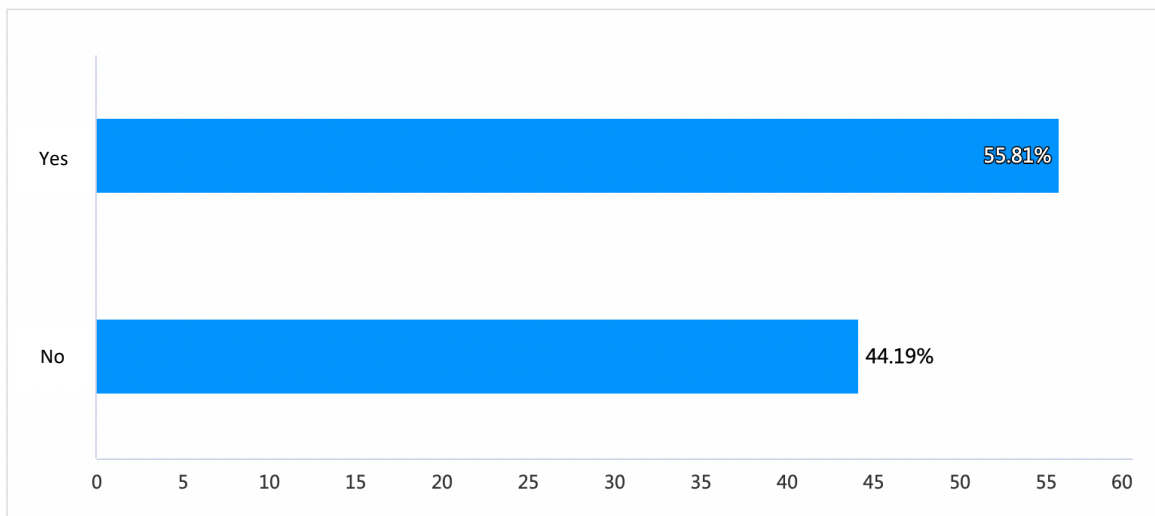
Figure 9 Questionnaire Q9

Q10 What obstacles did you face in learning and developing your film or TV production skills? (Multichoice)*

    a. Lack of resources and financial support

    b. Lack of guidance and coaching
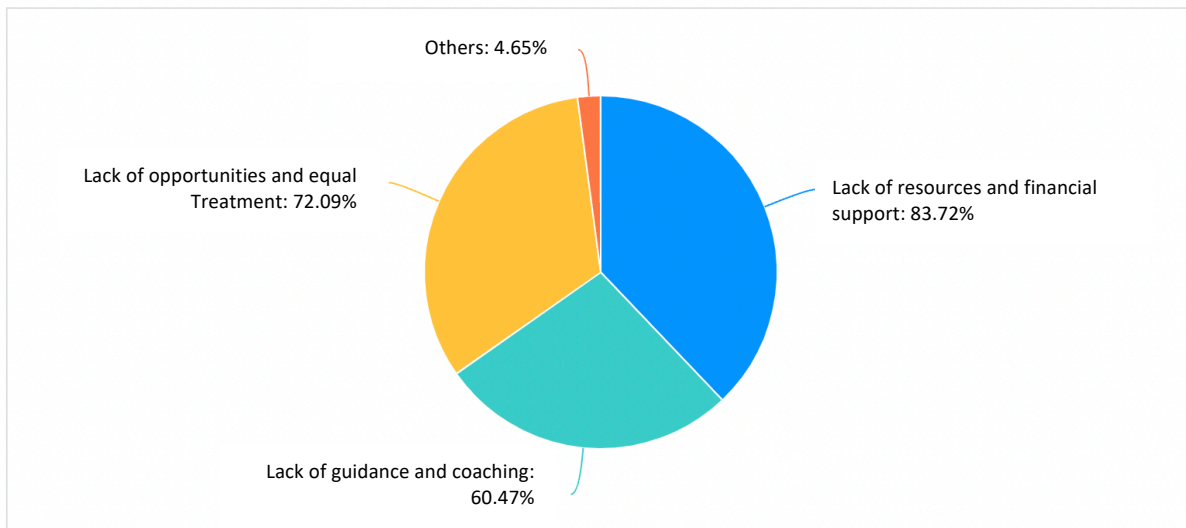
    c. Lack of opportunity and equal treatment

    d. Others _____*

Figure 10 Questionnaire Q10

Results show that most of the talents work in this industry by studying relevant majors, 37 out of 43 (86%). However, like every other industry, it welcomes people who have diverse backgrounds as well. Some participants join this industry by producing individual projects/work and others via channels such as social media platforms. What is noticeable is that this industry has a strong referral nature – meaning that if one has an acquaintance in the industry, it is likely that he/she could join along without any knowledge or skills, as long as they share their interests and willingness.

However, more than half of the participants (51%) claim that what they have learned from school or skills cultivated via training are insufficient for them to work in this industry and 56% of them have acquired additional study/training to enhance their capability in order to keep up to the industrial standard. All of the participants have encountered difficulties in learning and developing their professional skills. There is 83% agreement on a lack of resources and financial support, 60% agreement on a lack of guidance and coaching and 72% agreement on a lack of opportunities and equal treatment. One has put it down desperately:

"The entire industry has a heavy attention lying on networking and contacts, without which it is difficult to enter the industry. It is just too hard for a woman with absolutely no resources and background."

Then the survey touches on participants' opinion on current situation of the industry, from a genuine perspective as Asian females:

Q4 Do you think the current Film&TV industry treats/pays female professionals fairly?
a. Very fair
b. Fair
c. Not fair
d. Very unfair
e. Not sure/No idea

Q12 Do you think women have a lower status than men in the Film&TV industry?
a. Yes
b. No

Q13 How many opportunities do you think stand for Asian women in the film and television industry?
a. A lot
b. Fair
c. Very few
d. No chance

Q17 In your opinion, among Asian female film and television professionals, which groups have least chances to enter the industry? (Multichoice)*
a. Those who do not have the financial ability/opportunity to receive professional education and training.
b. Those who have no relevant industry connections.
c. Those who do not have good academic background.
d. Those who do not meet the language/cultural requirements to enter the industry (especially for those who work in another country other than home)
e. Others _____*

Q18 What elements do you think have positive influence on the career development of female professionals in the Film&TV industry? (Multichoice)*
a. Enhanced policy support/better public resource accessibility
b. Workplace culture/atmosphere
c. Excellent mentors and teamwork
d. Objective and fair evaluation mechanism
e. Extensive industrial networking opportunities and resource sharing
f. Others _____*

Q19 In your opinion, for female film and television professionals, which aspects need the most attention and improvement? (Multichoice)*
a. Provide more opportunities and equal opportunities.
b. Pay more attention to the works and contributions of female workers.
c. Improve payment and working environment, also the reward and punishment mechanism.
d. Policy/career development pathway construction.
e. Training and professional skills improvement

f. *Strengthen the system construction and management of anti-sexual harassment and sexual discrimination.*

g. *Health and psychological support*

Q22 What do you think of the representation and equality of Asian women in the Western Film&TV industry? Is there a problem? If so, what do you think should be done to improve the situation?

a. *I think the Western Film&TV industry lacks representation and equality for Asian women. We need more Asian women in dominant positions in the Film&TV industry so that more Asian women's voices can be heard.*

b. *I think representation and equality in the Western Film&TV industry has improved, but there are still problems, and we need to do more to support and promote the talents and achievements of Asian women.*

c. *I think the Western Film&TV industry has achieved representation and equality for Asian women, and there is no need to take more actions.*

d. *I am not sure about this.*

Q23 What actions do you think the Western Film&TV industry should take to achieve the goal of "advocating more voices and perspectives of Asian women"? (Multichoice)*

a. *Increase opportunities for and number of Asian female screenwriters, directors and producers.*

b. *Enhance the representation of Asian women in films and televisions.*

c. *Provide more stories and plots that reflect the true culture and experience of Asian women.*

d. *Strengthen Asian women's organisations and groups in the industry and increase their voice and influence.*

e. *Provide more training and development opportunities for Asian women to improve their professional competitiveness.*

f. *Take measures to reduce the impact of stereotypes and negative stereotypes to eliminate discrimination and prejudice against Asian women in the industry.*

g. *Promote cultural change for diversity and inclusion, including developing and implementing stricter equal opportunity and diversity policies.*

h. *Others _____**

Again, results indicate a not ideal situation of the Film&TV industry (Details in Questionnaire File):

- More than half of the participants 53% claim that the industry does not treat females fairly.
- An astonishing 74% of participants sense a lower status than the opposite sex.
- Over 90% participants agree that Asian females have "fair" and "very few" opportunities.
- When it comes to who stands for least chances to enter the industry, those who does not have relevant industry connections come on the top of the list (88%), followed by those who do not meet the language/cultural requirements to enter the industry (60%, especially for those who work in western countries) and those who cannot afford to receive propre education/professional training (53%).

It is discovered and worth noticing from the literature review that biased stereotyping and misunderstanding of Asian females in Film and TV works continue to affect people's opinion of this group in the professional world, which is also very much agreed by the participants (51% believe that

the Western Film&TV industry lacks correct representation and equality for Asian women. We need more Asian women in dominant positions in the Film&TV industry so that more Asian women's voices can be heard.). In terms of the future development of the industry, and especially for the Western industry, it is suggested that the industry should make efforts to provide more opportunities and equal opportunities (most important), pay more attention to the works and contributions of female workers, improve payment and working environment, also the reward and punishment mechanism, establish better policy/career development pathway construction provide training and professional skills improvement, strengthen the system construction and management of anti-sexual harassment and sexual discrimination and introduce more health and psychological support.

Following, the next part asks the participants about their real experience within this industry and their way of dealing with problems.

Q11 What challenges or difficulties have you encountered in the Film&TV industry? (Multichoice)*
   a. *Unfair/low salary*
   b. *Strong competition/lack of opportunity*
   c. *Unclear career development pathway/slow promotion*
   d. *Long working hours/endless overtime work*
   e. *Sex Discrimination/Sexual Harassment*
   f. *Difficulty in identity verification*
   g. *My work is not recognized/criticised.*
   h. *Others _____**

Q14 In your experience so far, has there been any incidents of sex discrimination, such as not being considered for a role or an opportunity?
   a. *Yes*
   b. *No*
   c. *Not sure*

Q15 In your experience so far, have you ever been in a situation where you felt uncomfortable/harassed by the words/actions of male colleagues around you? If so, how did you deal with it?
   a. *Yes, and I expressed my dissatisfaction directly and asked for respect.*
   b. *Yes, but I chose to remain silent to avoid conflicts.*
   c. *Yes, I resolved the issue by seeking support and assistance afterwards.*
   d. *No, I have not encountered certain situations.*

Q16 The circumstances/issues discussed above, have they every made you feel terrified/ think about quitting this industry?
   a. *Yes*
   b. *No*
   c. *Not sure*

Q20 In your life, study, and work, have you ever been ignored or undervalued because you are an Asian woman? If so, how did you deal with it?

    a. Yes, I have been overlooked or underestimated, I try my best to prove my ability and value and strive to get more opportunities.

    b. Yes, I have occasional situations where I am overlooked or undervalued, but I usually choose to give in or try to find other opportunities.

    c. No, I have not encountered any certain situations.

Q21 As an Asian woman, do you feel discriminated in Western film and television productions/industry? If so, how did you deal with it?

    a. Yes, I often feel the racial and gender discrimination, and I will directly express my dissatisfaction or complain to the relevant department.

    b. Yes, I sometimes feel discriminated, but usually I choose to live with it or express my displeasure in a softer way.

    c. Yes, I have occasional instances of discrimination, but I'm not sure if it's because I'm an Asian woman or something else.

    d. No, I don't feel any obvious discrimination.

Conclusively (Details in Questionnaire File), for those who have already engaged/worked in the industry, major difficulties include unfair/low salary, strong competition/lack of opportunity, unclear career development pathway/slow promotion, long working hours/endless overtime work, etc. But what is more problematic refers to the fact that even though around 1/3 of the participants have encountered sex discrimination, sexist misbehaviours, and unfair treatment, (even within the school and in general life), most of the Asian females have chosen to compromise their feelings and not fight for their rights. This is a new issue discovered in the survey and the reasons could be traced back to the traditional culture where they are brought up in.

The last part of the survey targets job hunting specifically and has put some focus on Film&TV students who study overseas to achieve more advanced knowledge and skills (Details in Questionnaire File).

Q24 Are you a film and television student that studies overseas?

    a. Yes

    b. No

Q25 Do you think studying abroad is beneficial in terms of entering the Film&TV industry?

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. Not sure

Q26 If yes, what do you think is most beneficial? (Multichoice)*

    a. I can learn advanced film and television production technology.

    b. I can learn advanced academic theories.

c. I can gain professional industry experience (through internships, workshops…)

d. I can gain comprehension and understanding of different cultures.

e. I can expand my professional network.

f. Others _____*

Q27 Have you thought about developing your career in the country where you studied?

a. Yes

b. No

Q28 If yes, have you faced any difficulties in finding a job in the Film&TV industry there?

a. Yes, I have had difficulties.

b. No, I find my dream job easily.

Q29 If no, how did you manage to tackle the difficulties? (Multichoice)*

a. By improving my skills and expertise.

b. By expanding my industrial network.

c. By changing career direction/geographic location.

d. Others _____*

Q30 If no, why don't you consider developing your career in the country where you studied? (Multichoice)*

a. There is large cultural difference/language difference, I am fear of employment barriers.

b. I have learned about the overall local job-hunting situation, and I do not feel optimistic in job hunting there.

c. I tried to apply for a job and the result was not satisfactory.

d. After weighing the pros and cons, I prefer to return to the Film&TV industry back at home for development.

e. Others _____*

Q31 Have you ever encountered faced any difficulties in finding a job in the Film&TV industry?

a. Yes, I have had difficulties.

b. No, I find my dream job easily.

Q32 If so, would you/did you choose to change career directions or leave the Film&TV industry for good?

a. Yes

b. No

c. If yes, what industry would/did you choose? (Multichoice)*

    a. Media

    b. Advertising

    c. Design

    d. Education

    e. Finance

    f. IT/The Internet

    g. Others _____*

Though there is no official data of how many Asian female students study Film&TV related courses in UK, they account as a large proportion of the class accruing to informal opinion pool via social

media such as WeChat and Red. But almost all of them have given up finding a job in Film&TV in the UK, which is considered very frustrating.

For students who have chosen to study overseas, they mostly agree that they believe by studying overseas, it is beneficial for them to enter this industry. They claim that they can learn advanced film and television production technology (60%), learn advanced academic theories (67%), gain professional industry experience (through internships, and workshops...) (67%)), gain comprehension and understanding of different cultures (80%), and expand their professional network (60%). Before actually giving up, 90% of them considered landing a job in the UK but 93% of them encountered difficulties. And eventually, only 2 of them successfully found a job that sponsors Visa, one of which has to switch to a more marketing-focus role. Most students find themselves lacking confidence in terms of finding a job in the local area and state that there are no sufficient resources or help. This situation, however, is not only happening in the international job market, 92% of participants who did not study overseas also face job hunting difficulties and among those who chose to leave the industry (16 people), many of them (14 of them) has compromised to a job in the media industry.

Finally, this questionnaire also gathered some opinion on the future development for this industry, and what they would expect to see if a certain platform would be provided to help them thrive. Around 39% of the participants are optimistic about the future development and the expect changes to happen, but there are still 9 people out of 43 who are slightly pessimistic. Among the proposed functions of this platform, to provide job/work opportunities and funding/resources and to help expand professional network are the most popular ones.

2.3.2   Competitive Analysis (Case Studies)

A competitive analysis is a process of gathering and analysing information about the strengths and weaknesses of competing products or services that are compatible with one's own (Pono, 2018). In the context of design, a competitive analysis can help designers identify opportunities to differentiate their products or services **from** those of their competitors. Academic research has examined the importance of competitive analysis in design. For example, a study by Osterwalder and Pigneur (2003) found that conducting a competitive analysis can help designers identify potential market niches and develop innovative products or services. Another study by Kim and Mauborgne (1999) identified the importance of creating a "blue ocean" strategy, which involves designing products or services that are not currently offered in the market. Competitive analysis can help designers identify areas where there is currently no competition, and create products or services that can fill that gap.

According to online research, there are multiple platforms that are aiming at helping female professionals in the Film&TV industry to thrive. Three of them have been chosen to study because they are already running in scale and making positive influences.

-    Women in Film (Los Angeles, USA)

Women in Film (WIF) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1973, as the first proper organisation that advocates for and advances the careers of women working in the screen industries – to achieve parity and transform culture. WIF believes that in a healthy civil society, gender parity - characterised by equal opportunity, pay, and representation - is imperative. However, despite significant strides, the screen industries continue to exhibit systemic bias, both conscious and unconscious. This bias intersects with race, ethnicity, ability, age, class, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Acknowledging the existence of systemic imbalance is the first step towards cultural transformation. Cultural transformation, in turn, serves as a precursor to policy change. Achieving parity necessitates a shift in culture and policy, requiring decision-makers to hold themselves, their teams, and their businesses accountable for implementation. Furthermore, parity, inclusivity, and equal representation are essential requisites for sustainable media businesses. Therefore, WIF has donated every effort into creating an entertainment industry free of bias.

WIF website provides multiple layers of information, including their manifestation, press presentation and content, advocacy work and research, programs and events that members can take part in as well as community/committee building up functions. The website is well-designed in terms of the User Interface as it has a clean and modern design that is easy to navigate. The main navigation

menu is located at the top of the page and includes links to various sections of the website, including "About," "Membership," "Programs," "Advocacy," "News," and "Contact." Above which lies three other buttons in the header margin area – "LOGIN", "DONATE" and "HELP LINE" (Figure 11). These three buttons are self-explanatory and have a strong functionality focus.
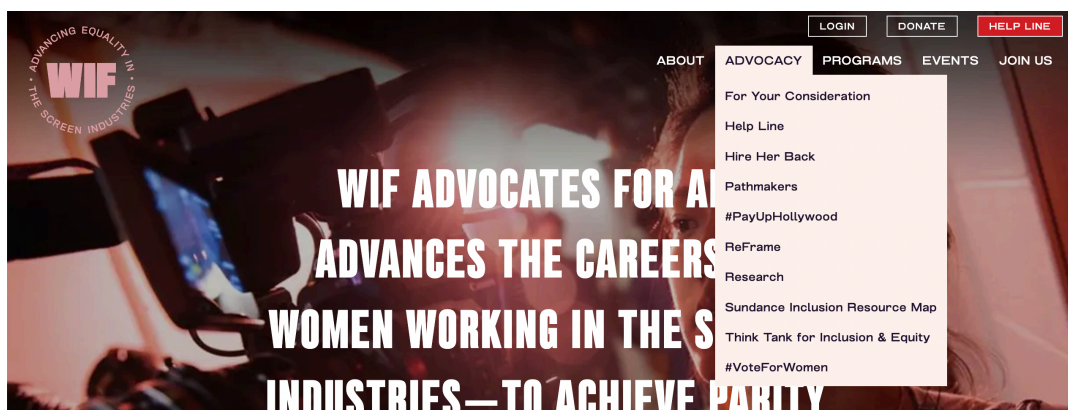

Figure 11, WIF Website Global Navigation Bar and Function Buttons

The website is well-organized and easy to access. Each section of the website includes sub-menus that provide users with more detailed information about the organisation's various programs, initiatives, and resources (Figure 12). But there is no clear hierarchy of elements in the navigation bar nor an indicator that tells users which page they are on at the moment.
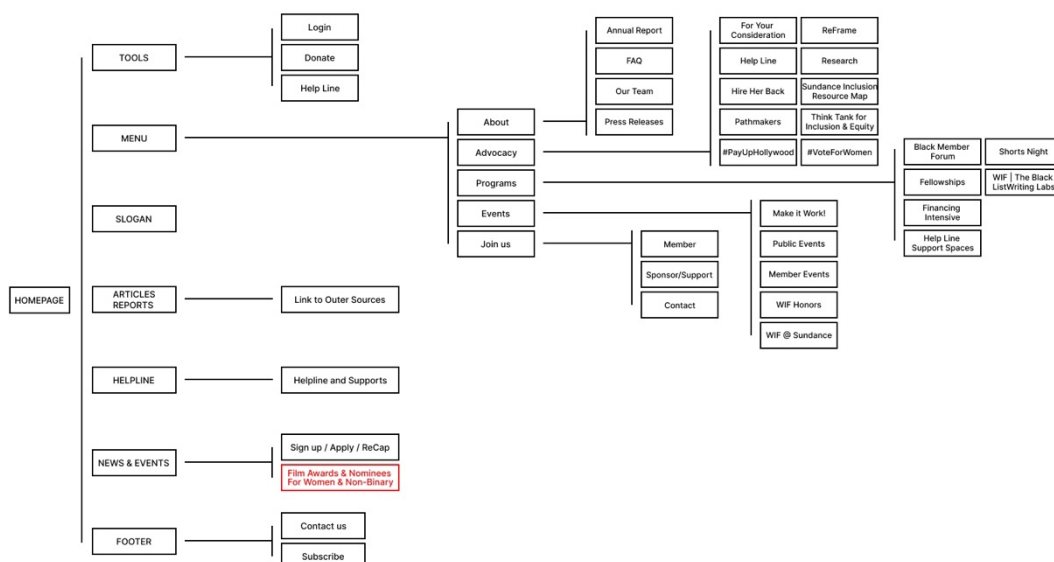
Figure 12, WIF Information Architecture

In terms of its visual communication, the homepage features large, bold images that showcase the organisation's mission and highlight recent events and initiatives. Scrolling down the page, users can find information about upcoming events, recent news articles, and ways to get involved with the organisation. Other pages follow a consistent page layout and UI style guide: the same page template

is flexible enough to be used in multiple places. The result is a cohesive-looking and acting interface that makes it easy for employees to quickly acclimate on any page. For a content-heavy platform/website, WIF has done a great job in formatting text and distinguishing different divisions of the pages – 1) pages are pleasantly palatable because of the deft deployment of several web writing techniques: content chunking, obvious headings, and subheadings, underlined embedded links, and bolding important words; 2) pages all come with well-designed colourful backgrounds, visually appealing pictures, and visible buttons with high-contrast colours. These are all considered very good UI design practices.
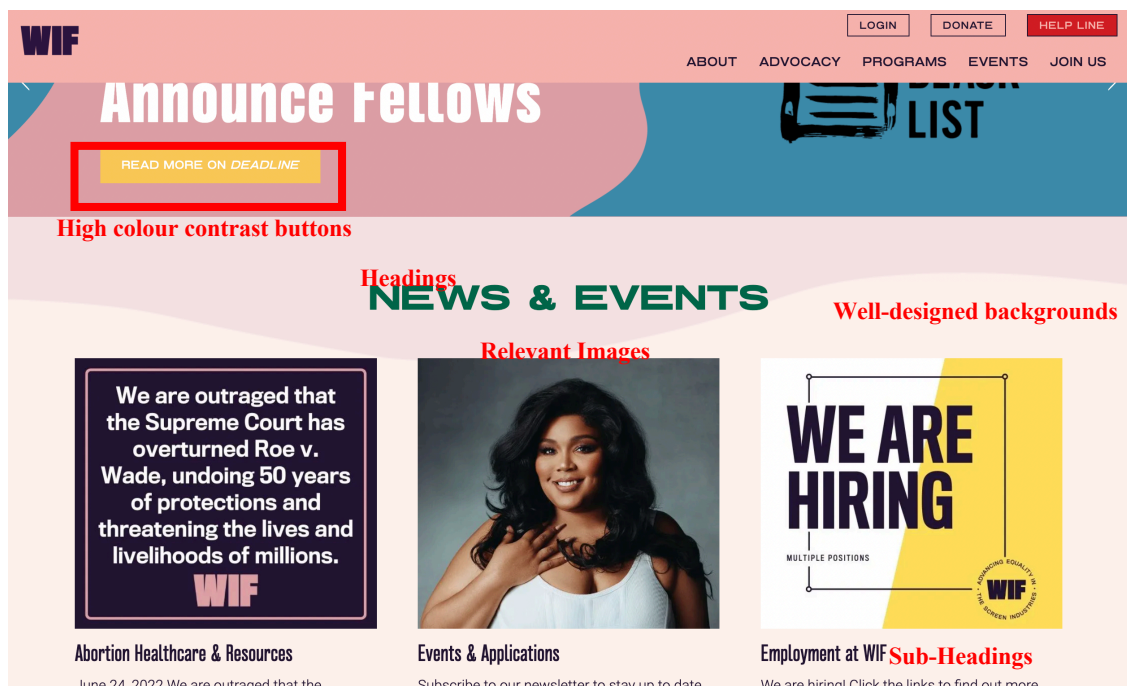
Figure 13, WIF Website UI Design Practice

Overall, the Women in Film website provides users with a positive user experience. The website is easy to navigate, visually appealing, and provides users with valuable information about the organisation's mission and programs. The design and layout of the website reflect its commitment to promoting gender equality and diversity in the screen industry.

However, what has made WIF so successful and hence, inspiring, is the way it has been thriving to gain attention and make a more good influence. To put it in simple words, it knows how to be more visible throughout the industry:

- It collaborates with other well-known organisations such as the Sundance Institute to make even bigger progress.
- It makes a presence in front of the public and critical media, to attract sponsorship and donation so that it could incubate meaningful and helpful programs and events.

- It prizes and gives awards back to its sponsors and contributors so that the collaboration is scalable, sustainable, and stable.

And eventually, it has utilised its recognition and fame to give back to its members – those female screen industry professionals. For example, the "For Your Consideration" page, recommends talents to anyone who visits the website, and this is only feasible because WIF is now well-known and identified by the industry, so its referral is valid. Also, on the "Shorts Night" page, it holds the annual Shorts Night showcasing its members' best short content of the previous two years. Women filmmakers and filmmakers of underrepresented genders are invited to submit short narrative or documentary projects, 20 minutes of length or shorter. Given its influential power, members are more likely to get exposure and more opportunities.
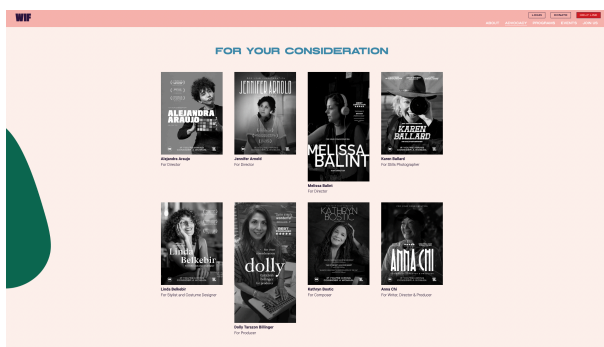
Figure 14, WIF Website For Your Consideration   **Figure 15**, WIF Website Shorts Night
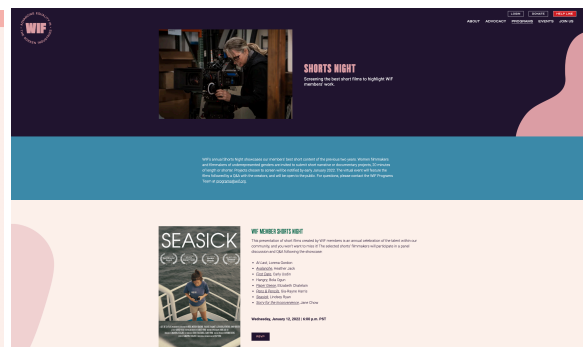
Takeaways:

a) A good global navigation bar is always the key to the website and wording matters!
b) Make sure there is a clear measure of the content and its presentation, that remember to use good visual elements to deconstruct the heavy texts, use images to accompany relevant content, use different heading styles to indicate hierarchy, make clickable elements visible, etc.
c) Think about the nature of the issue and plan ahead and plan for the constant development: how to afford the running of the platform, how to engage influential and resourceful parties, how to engage more parties, how to amplify the positive impact, how to make it economically sustainable, etc.

- New York Women in Film & Television

NYWIFT, or New York Women in Film & Television, is another American professional association dedicated to advancing women in the entertainment industry, founded in 1977 in New York City. The organisation believes in the power of media to effect change, and as such, has made diversity, equity, and inclusion integral to its mission. By using DEI as a guide, NYWIFT seeks to foster positive change for its talent, staff, and board, as well as in all of its content and programming. With over 15,000 members across more than 60 women in film organizations worldwide, NYWIFT energises women by

illuminating their achievements, providing training and professional development programs, awarding scholarships and grants, and providing access to a supportive community of peers. The organization produces over 50 programs and events annually, including the Muse Awards for Vision and Achievement and Designing Women, which honor women in front of and behind the camera, as well as costume designers, makeup artists, and hair stylists in the industry. NYWIFT advocates for women to accelerate diversity in media and calls for equity for all women in media and entertainment to better reflect our world and transform our culture.

The design of NYWIFT is, on the other hand, less compatible with the contemporary UIUX design standard and appears to be a bit old school in its visual language. The global navigation bar (Figure 16) is the main anchor tool that would allow users to browse through the website. But under every single element in the navigation bar, there is a dropdown menu containing at least 5 objects, making the total items in the navigation bar 45. The information architecture (Figure 18) can also indicate how content-heavy this website is. For websites with loads of information, it is vital to consider the UX because it hugely affects users' willingness to stay for a longer time and to read the content properly. Without a good layout/filter system, it could lead to a poor user experience, thus wasting the efforts that have been put into generating such good-quality press articles (Figure 17).

Figure 16, NYWIFT Website Global Navigation Bar and Visual Overlook

ABOUT   PROGRAMS   PARTNERS   NEWS   RESOURCES   BOUTIQUE   MEMBERS   DONATE

NYWIFT in the News

No filters, must scroll down…

FRIDAY | FEB 3 | 5PM | "THE JANES" SCREENING+DISCUSSION (NYU CMCH)

This award-winning documentary chronicles the pre-Roe v. Wade era when young female activists who called themselves 'Jane' built an underground network for women with unwanted pregnancies, providing safe, low-cost illegal abortions to an estimated 11,000 women. Post-screening discussion: filmmakers **Tia Lessin** and **Emma Pildes** with **Dr. Wendy Chavkin**, Columbia/Mailman School of Public Health; co-founder, Global Doctors for Choice. Moderator: **Katie Chambers** (New York Women in Film & TV).

Co-Sponsors: Anthropology, Center for Religion and Media, Cinema Studies, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality

WLIW FM npr — January 30th, 2023 – Ruth Ann Harnisch (WLIW-FM NPR)

East Quogue resident, Ruth Ann Harnisch, discusses two films she produced that first screened at the Sundance Festival last week, as well as some of her favorite films from the festival, during the Monday Meditation segment on The WLIW-FM Heart of The East End with Gianna Volpe

Press Contact:

Katie Chambers
Senior Director of Community
& Public Relations
kchambers@nywift.org
212-679-0870 ext. 23

Clickable, but not that visible…

Press Releases

2023 NYWIFT Loreen Arbus Disability Awareness Grant Opens for Submissions (February 13, 2023)

NYWIFT Announces 21 Projects from 24 Members Selected for the 2023 Sundance Film Festival (January 19, 2023)

U.S. Premiere of Calypso Music Documentary One Hand Don't Clap Makes Its 4K Restoration Premiere at To Save and Project (January 11, 2023)

NYWIFT Presents 10 Scholarships and 14 Festival Awards throughout 2022 (November 22, 2022)

NYWIFT Special Event:

Figure 17, NYWIFT Website Press Room
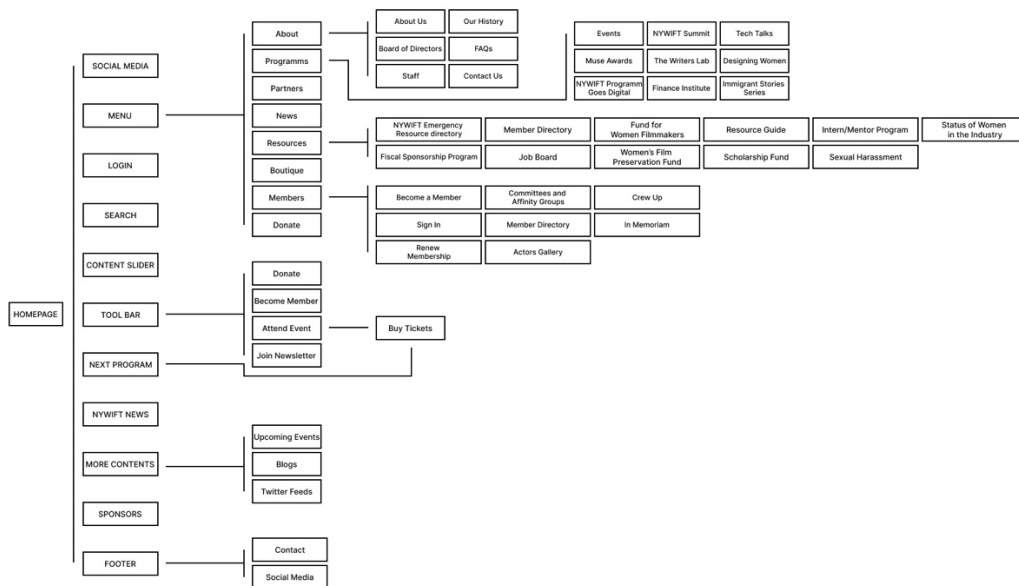
Figure 18, NYWIFT Website Information Architecture

When it comes to the visual identity of this organisation, it is hard to see it as modern or creative. And this could affect users' attitudes and level of trust in it. The colours used are mostly low in saturation, which creates a comfortable way for the eyes to consume, but it lacks that touch of aesthetic. The design of input boxes and clickable elements such as buttons are very rigid and

traditional, thus not really corresponding to the creative nature of this industry. It would be suggested that the website work on improving its content layout and visual design to obtain a better UI and UX so that to create more flow to the website and longer staying time.

Figure 19, NYWIFT Newsletter SignUp Button

What is unique about NYWIFT is that it has a very comprehensive "Members" section (Figure 20), and it contains information that I consider very useful. It is the only website that allows guest visitors to access the member list. The "Crew Up" section (Figure 20) allows users to filter through members according to their needs so that they could reach out to and arrange a collaboration with people they have never met before, thus adding up to their work experience profile. In the "Actors Gallery", it showcases the actors, mostly females, in the member group. This is also considered a good way to include more and more female actors in the leading role, or even just in films/TV shows in general. Because actresses of colour have not been adequately represented, it reinforces negative stereotypes and can lead to feelings of marginalization and exclusion. By including more female actors of colour in Hollywood, it helps to provide representation and visibility for groups that have historically been underrepresented. This can also lead to more authentic and nuanced portrayals of different cultures and communities and help to broaden the types of stories that are told.
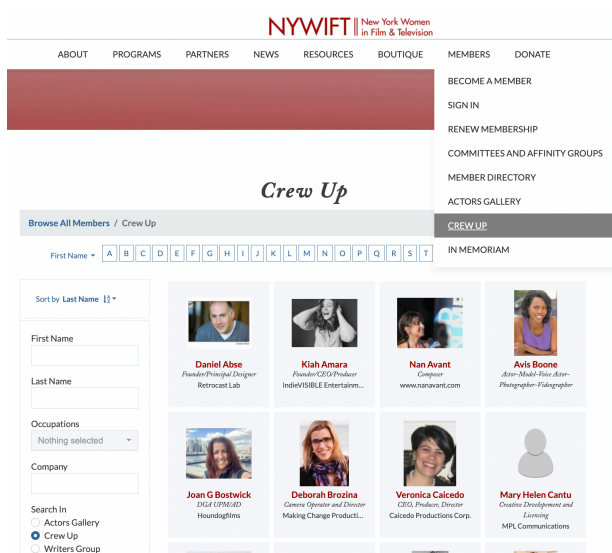
Figure 20, NYWIFT Crew Up   **Figure 21**, NYWIFT Actors Gallery
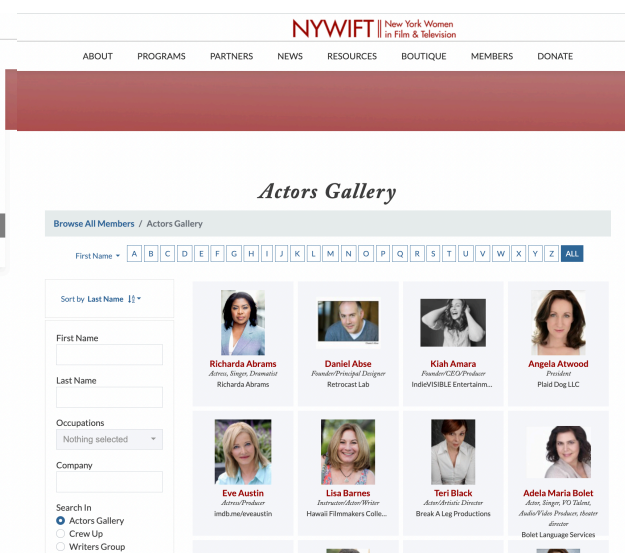
Takeaways:

a) A good global navigation bar is always the key to the website and its composition matters!
b) Always improve the visual language of the design to keep up with the trend and brand identity.
c) Use filters and anchors for content-heavy pages to allow better user experience.
d) Publicise member list to encourage cross collaborations and peer connections.
e) Advocate more positive female image in Film&TV is also important and should be encouraged as much as possible to bring true ideology-level changes.

- Women in Film and TV (UK)

The Women in Film and TV is the London-based UK leading membership organisation for women working in media and part of an international network of over 12,000 women. It is also a valuable online resource for individuals who are interested in the advancement of women in the film, television, and digital media industries. The history of WFTV (UK) traces back to 1989 when a group of women came together for the first WFTV meeting. A mix of executives, creatives, and performers, they included Lynda La Plante, Norma Heyman, Jenne Casarotto, Dawn French, Joan Collins, and Janet Street-Porter. These were all women who enjoyed career success but knew that the male-dominated industry needed to fundamentally change if women were to be truly equal. They resolved to take positive action and follow in the footsteps of organisations in Los Angeles (WIF) and New York City (NYWIFT) established in the '70s to support women working in the screen industries. Till today, it continues to expand and build upon the vital work of that original group of women. However, it is acknowledged that even over the years improvements within the industry have been seen, there's still a long way to go. WFTV (UK) welcomes everyone to be a part of its organisation's history and help to make the creative-media industries' future fairer for all.

Figure 22, WFTV(UK) Website Global Navigation Bar

In terms of the UI and UX of this website, it follows a good guideline of design. The navigation bar is again, located in the header section as a global navigation throughout the entire website. Though it

looks like that there are many items in the navigation bar, three of them ("About", "Careers", and "Fearless Leadership Programme") do not have dropdown menus. But these items are not aligned according to any specific order, which could lead to confusion caused by missing hierarchy. And it did not indicate the current page on which users are on.

When it comes to its visual language, it is considered well-designed. Like WIF's website, it uses a wide range of colours to make a strong contrast between different sectors of the page, helping users to navigate. By formatting the text, it adopts a good hierarchy mechanism for the textual content. And the buttons are well-made to stand out on the background, encouraging more clicks. WFTV (UK) impresses me because of its atheistic elements used for visual communication. For example, in the "Upcoming Events" section, the clickable image of every event is carefully designed and together they form a good-looking colour platter, no repetition is seen, and it effectively stimulates users' attention and willingness to click on them. Therefore, encouraging longer stay on the website and more participation in the events. For the "Award Nomination" part, it uses a graphic design pattern as the background, blending with colours that match the entire colour scheme. All these designs:

- creates a positive first impression: a website's design is often the first thing visitors notice about a website and a well-designed website can increase the chances of visitors returning later.
- advocates the creative nature and inclusive identity of this organisation and makes it a more convincing professional party to join.
- enhances user experience, obviously.

Figure 23, WFTV(UK) Upcoming Events

Figure 24, WFTV(UK) Award Nomination

However, more has to be considered when it comes to dealing with a website that is very content-and-text-heavy. I have illustrated the Information Architecture of WFTV (UK), and as shown in Figure 25, it has a heavy volume of information under navigation bar elements such as "More", and it is very tricky to put more than 10 items under one navigation bar element. I would suggest reallocating the

composition of the navigation bar element and even the distribution of items under each element to make it more accessible and easier to navigate.
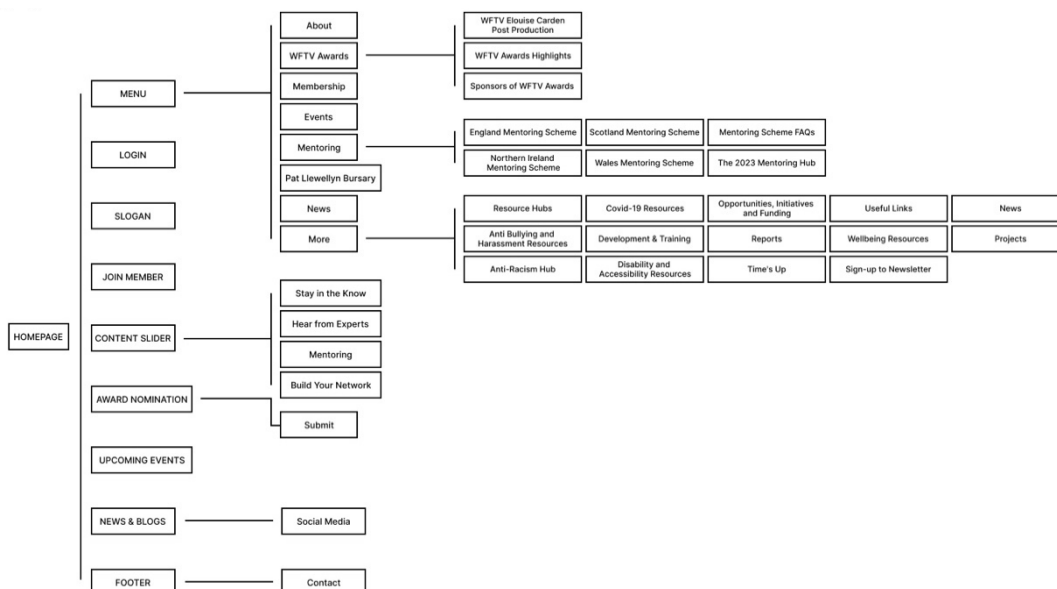
Figure 25, WFTV(UK) Information Architecture

As shown in Figure 26 and Figure 27, though the content itself is useful, users could lose patience when they have to scroll down the entire page to locate the information that suits them. For instance, on the "Upcoming Events" page (Figure 26), a simple filter could solve the problem. And on the "Useful Links" page, the same method could be applied to avoid the instant loss of patience. Having filters on a webpage can greatly enhance the user experience:

- Filters provide users with the ability to narrow down search results based on specific criteria, making it easier for them to find the information they need.
- Additionally, filters can allow users to customise their browsing experience, making the website more accessible to individuals with specific needs.
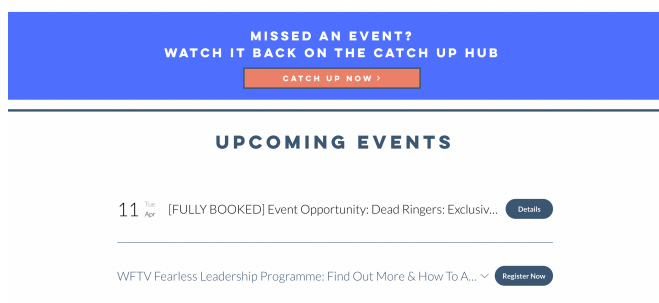
Figure 26, WFTV(UK) Upcoming Events
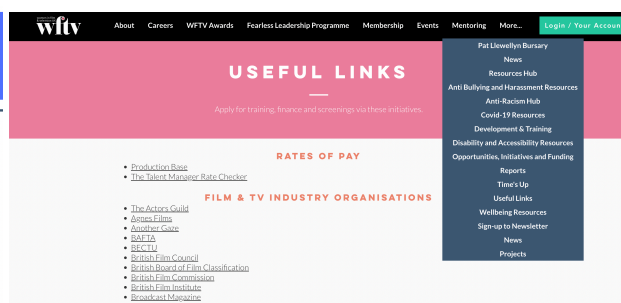
Figure 27, WFTV(UK) Useful Links

What I want to emphasise about this website is its strategy for long-term development. Firstly, it put heavy emphasis on career development by putting four relevant (out of 8) navigation bar elements and it runs very comprehensive mentoring programs for members from different geographic locations. It also directly offers career opportunities for candidates who are willing to join the

expansion of this organisation. Secondly, it also nominates its own awards for members' works, which is a good way to attract sponsors and funding. Given the fact that the UK is very well-developed in terms of its broadcasting industry and traditional TV industry, the WFTV (UK) possesses the advantage of being able to collaborate with the "big four" including BBC and Sky, making it easier to build strong industry connections.

Takeaways:

f) A good global navigation bar is always the key to the website and its hierarchy matters!
g) Good design feature builds up a strong brand identity and is more likely to build trust and long-term relationship with its audience.
h) Filtering system is extremely important for UX when the interface has too much information.
i) Long-term development requires a valid organisation-wise strategy, including cross-party collaboration, attracting sponsors, and acquiring funding.

Conclusion

By studying these three websites, it has been made clear in terms of the content composition and UIUX design rules for certain websites:

Content-wise:

- Enrich the content and include statistics, news, and blog posts to enrich the content of reading.
- Think about what resources can actually be useful for Asian female professionals in this industry that they find hard to acquire elsewhere, whether it is mentoring programs, events, work opportunities, collaboration or so on (Take time to do thorough research and have clear data to anchor to will keep me focused on what matters most).
- Pay attention to the hierarchy and presentation of textual content.

UIUX-wise:

- Use headings properly according to content hierarchy.
- Make buttons and clickable links visible.
- Use filter systems, columns, search bars, and secondary pages, to allow users quick access to the information they are looking for.
- Consider the colour platter carefully to make sure it goes with the content and the brand identity.
- Be creative and do the visual communication properly!

Platform-development-wise:

- Consider the long-term development strategy ahead and be prepared.
- Reach out to available sponsorship and funding provider to cover the running of the platform.
- Make good use of local resources such as the four big broadcasting companies and their resources.
- Make sure the platform covers as many as user segments as possible, more exposure brings more potential.

2.3.3 In-depth User Interviews

Following the questionnaire, where I gathered an overview of the user segments and pain points, I proceed to conduct in-depth user interviews. An in-depth user interview is a qualitative research method that involves conducting a detailed conversation with a user to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences, attitudes, and behaviours. This method allows me, a non-Film&TV professional, to explore topics in-depth and to gain rich insights into their perspective. According to Bloor et al. (2001), in-depth interviews are a useful method for exploring complex social phenomena, as they allow researchers/designers to delve into the nuances of a topic and gain a detailed understanding of the user's experiences. Similarly, Rubin and Rubin (2011) argue that in-depth interviews can provide researchers with a more comprehensive understanding of a user's subjective experience than other research methods. In-depth user interviews are very commonly used in user-cantered design, product development, and marketing research, and they can be a valuable tool for understanding user needs and preferences (Ngo and Lee, 2017).

I invited 6 users, including Asian female Film&TV students studying in the UK but with limited industry experience, Asian female individual producers who have been working on contract-based projects in different locations around Europe, as well as those who work domestically in Mainland China.

Questions	
Finding a job	What kind of work/projects do you do at the moment?
	Did you manage to find a job in this industry in the area that you are based in?
	If yes, how difficult is it? If no, what difficulties did you encounter and what did you do?
	How different is different markets for you and why do you relocate/or not?
Fitting in this industry	What challenges have you met as an Asian female talent and what did you do?
	Do you feel as a part of the industry as a student/professional worker, and why?
	Did you look for/find/ever seek for any support/guidance?
	What do you think could help improve Asian females' status quo in this industry?

Career development	What is your long-term plan in this industry and are you aware of the challenges?
	In terms of your individual profile, how do you manage it?
	What is your expectation for this industry & the future for Asian females engaged?
	What do you think about forming a supporting community for us (via platforms?)?

It is only through these interviews that I gathered the following feedback:

- Most students work hard to obtain an offer to their dream Film&TV school overseas because they are aware of the advanced development, especially in the US and UK.
- But they find it hard to build industry connections even though they have good resources from university, therefore find it very hard to find internship/work experience. They are not aware of most of the free events that they could participate in, given there are many in London that are open to all.
- Lack of industry experience then turns into a vicious circle and leads to limited chances of finding a graduate job, forcing them to change industry or return to their home country, further decreasing Asian females' representation in the international market.
- Experienced workers face challenges such as not being recognised and being unable to fit into the foreign industry. Even though they are very skilled and hard-working, the cultural and language barrier, as well as the long-lasting wrong stereotyping towards them, have made it very hard for them to find a place in the industry.
- This leads to less funding and support that they would utilise to enhance their individual projects, lowering their exposure rate and compatibility.
- Almost zero representation of Asian female senior-level worker in the industry make them feel insecure and unsure about their career future – there is a serious lack of role model.
- For those who work in domestic industry, many are facing social-convention-sourced problems such as birth pressure and unhealthy labour market competition, forcing them to quit the industry at a certain age.
- Limited access to international resources and opportunities also blocks their individual career development and they deliberately seek cross-border collaboration opportunities.
- The labour-requiring nature of this industry, whether they are directors, producers, gaffers or etc., exhausts them out with the extra-long working hours.

To conclude, apart from the insights taken above, it is very surprising that none of them are aware of existing platforms such as the three studied above. This leads to an urgent need and sense of mission for me to bring this platform to life for them. Because it would be a shame to see these people who genuinely have passion for the screen industry leave.

Part 3 Design Outcome

3.1 User Segments and User Needs

User segmentation is a crucial aspect of user-centered design, as it helps designers understand the needs, behaviors, and preferences of different user groups, enabling them to create more effective and user-friendly interfaces. User segmentation involves dividing a user base into distinct groups based on shared characteristics, such as demographics, behaviors, or needs. According to research by Kim and Lee (2012), user segmentation can help designers create better user experiences by providing a deeper understanding of user needs and behaviors. By identifying and understanding user segments, designers can tailor their design solutions to the unique needs of specific user groups, resulting in interfaces that are more intuitive, efficient, and enjoyable to use. From a long-term iteration perspective, user segmentation can also help designers identify potential design problems and address them before they become significant issues. By conducting user, it will ultimately lead to better user experiences and increased user satisfaction.

Given the results from the research phase, I make the following user segmentation map (Figure 28).
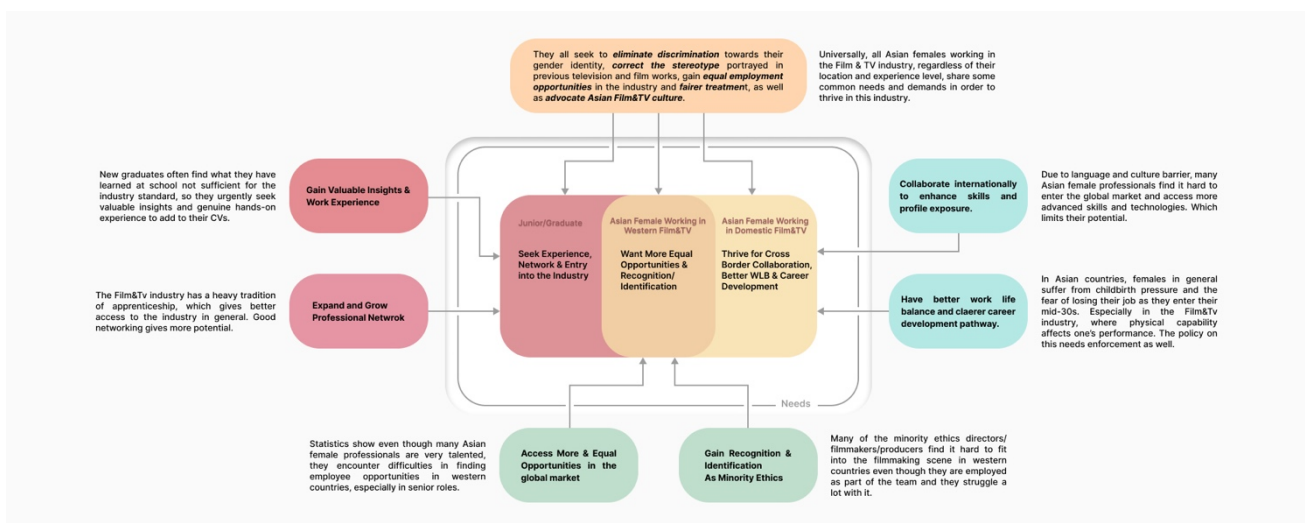
Figure 28, User Segmentation Map

I have developed three main user groups: junior and graduates, experienced workers in foreign industries, and domestic industry workers, all identified as Asian females. Universally, all Asian females working in the Film & TV industry, regardless of their location and experience level, share some common needs and demands in order to thrive in this industry. They all seek to eliminate discrimination towards their gender identity, correct the stereotype portrayed in previous television and film works, gain equal employment opportunities in the industry and fairer treatment, as well as advocate Asian Film&TV culture.

As juniors and graduates, they seek experience, network, and entry into the industry. New graduates often find what they have learned at school not sufficient for the industry standard, so they urgently seek valuable insights and genuine hands-on experience to add to their CVs. The Film&TV industry has a heavy tradition of apprenticeship, which gives better access to the industry in general. This is to say, good networking gives more potential. So, it is necessary to provide them with connections to expand and grow their professional network from a very early career stage.

For Asian females who are already exploring the Western Film&TV industry, they want more equal opportunities, and acquiring recognition and identification is the key to that. Accessing more and equal opportunities in the global market is their goal because statistics show even though many Asian female professionals are very talented, they encounter difficulties in finding career opportunities in Western countries, especially in senior roles. Nevertheless, many of the minority ethics directors/filmmakers/producers find it hard to fit into the filmmaking scene in Western countries even though they are employed as part of the team, and they struggle a lot with it. For them, career development is hugely dependent on the factors such as equality and identification.

And lastly, for Asian females who are working in domestic Film&TV industries, they thrive for cross-border collaboration, better WLB, and a brighter career development pathway. Due to language and culture barriers, many Asian female professionals find it hard to enter the global market and access more advanced skills and technologies. Which limits their potential. They believe collaborating internationally will help enhance their skills and profile exposure. Secondly, in Asian countries, females in general suffer from childbirth pressure and the fear of losing their job as they enter their mid-30s. Especially in the Film&TV industry, where physical capability affects one's performance. The employment and working environment policy on this needs enforcement as well.

3.2 Design Opportunities

Design opportunities refer to potential areas where design can have a positive impact. After sorting out the user segmentation, the design opportunities have revealed themselves. I take the following steps to define design opportunities:

1. Identify the problem and challenge:
The situation Asian female professionals are facing is tough and challenging. They struggle to locate useful resources for them to thrive in a foreign market, and they have to deal with unfair treatment, discrimination, lack of recognition, stereotyping, and misjudgement, some of which may even lead to them giving up their dreams. Very few role models are there for them to look up to and way too few advocators are available.

2. Recap results from competitive research.

Competitive analysis has provided valid guidance on content composition and UIUX design. The platform is going to be content-rich enough to attract members and attention from other parties who might be potential sponsors, thus funding the running and further development of this platform. The UIUX design should, nevertheless, follow a contemporary design guild line. That is to make navigation intuitive, use legible typography and proper heading formats, choose the colour platter wisely (could even refer to colour psychology), make everything responsive, provide clear calls to action such as buttons and links with clear labels, and so on. What is also vital here, is to think about what none of these three platforms can provide so that this platform can take advantage of that missing existence and make it a one-of-a-kind feature that no one else could compare to.

3. Identify the constrains.

But before proceeding, it is also important to consider the budget, time, technology, and resources that might limit the design solutions available. For this platform, it is important to gather enough resources even for the first launch because there has to be enough content to display. Also, as it will be a content heavy website, it is important to take the technical part into consideration, such as the database capability and that if the website could run smoothly with that much text and image data. Some advanced functions such as filtering, and auto-emailing might be put off to the second version. In terms of budgeting, it is important to plan ahead and apply for resources at an early stage so that there is enough money for the running and maintaining of the platform.

4. Picture the scenario.

It is important to picture user scenarios because it helps me understand the needs and motivations of users when searching, arriving, and browsing the platform. By imagining different scenarios in which users may engage with the platform, I can identify potential pain points or areas of friction, and design solutions that address these issues. Considering user scenarios allows me to ensure that functions are tailored to my target audience's specific needs and preferences and that it provides a seamless and enjoyable experience for users. This can help increase user satisfaction and loyalty and drive long-term success. I've put myself into the shoes of the three users to empathise with their feelings and concerns so as to come up with what I can offer them.

5. Generate ideas., evaluate and give hierarchy to them.

The next step is to actually put forward my design ideas. I proceed with doing mind mapping, which involves brainstorming ideas and connecting them to create a visual representation of my thoughts. I write down my main ideas in the centre of a piece of paper and then draw branches outwards with related concepts. To help better conceptualise and visualise the outcome, I sketch a very simple preliminary wireframe on paper. At this stage, I remind myself of the content-heavy nature of this platform and decide to give hierarchy to contents right away by changing the elements' order in the navigation bar – prioritising important ones based on their potential to solve the problem.

6. Refine design opportunities to serve the design brief later.
   a) Manifestation: equal rights and inclusion for Asian female Film&TV professionals are the keys to this platform, so every single page and function will be working towards serving this goal.

b) Providing career support: is the most important function of this platform and it will include listing work opportunities, providing mentor programs and peer support, hosting career-related events, encouraging production and self-exposure and so on.

c) Helping with networking expansion: this platform will build connections between members and industry professionals so that they can benefit from introduce-work-via-acquaintance. And that they can have a role model to look up to and to get inspiration from.

d) Gather funding and encourage production, for profile exposure: there will be a scheme designed to guide the financial management of this platform and monetary profits earned by this platform will contribute to the running of this platform, the hosting of programs and events, the encouragement and awarding of individual projects and so on.

e) Advocation: the ultimate goal of this platform is to improve Asian females' status in this industry and eventually bring ideology/perception level changes to the industry and society.

3.3 Design Brief – What

This project is about designing a platform as a channel to advance Asian females in the Film&TV industry. It concentrates on taking advantage of digital platforms to provide manifestation, resources, support, and advocation that work towards the goal. It will provide content both via online channels and offline in-person deliveries such as events and festivals. The goal is not limited to helping Asian females thrive in their careers and encourage more amazing works, but also to challenge the pre-possessed discrimination and wrong stereotyping towards this group. It aims to foster long-term development and a real scabble influence.

Who

The target users of this platform are anyone who identified as Asian female Film&TV professional, but anyone who are interested yet not have the exact identity are also welcome to take part in. Our main users/members have a genuine passion for this industry and would not easily give up even there are many obstacles. They devote everything into this industry, but they deserve better treatment and recognition. Regardless of their age, occupation, experience level, location, etc., they thrive for the same goal – become more visible in the industry as well as in society in general.

Why

Statistics show that there is a severely unbalanced composition of professionals in the industry, leaving almost no room for Asian females and being very exclusive to the locals. It has been a pain for Asian females to thrive in this industry, as professionals, and as actresses. Given the existing discrimination, misunderstanding, and misperception towards this group, this gradually kills the enthusiasm and could lead to worse consequences. For them, acknowledging the existence of

systemic imbalance is the first step, then together we could work towards parity, inclusivity, and equal representation, and finally acquire cultural transformation.

3.4 Value Proposition Canvas (How)

I decide to use a value proposition canvas (Figure 29) here, which is a statement that describes the unique benefits that this platform provides to its users, differentiating it from its competitors. Value propositions are essential for user-centred design. Because by doing this graph, it helps me understand the needs and preferences of users and create solutions that address those needs effectively. According to Osterwalder et al. (2014), a value proposition canvas is a tool that helps designers create products and services that are valuable, desirable, and feasible. Value propositions can also help designers identify potential design problems and address them before they become significant issues. It has been a critical component of this design process, as it also enables me to result in better user experiences and increased user satisfaction.
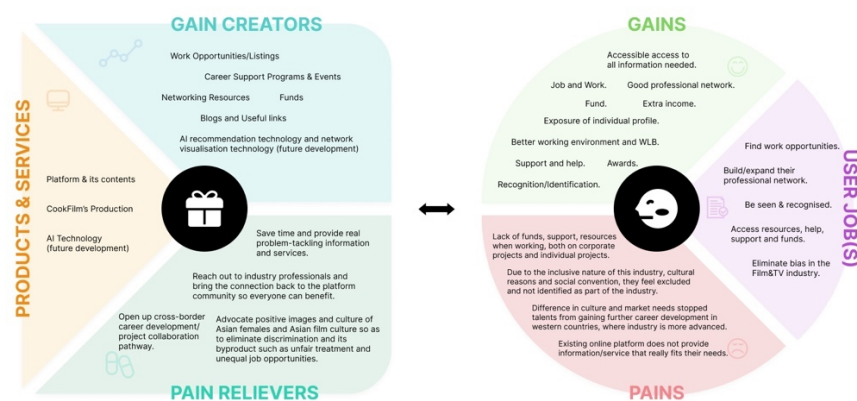
Figure 29, Value Proposition Canvas

3.5 User Journey Map (How)

A user journey map is a visualisation tool that illustrates the path a user takes to accomplish a task or goal on a website or application. It provides a holistic view of the user's experience, including their emotions, motivations, pain points, and opportunities for improvement. User journey maps are essential for user-centered design because they help designers understand the user's perspective and design experiences that meet their needs and expectations. According to Forrester Research, user journey maps help designers "craft empathetic experiences by understanding the customer's emotional state and mindset at each touchpoint" (Forrester, 2019). By incorporating user journey maps into the design process, designers can create more intuitive and satisfying experiences that meet the needs of their users.

Three user journey maps have been made according to the user segmentation. They divide users' journey into four stages: searching, browsing, participating, and becoming a loyal member. They may all start with a bit of confusion and uncertainty, then they arrive at this platform and browse, which gives them support, encouragement, and even funding. Then they participate in various platform events/programs/collaborations, which leads to more potential in their career. So, in the end, ideally, they would become loyal members of this platform and even help to advocate its manifestation.
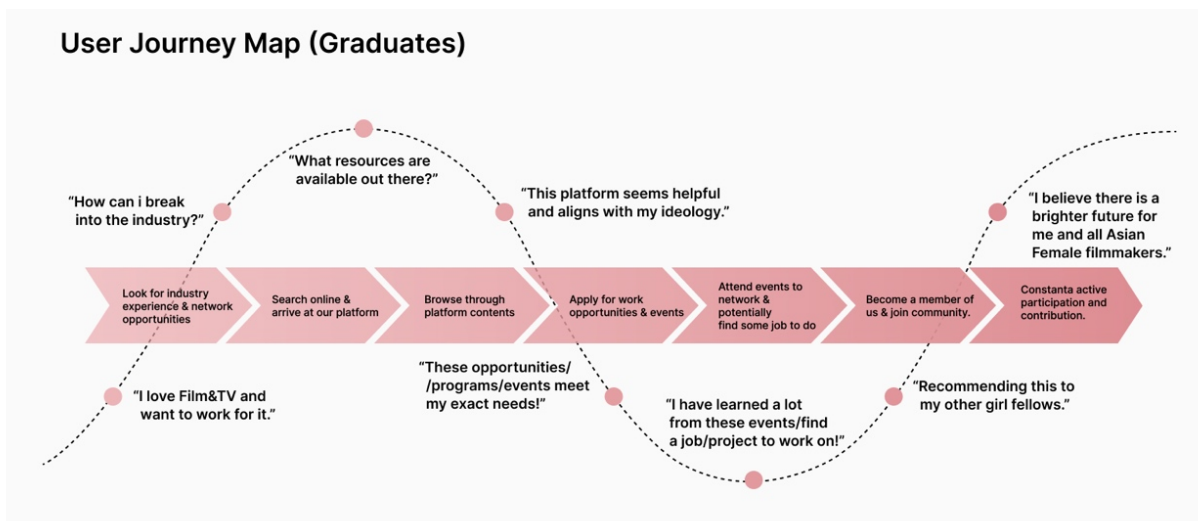
Figure 30, User Journey Map 1
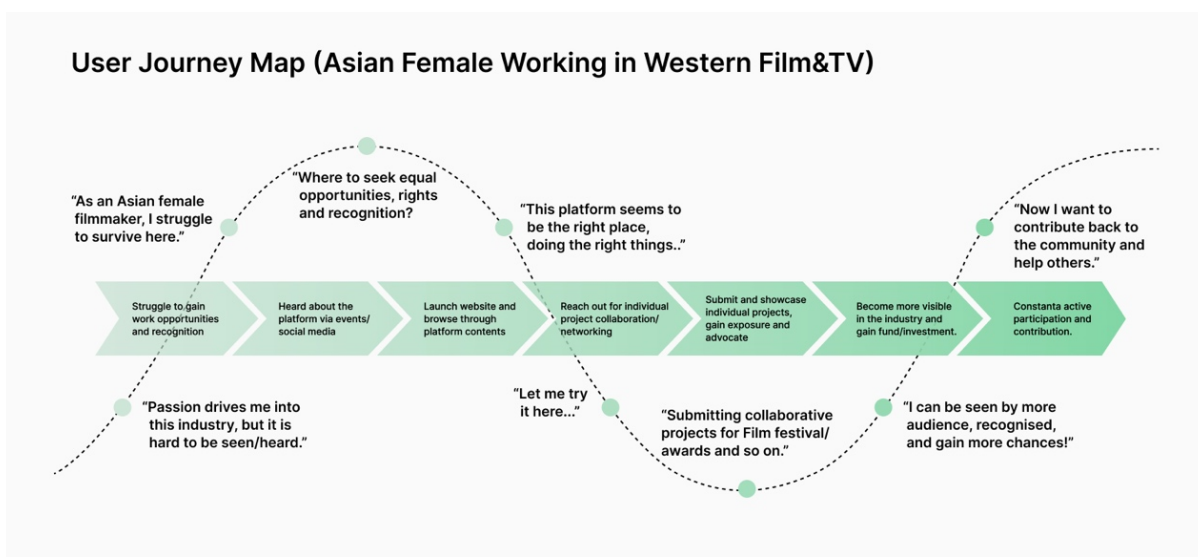
Figure 31, User Journey Map 2
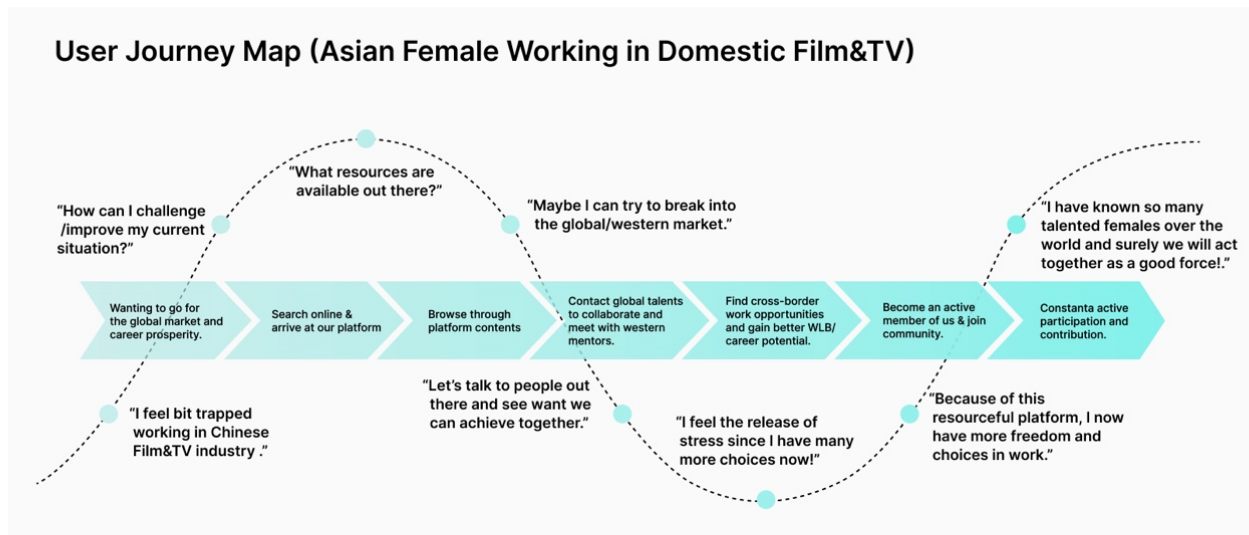
Figure 32, User Journey Map 3

3.6 Information Architecture

Information Architecture (IA) is defined as "the structural design of shared information environments" by Richard Saul Wurman, a pioneer in the field of IA. Wurman's definition emphasises the importance of structure in organising information and making it accessible to users (Wurman, 1997). Similarly, Morville and Rosenfeld (2006) define IA as "the art and science of organizing and labeling websites, intranets, online communities, and software to support usability and findability." Their definition emphasises the user-centered approach of IA and the importance of designing systems that are easy to navigate and understand.

To put it in simple words, IA considers the needs of users, the content available, and the overall objectives of the product to create a clear and intuitive navigation system. This includes defining categories, hierarchies, and relationships between different types of content. IA is important for creating a positive user experience as it helps users quickly find the information they need, reducing frustration and increasing engagement. It also improves content management and scalability, as well as facilitating easier updates and maintenance of the product over time.

Based on the previous procedures and their results, I proceeded to make the IA for this platform, which explains its content layers and functionalities. The global navigation bar is the key anchor point of this platform as it takes users back and forth between pages. From left to right, there aligns the hierarchy of each sector, with manifestation, career support & mentoring, and production as the most important ones. Different legend colour indicates the nature of the page. When landing on white ones, users merely consume (read/watch) the website content, while on blue and yellow ones,

they can click on contents/links to read more. And they can find actual action buttons on green ones, where they can apply for projects/programs, contact us/peers, and submit monthly projects.
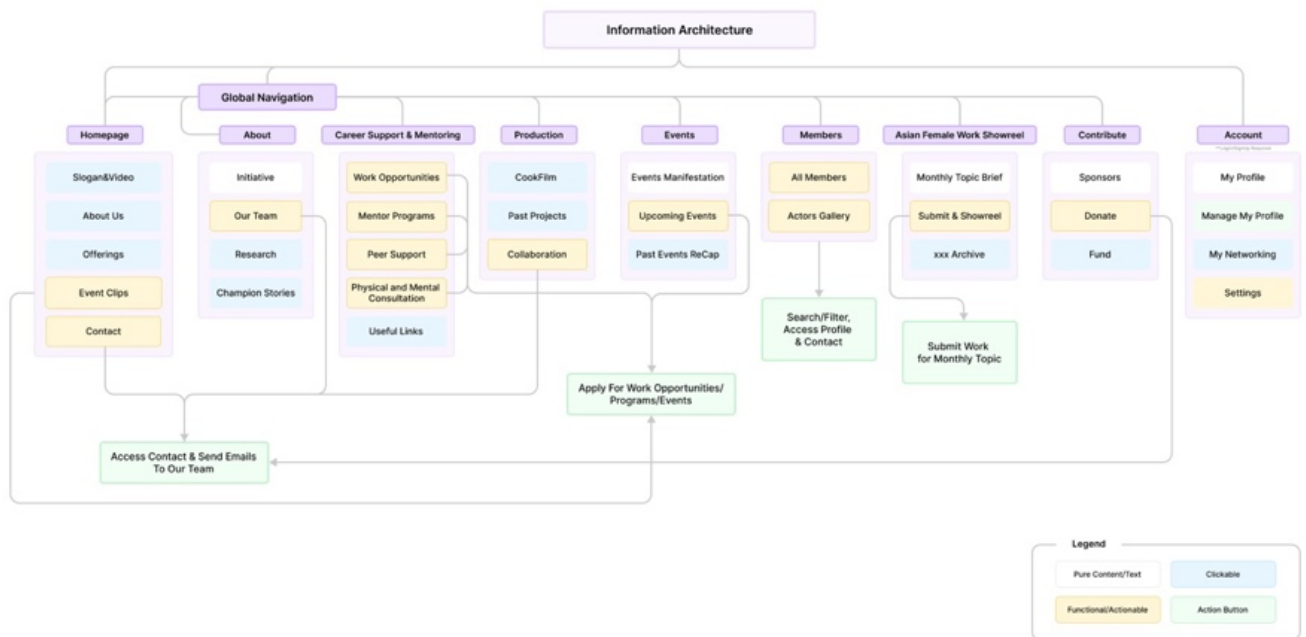
Figure 33 Information Architecture

3.7 Low-Fidelity Prototype

Integrating all the research, design opportunities, and user information, I sketch out a low-fidelity prototype to have a basic, rough, and inexpensive version of the platform. I make a complete version of the website pages so that I can use these low-fidelity prototypes to test and evaluate design concepts and ideas, thus making informed decisions about the later direction of the design (Kujala and Kaikkonen, 2011).

Figure 34 Low-Fi Homepage

The global navigation bar lies in the header section throughout the website and contains 10 elements. Given the research result, after announcing the manifestation of this platform, it comes the Career Support & Mentoring section because it is considered the most helpful and urgent resource for the users.

The Production section is the unique section that has been integrated into this platform because I have managed to find collaboration at a very early stage. By providing professional filmmaking and production service, the platform will be able to make profits that would serve as funds for itself. The company to collaborate with is named CookFilm and they are a very experienced team who has worked with well-known brands such as Burberry, BMW, and Samsung. Website visitors can reach out to them for professional service, members can also get in touch for work/collaboration opportunities.

The footer format and content are consistent throughout the platform to increase UX and, encourage subscription to the newsletter.

The homepage (Figure 34) is designed to be straightforward and easy to read. There will be a specially made film to explain the manifestation of this platform and I will insert it as the background. Below comes the About Us section, and users are welcome to click on the button to redirect themselves to the About page to learn more. The slider indicates the most valuable offerings this platform provides and is clickable. The Latest Events & News will indicate the liveness of this platform and encourage more participation. The XXX Archive section is also a very unique part of this platform and will be explained below.
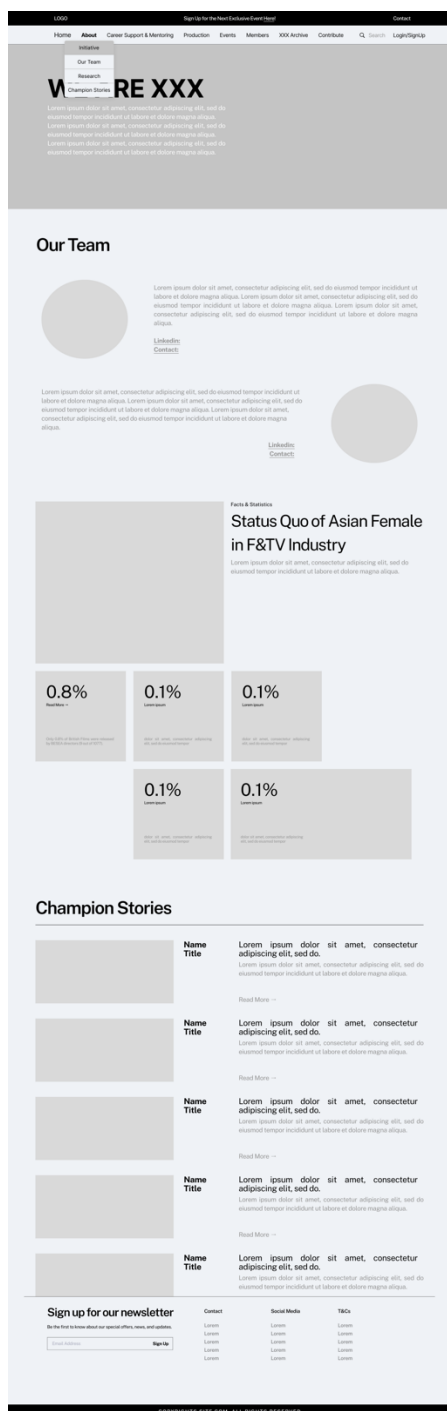
Figure 35 Low-Fi About Page

On the About page, it indicates the initiative, goal, and advocation of the platform, as well as the team introduction. There will be clickable 'Call to action' buttons for users who want to reach out to the team.

The section 'Status Quo of Asian Female in Film&TV Industry' is included to reveal the problematic situation they are facing at present. This is not only to advocate for Asian females but also for anyone who arrives at this page or who cares about the parity issue in this industry.

There will also be a 'Champion Stories' section to build up confidence, encouragement, and courage Ness for Asian Females. User interviews have told about Asian females' concern about not having enough role models to look up to in this industry, which may lead to fearfulness in terms of career development. So champion stories will be provided here, including stories of famous Asian actresses, film producers, and directors, and interviews with industry leaders.

I feel lucky to have initiated this platform in London where there are actually many reachable female leaders. For example, I participated in the recording of BBC4 Women's Power List and was lucky enough to learn about female leaders' stories there. Though there are no Asians yet on the list, I believe this platform will make it happen in the future.

Moving on to the most important feature of this platform – Career Support and Mentoring. It is found that no other competitive platforms have the 'Work Opportunities Listing' function (Figure 36), I want to include this function and prioritise it because:

1) Asian females find it even harder than females of other ethnic groups to find a job/work experience, and they urge to find one, by gathering information here, it saves their efforts.
2) I want to establish connections with companies/the industry to invite them to come to this platform to publish their needs so the members can have an even direct connection.
3) This function is prioritised in the navigation bar and in the dropdown menu to enable easier access, so that make it clear that this platform is different from others and that it holds valuable resources that can actually benefit its users.

By clicking the 'Details' button, users are redirected to the secondary page where they can see details about the job listing and submit the application. They can go back to the list via the backward buttons.
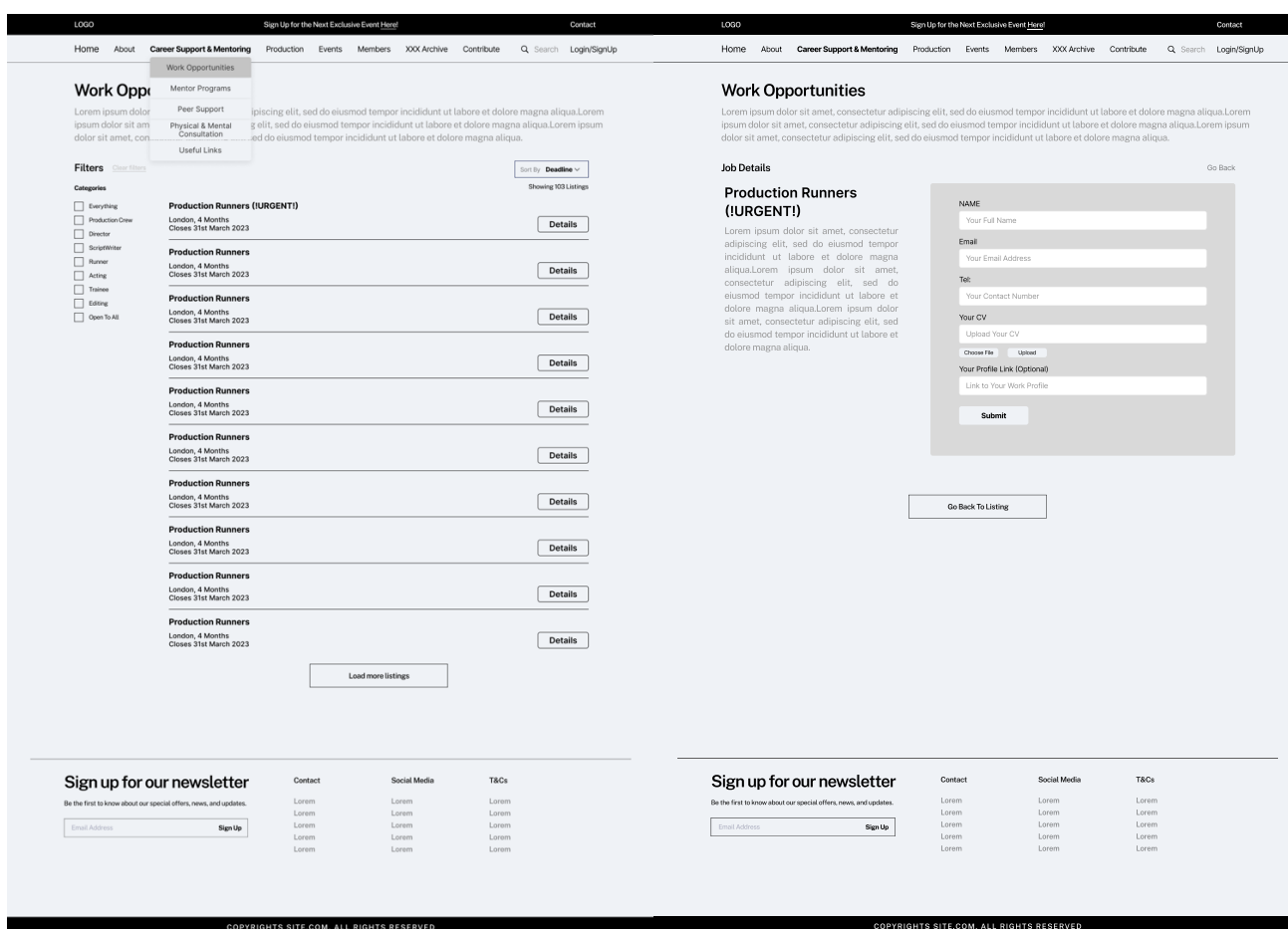
Figure 36 Low-Fi Work Opportunities Listing and Application
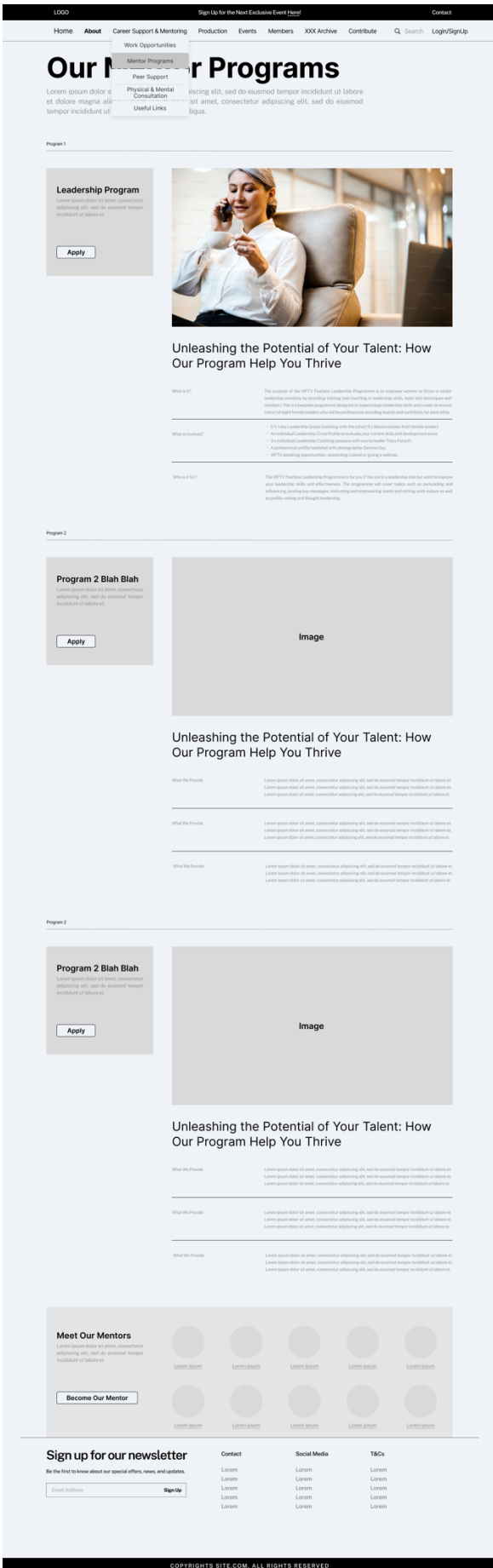
Figure 37 Low-Fi Work Mentor Programs

This platform, as research suggests, will be hosting 'Mentor Programs' so that users can interact with industry leaders and learning from them. Mainly for upskilling and learn from the ones who 'know the drill'. Also, this industry has a very traditional convention of giving prioritisation to those who have industry connections, therefore through the mentor program, the talents could open the door for this.

There are a few categories of programs I would like to introduce as mentor programs:

- Skill-focused
- Leadership-focused
- Career-development/planning-focused

In terms of the page UI design, it is going to be in a one-page format. There will be detailed introductions to the program and buttons for users to click and submit their applications. Below the programs, I will list the mentors as well as encourage anyone who is interested in becoming a mentor to get in touch.

I also deliberately include a Useful Link (Figure 38) page here, because it is shocking to know from the user interview that none of our interviewees are aware of these resources and it is time-consuming to gather this information for themselves.

Another section I plan to include is the Physical & mental Consultation (Figure 38) section because of the nature of work in the Film&TV industry. Often, working on the set/backstage/in front of the camera/in front of the editing screen could be very physically exhausting and it is suggested in the user interview that they would really love some physical stress release after work. The mental stress is, on the other hand, nothing new to mention. I am negotiating with one collaborator who has shown a willingness to offer these kinds of services for free. We plan to do online sessions at first and could move to offline sessions such as yoga and meditation workshops if funding is available.
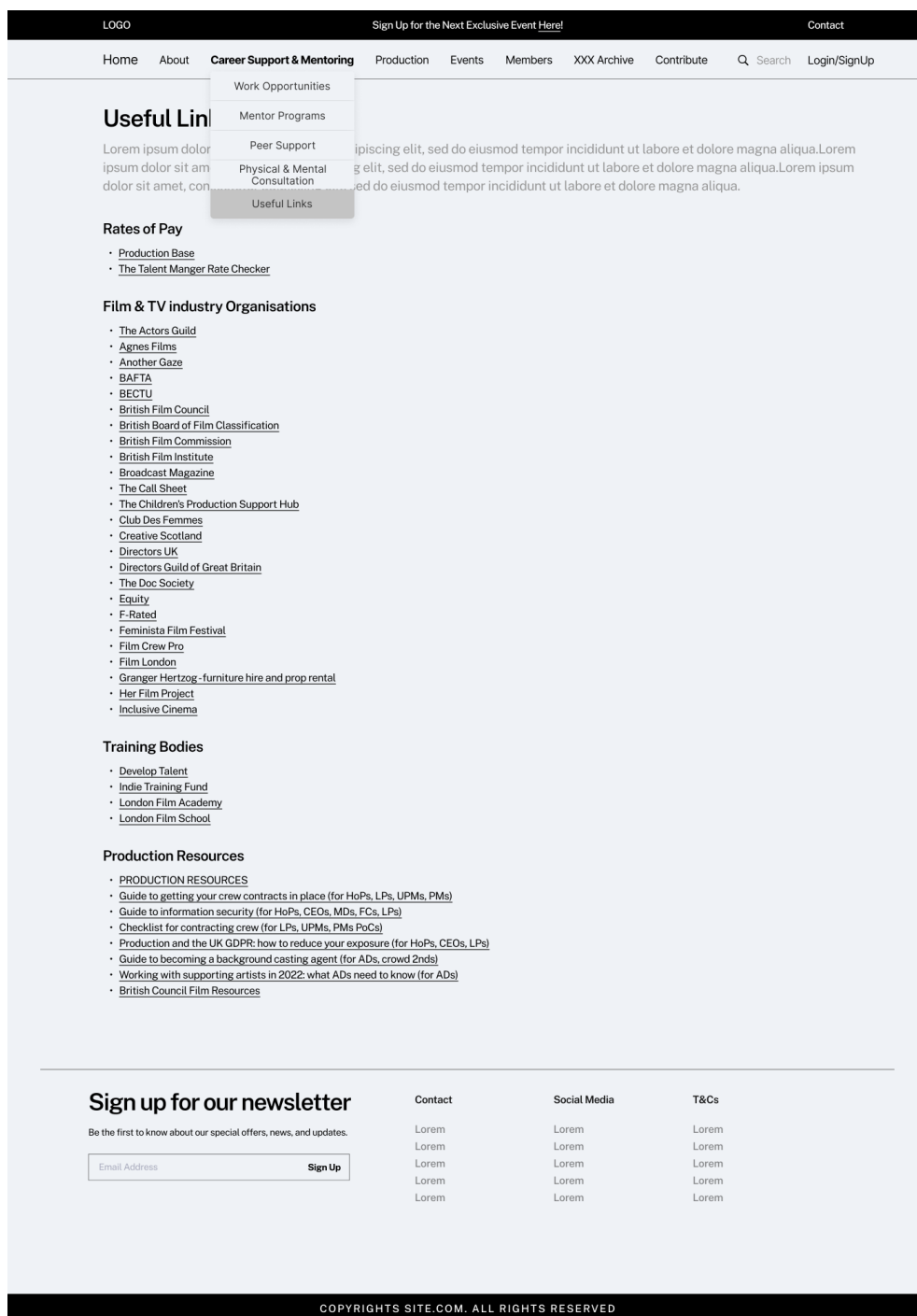
Figure 38 Low-Fi Useful Links

The Production section, as mentioned above, is the key to the running of this platform as it is the source of profits at this stage. I prioritise its order in the navigation bar and mention it on the homepage, aiming at attracting more potential service consumers. CookFilm is led by a girl who is really passionate about film production and uses film as a medium to realise cultural changes. It has worked on commercials, music videos, and short films and the crew is very experienced. Platform members can apply for jobs (if applicable) and collaboration opportunities. Other visitors are mainly encouraged to purchase production services from it. On the interface, there will be a short introduction to the company, a grid list of clickable past projects, as well as a Let's Talk button by which they could get in touch with each other.
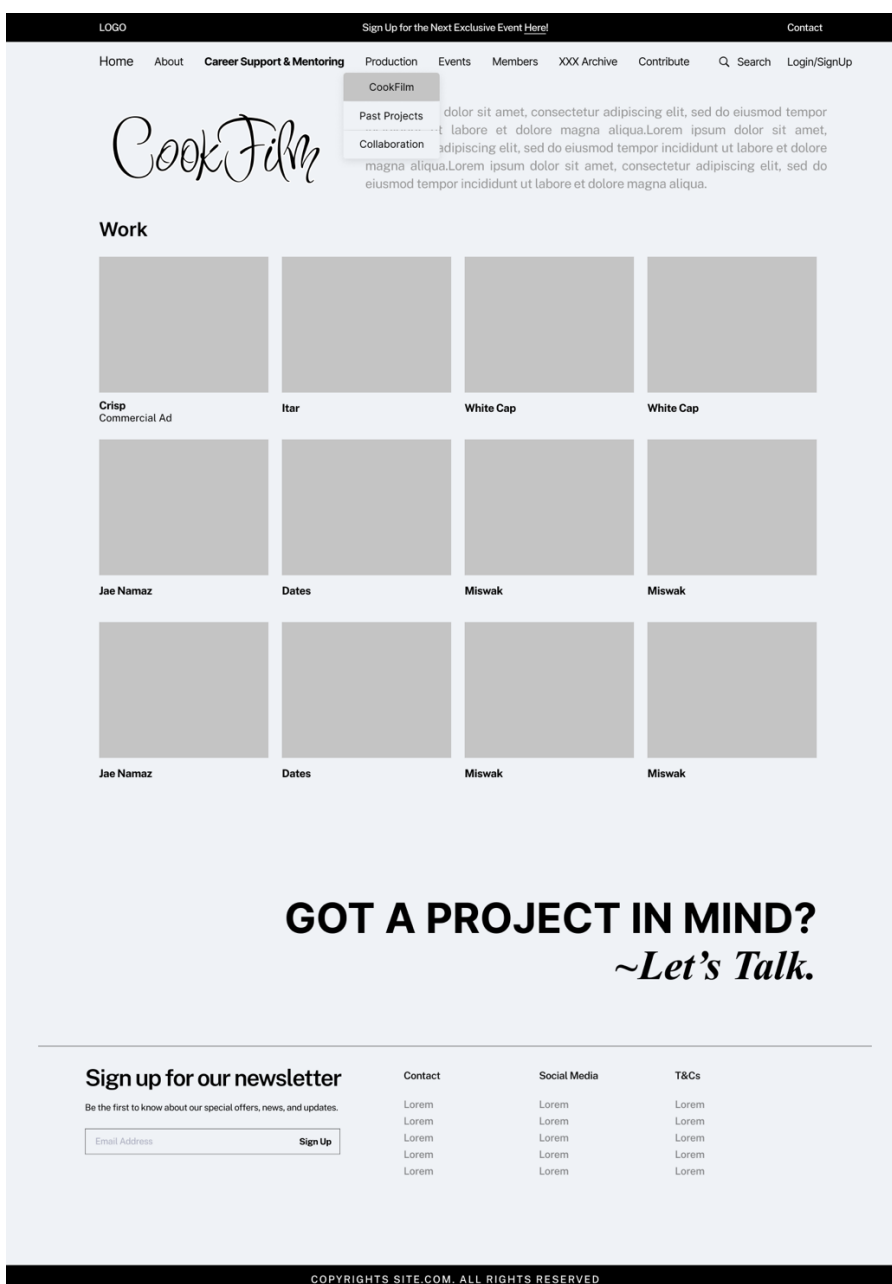
Figure 39 Low-Fi Production

The Event page follows next, and it is a standard section in terms of both the content and format. Events are an essential component for any organisation, and this platform is no exception. Hosting events allows this platform to provide members with access to industry professionals, information, and resources. Additionally, events create a sense of community and foster collaboration among members. These events provide a platform for members to showcase their profile, develop new skills, and stay up-to-date with industry trends. The page consists of an event manifestation, details the upcoming events and their signing up buttons, as well as a recap of past events.
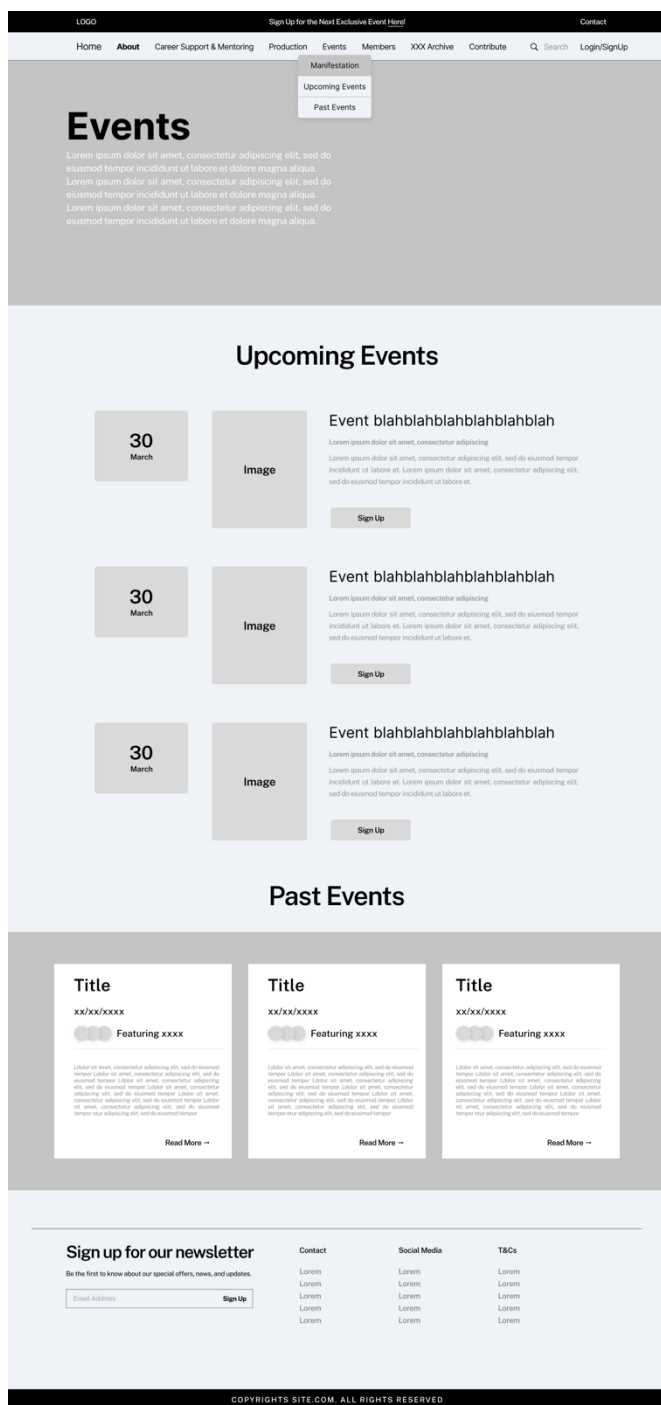
Figure 40 Low-Fi Events

The Members section takes inspiration from NYWIFT's website, and I consider it a cornerstone for this platform's goal. The major reason to allow access to member lists for anyone who arrives at this platform is to show them that there is actually a large number of Asian female talents who are actively engaged in this industry. Members/visitors are welcome to crew with each other for collaboration and potential contract signing up. When it comes to the Actor Gallery, it has a special mission here. According to research, the mis conceptualisation and stereotyping of Asian female professionals partly come from those pictured in films and TV shows. Therefore, I want to encourage more Asian female actresses to present themselves, regardless of the challenges and obstacles.

By providing more opportunities for Asian females to participate on the screen, we can begin to shift the narrative and change the representation of Asian women in film and TV. When Asian females are involved in creating and producing content, they can provide more accurate and nuanced portrayals of their experiences, which can challenge and dispel harmful stereotypes. Moreover, when audiences see more diverse representations on screen, it can lead to greater understanding and empathy for different cultures and experiences. It can also inspire younger generations of Asian females to pursue careers in the entertainment industry and provide them with role models to look up to. Ultimately, engaging more Asian females in film and TV, in whichever role, is crucial in promoting diversity and inclusivity in the industry, challenging stereotypes, and creating a more accurate representation of diverse experiences on/off screen.
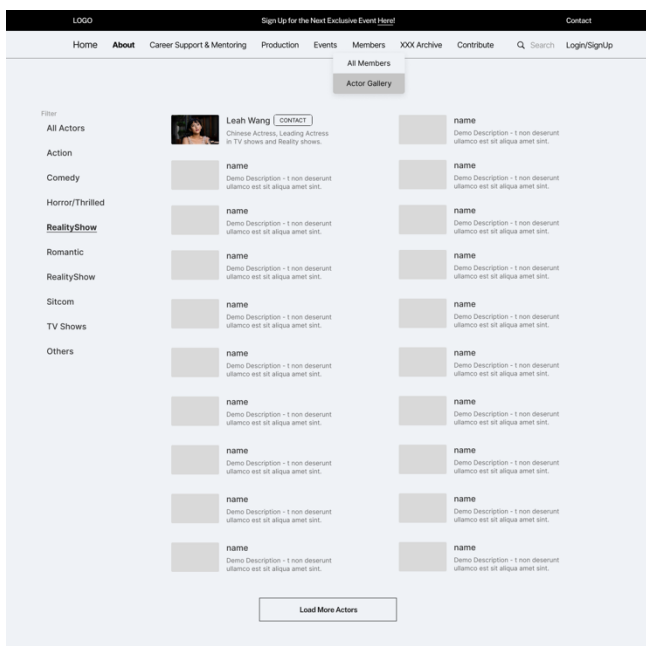
Figure 41 Actor Gallery Page   **Figure 42** Actor Gallery Contact Page
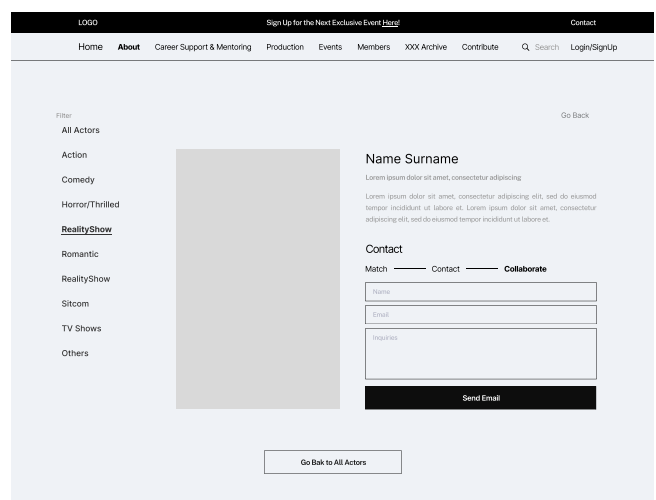
The XXX Archive (name to be defined below) is where this platform encourages Asian members to produce more individual projects in order to gain more exposure in the industry and in front of a wider audience. I will be announcing the monthly topic on which short films are wanted.
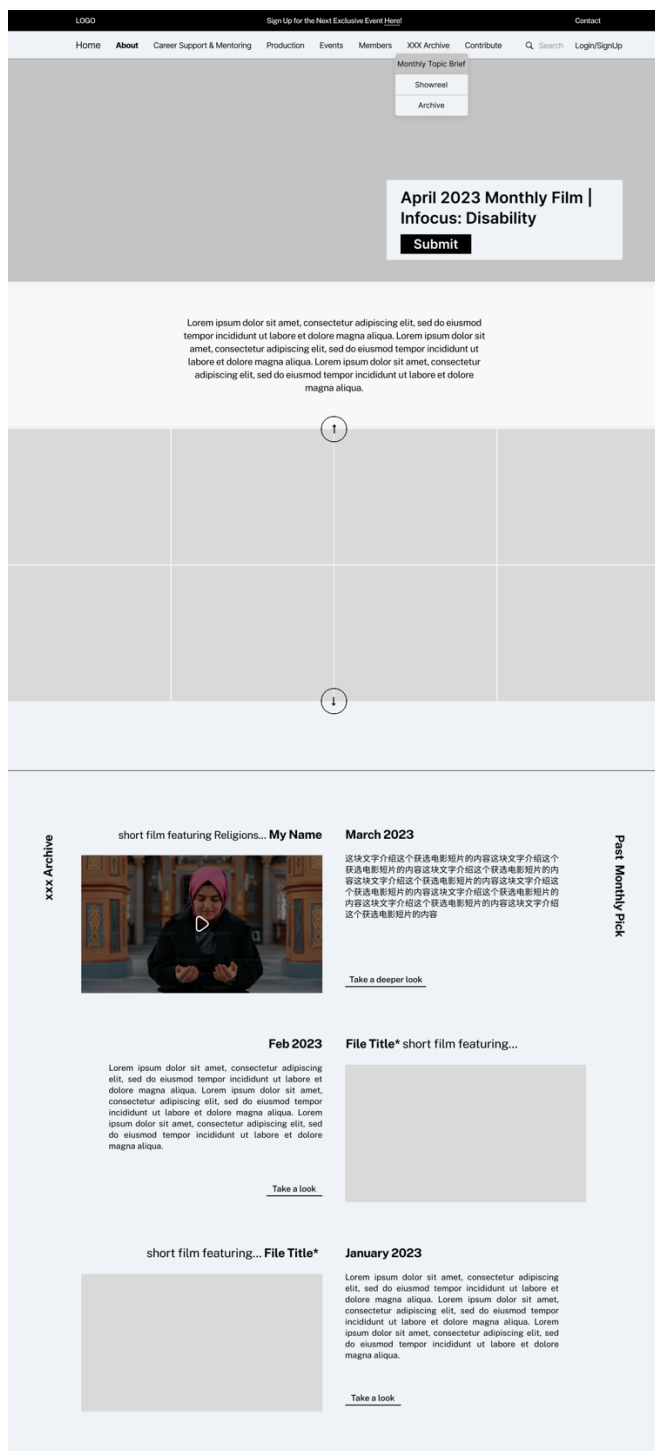
Figure 43 Low-Fi Archive Page

By working on individual projects, Asian female professionals can showcase their talents and skills, which can lead to more visibility and recognition within the industry. This is particularly important for Asian female filmmakers who may face barriers to entry and may not have the same access to resources and opportunities as their male or non-Asian counterparts.

Individual projects allow creative freedom: they can explore their own unique perspectives and tell stories that are important to them, which can help them stand out in a competitive industry.

Working on individual projects also enables more networking opportunities and brings personal fulfilment. If chosen to be our winner of the month, her project will be showcased, thus bringing more spotlight to the talent and could potentially attract collaboration and job offers. And arguably, working on individual projects can be personally fulfilling for Asian female filmmakers, as it allows them to express themselves creatively and tell stories that are meaningful to them. This can help them stay motivated and inspired, even in the face of challenges and obstacles within the industry.

3.8 Needs and Offering Map

After sketching out the low-fidelity prototype, I proceed to make a User Needs & Offerings matrix to see if I have met the needs of users correctly. I empathise with users' feelings before and after accessing this platform and its offerings (Figure44). A good match between needs and offerings contributes to user satisfaction, and loyalty; helps the platform to stand out among its competitors; reduces costs that are not necessary as well as provokes future innovation opportunities.

Figure 44 Needs and Offering Matrix

3.9 User Test and Amendments

I conduct user tests with the low-fidelity prototype by giving users tasks to complete and making amendments accordingly before proceeding to the high-fidelity prototyping. This allows me to identify usability issues and make changes to improve the user experience. Therefore, it helps improve user satisfaction and increase user engagement.

Task List:

1. *Find a job that you are interested in and apply for it.*
2. *Choose a mentor program to participate.*
3. *Find a useful link that serves you.*
4. *Contact an actress for your new short-film project.*

Results and Changes:

1. *It is easy to find the job listing page, but it might need a better filter system. Users have to click the filter on the left first and then go to the sorting function button to sort the results as they prefer. This is considered time-consuming. It is better to integrate all the filters/sorting together to allow a smoother workflow.*

2. *It is easy to find mentor programs and it is good that they all come with very detailed information. But this has made the page too long to scroll down, let alone the mentor section at the button. It is easy to lose patience. Hence, I consider using anchor buttons to provide quick access to each program and make the page shorter and easier to read.*

3. *The useful links are very useful and easy to find but the interface looks terrible if just listing all the links. It is suggested to work on the UI part more.*

4. *The current layout and user flow of finding an actress and contacting her is feasible. But one of the subjects suggests that 'What if I want to send emails to multiple actresses at the same time, can I just do it by simply clicking the button and letting the website send the pre-generated emails automatically for me?' This is considered a very good suggestion, and I will consider adopting it by looking into available technology (like APIs).*

All users are informed of the initiative of this platform, and they all adore this idea and encourage me to proceed without hesitation. They find the idea easy to understand and follow, as well as exciting and inspiring, and all promise to be the first group of platform members once launched. In terms of the general design guidance of the UIUX, it has been suggested to consider the colour platter carefully to match the manifestation of this platform, to use typography properly, and to layout the textual content strategically and so on.

3.10 High-Fidelity Prototype

The platform is named MERAKI in the end. MERAKI in Greek means "Doing something with a sense of PRIDE and CARE". In English it could be loosely translated as the LABOUR of LOVE we see from certain craftsmen, artists, chefs, or creatives in their pieces of work. A common online definition for the word MERAKI is: "The soul, creativity, or love put into something; the essence of yourself that is put into your work".

The reason why I choose this word is that through the desk research, questionnaire, and user interview, it is revealed that all Asian female professionals in this industry possess a true passion for what they do and it is their pride and care that has driven them to where they are, despite of the real-world difficulties and they have all made up their mind to keep doing so.

Following is the final high-fidelity prototype with amendments generated via user test. The main colour is set to be black and dark too, on one hand, resonating with the nature of films, and on the other, to represent the still dim outlook of Asian females' situation in this industry. But many colourful pictures have been inserted to relive the liveness and passion.
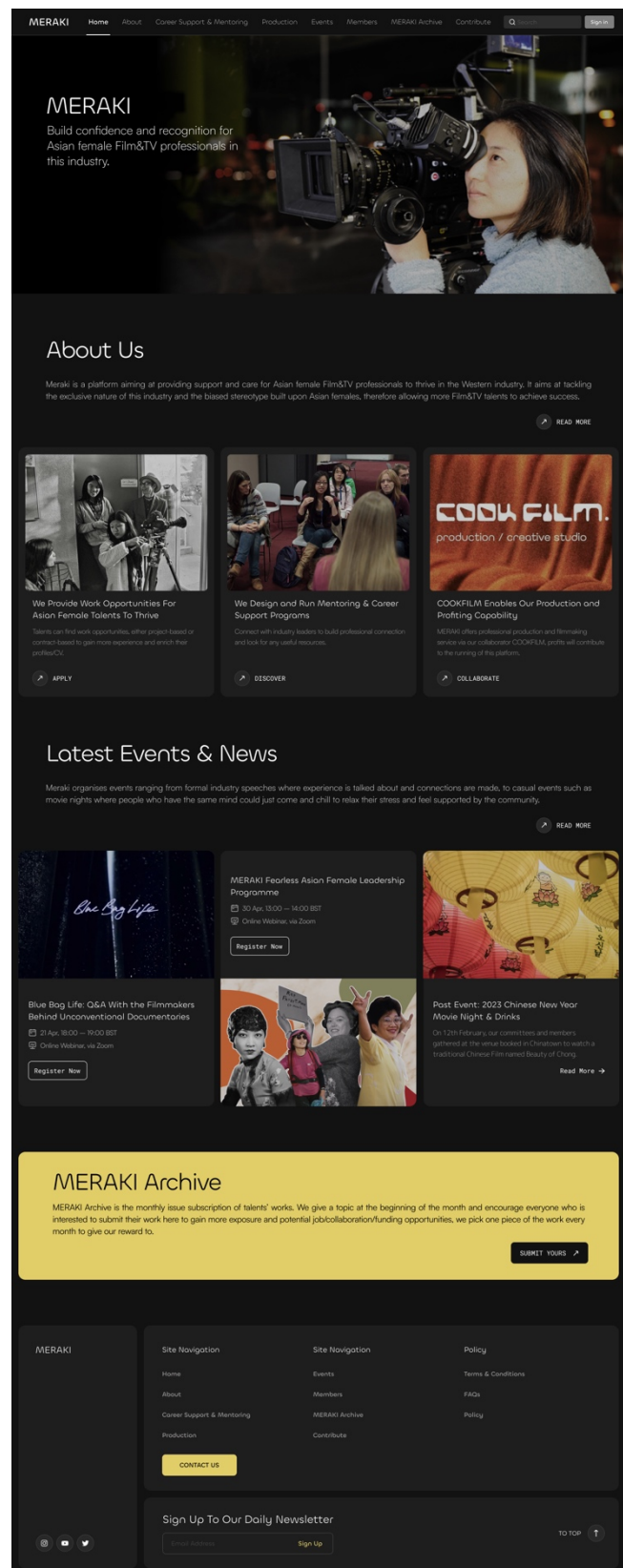
Figure 45 High-Fi Homepage

I have made changes to the job listing page according to user feedback. Now users can access the universal filter easily to filter through listings by job location, job category, and application deadlines. I have made it highlighted with an URGENT button if the deadline is due to enhance visual communication. On the application page, it is also suggested to offer a Refer To A Friend button so that more can benefit from this platform, thus attracting more potential users.
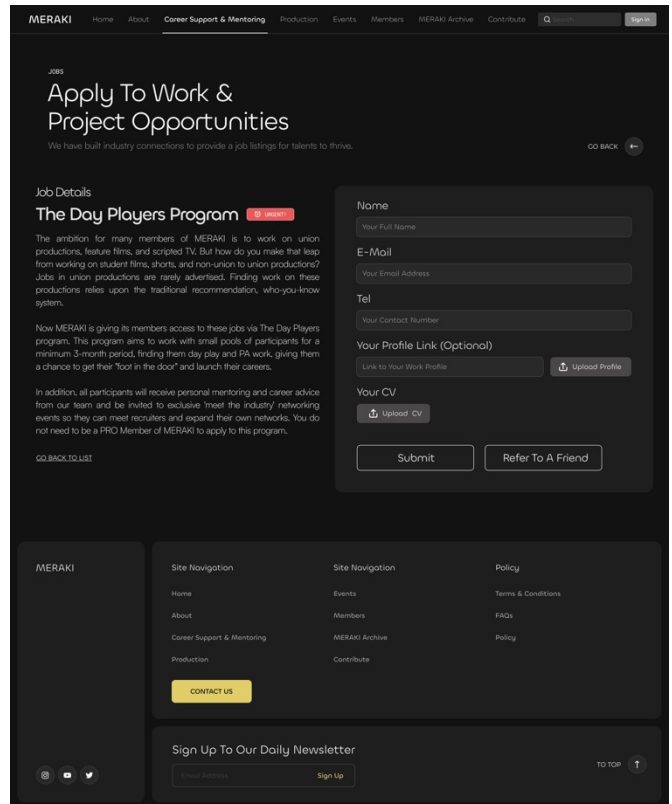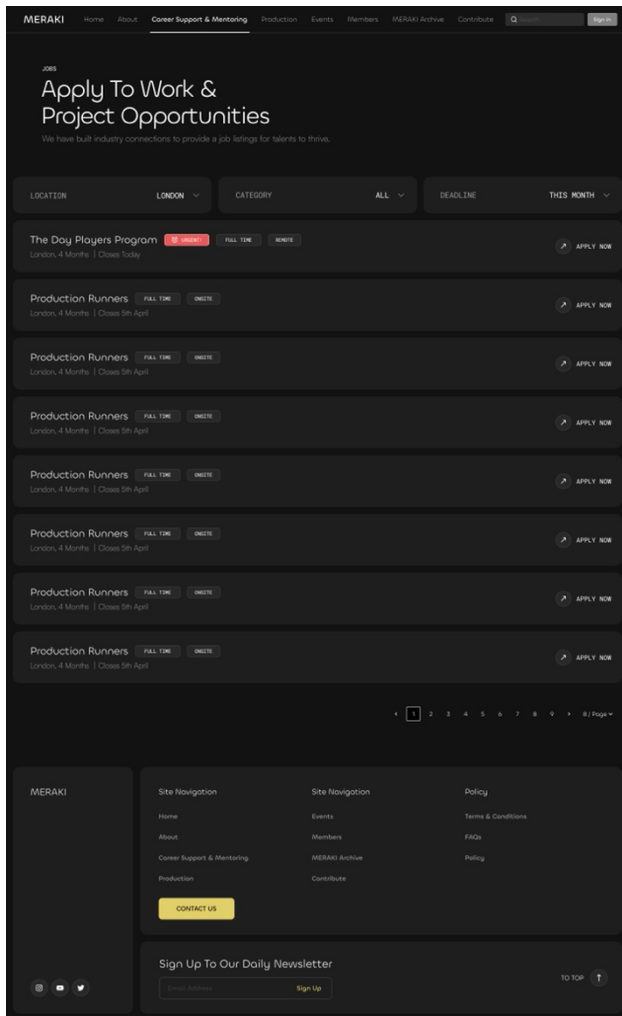

Figure 46 High-Fi Work Opportunities Page

To make the content-heavy page easier to read, I shorten the page length by adding the anchor point buttons, which lie on the top of the program image. So that users can access the program that they are most interested in more quicker. I have also included FAQs to provide further answers to the questions about the programs.
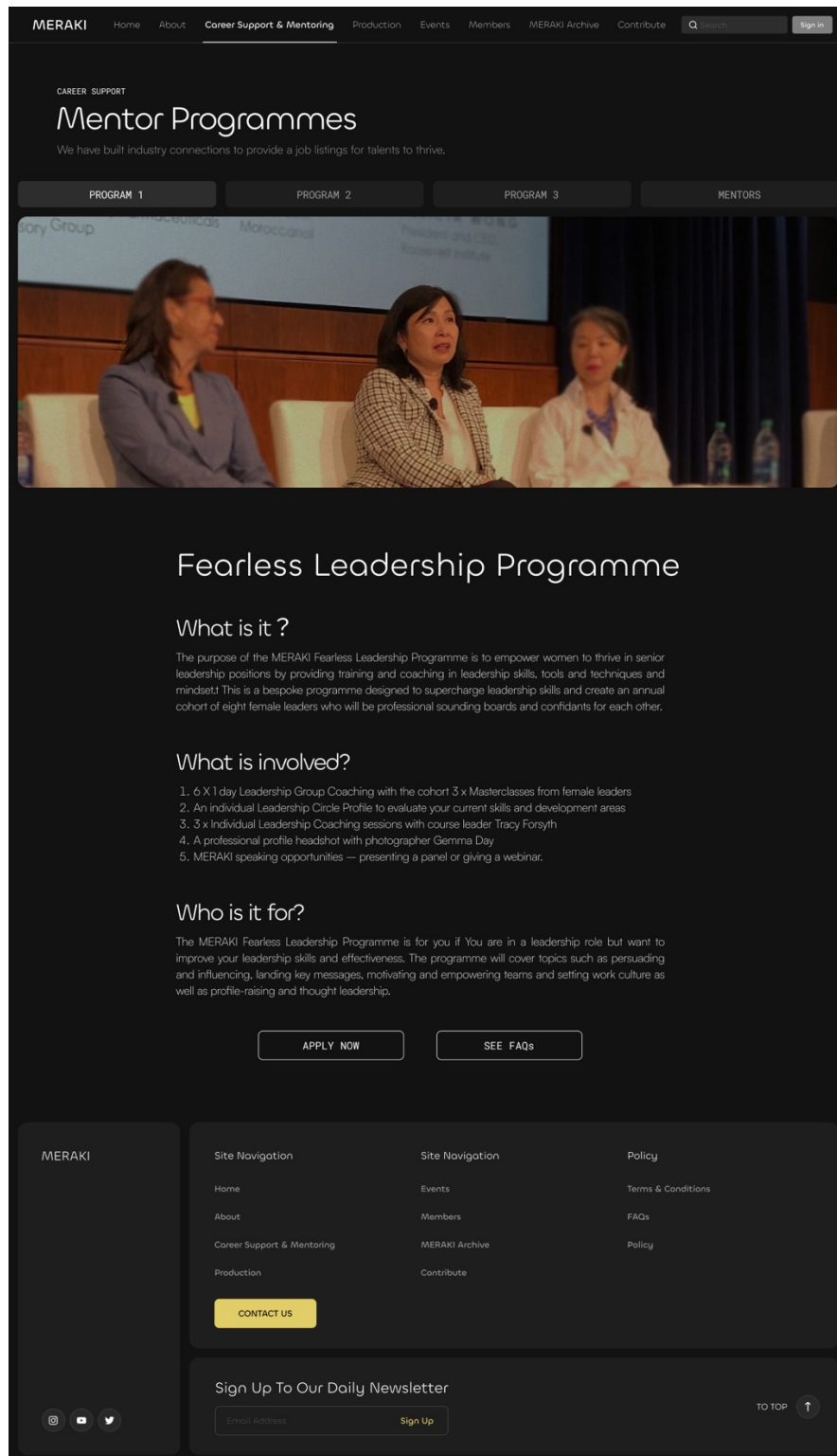
Figure 47 High-Fi Mentor Program Page

Interface of the Useful Links has been updated to match the style of the entire website and, to be visually more appealing.
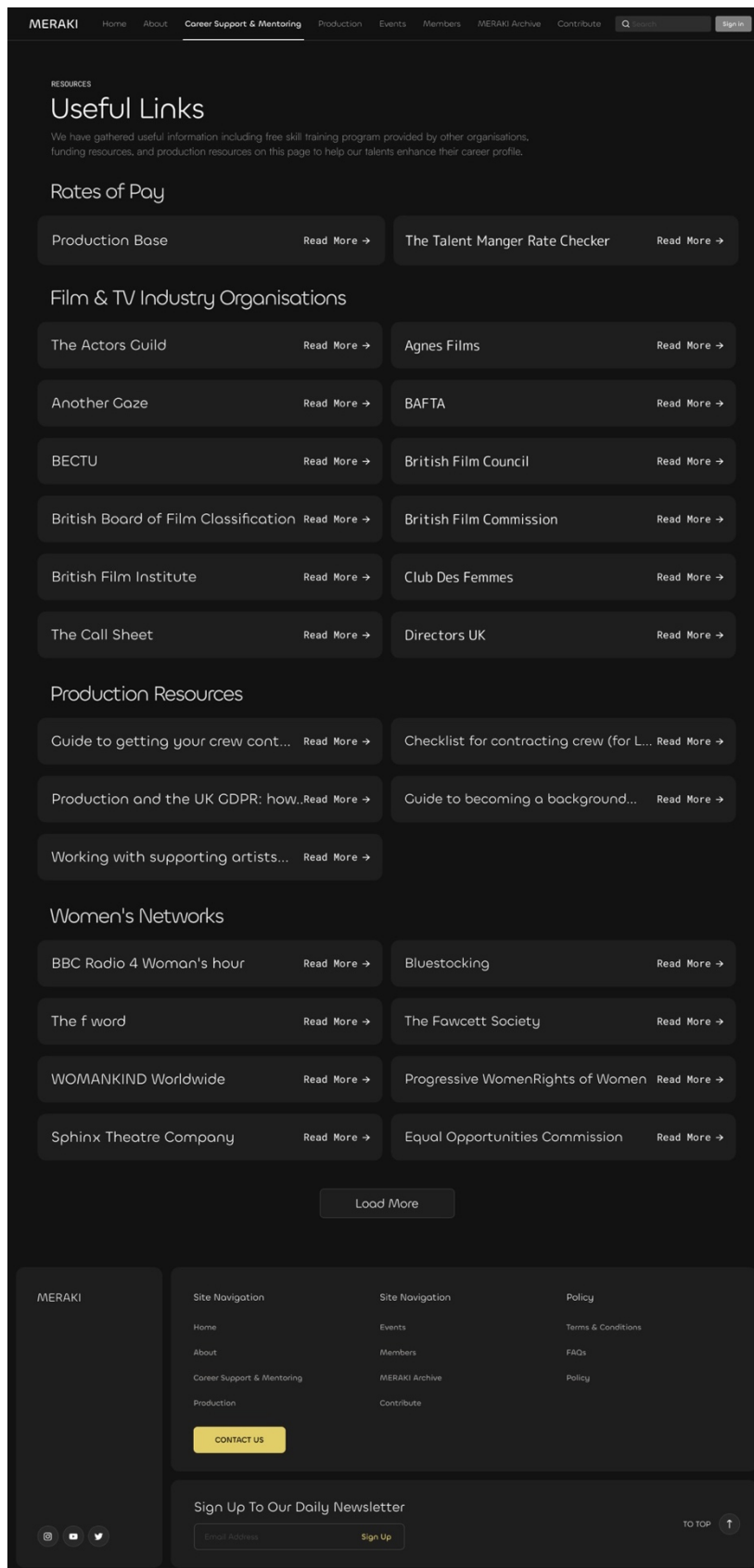
Figure 48 High-Fi Useful Links Page

Minor changes have been made to the Production page, allowing more interaction. Data has been added to provide more information and credibility of CookFilm.
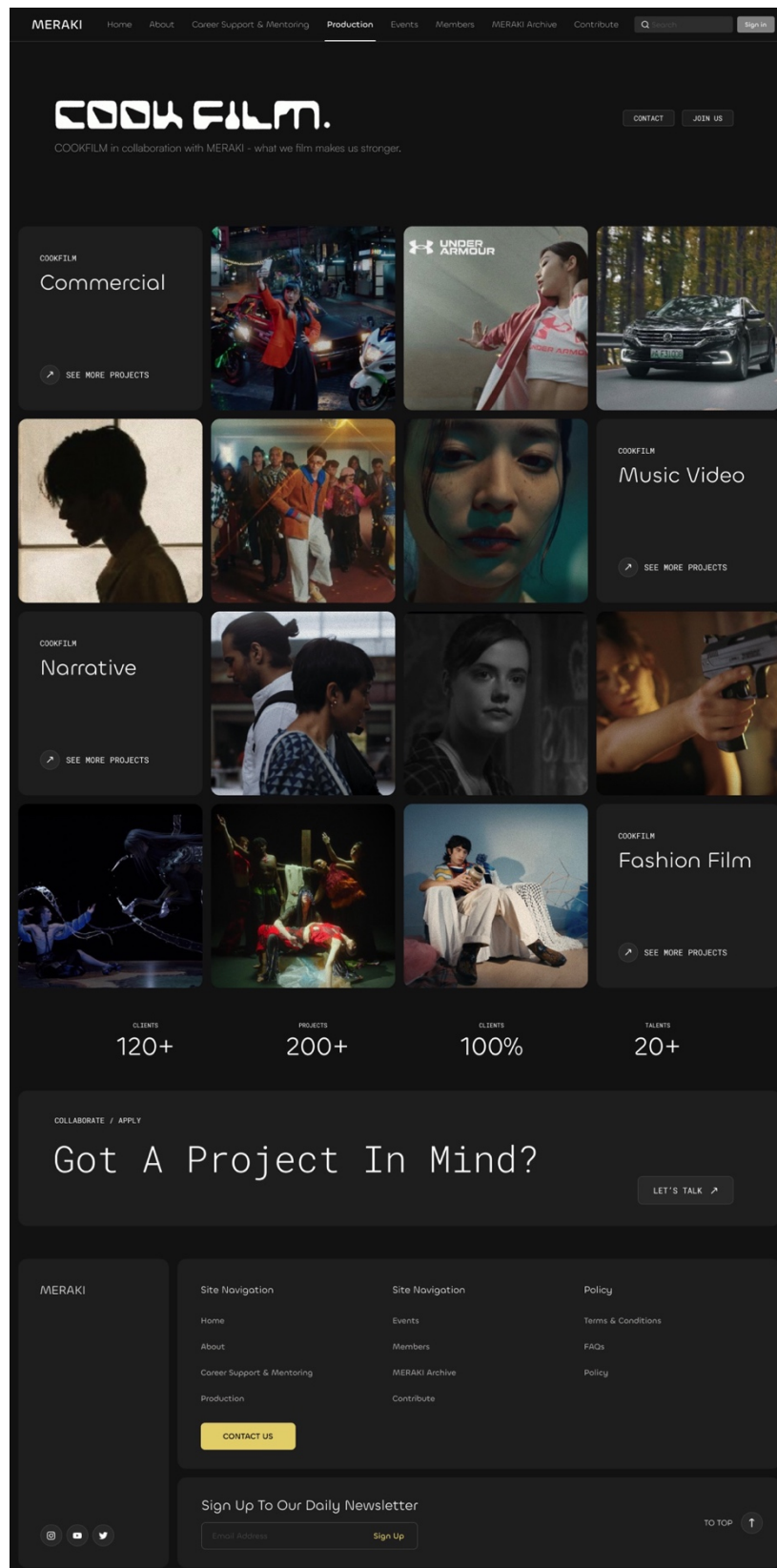
Figure 49 High-Fi Production Page
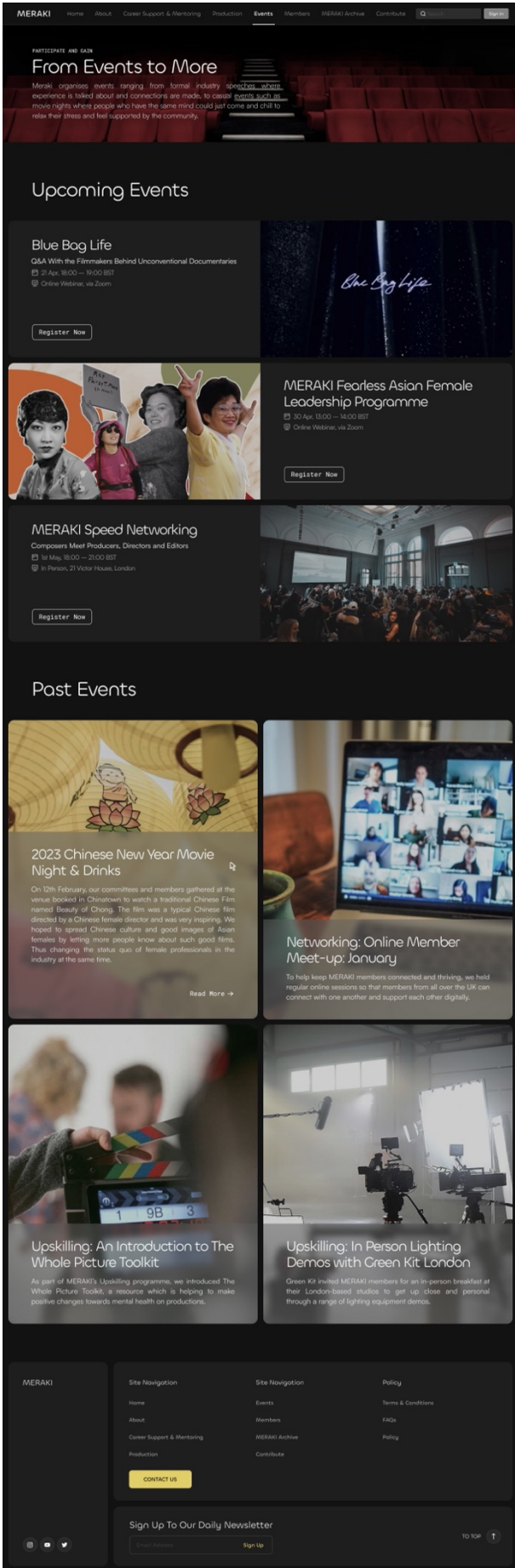
Figure 50 High-Fi Event Page
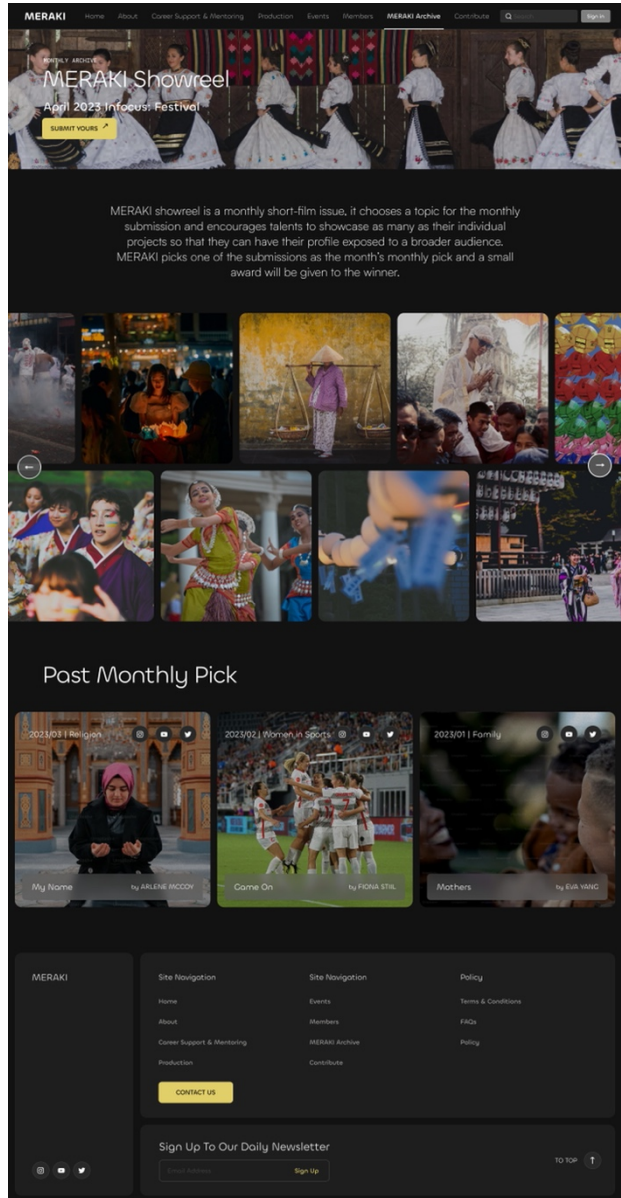
Figure 51 High-Fi Archive Page

In the final version of the prototype, users can just hover over the actress's profile picture to trigger the email button. And ideally, with later integrations of API, I want to provide the users with the possibility to send emails without having to fill in any forms so that the process could be easier and more productive.
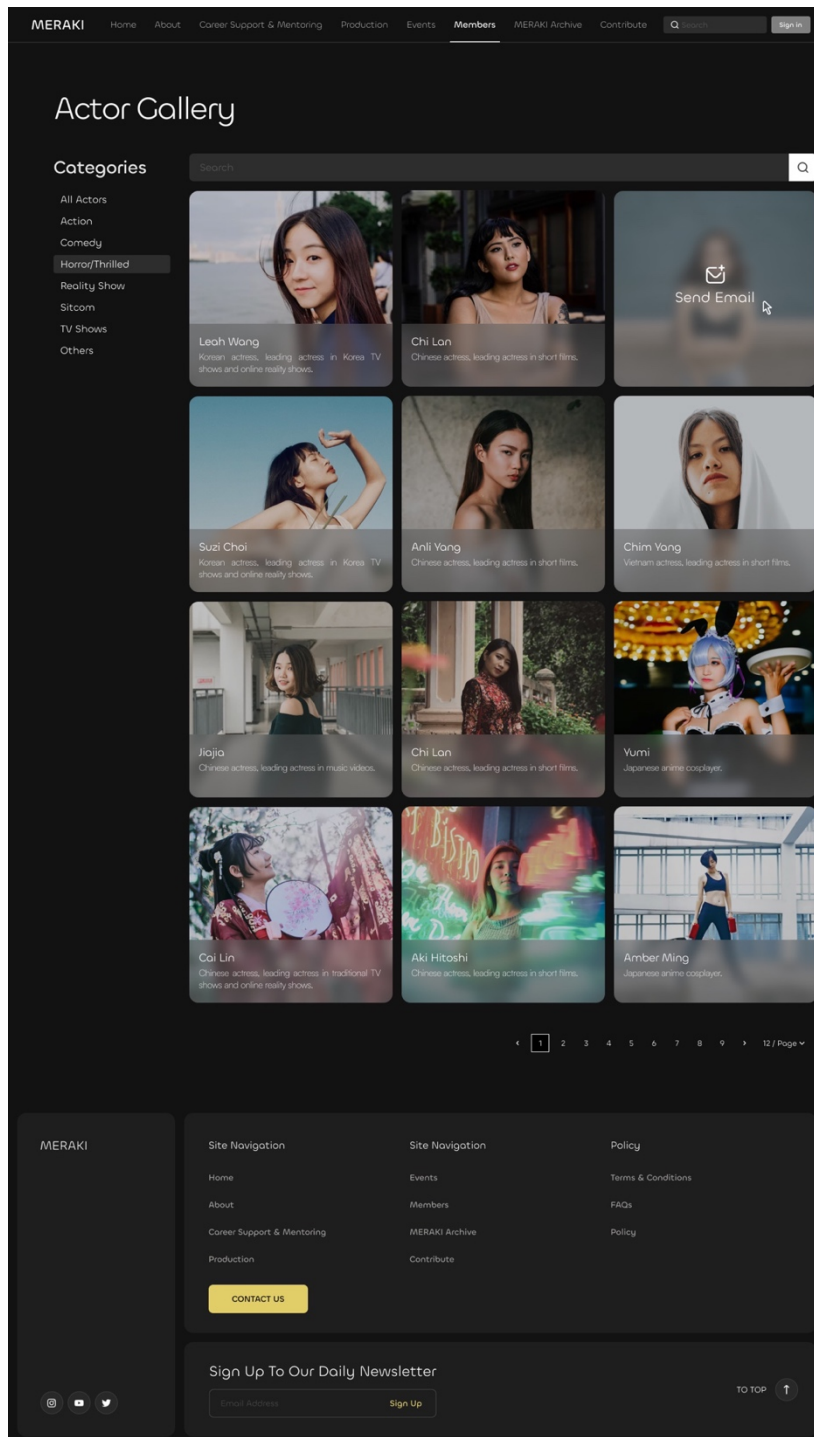
Figure 52 High-Fi Production Page

Future Developments

There are some elements in the navigation bar that I have not elaborated on in terms of the interface, but they are of equal importance.

Under the Contribute button, there are Sponsors, Donate and Fund. The former two are very self-explanatory as the sponsors will be listed and there will be a button for parties who want to donate to click and get in touch. About the Fund, it is operated in this way:

- The fund comes from Production (5% of the monetary profits of every collaboration/service purchase generated), sponsorship, funding that the platform is granted (if any), as well as direct donations.
- The fund will be used in website maintenance, program/event organisation, MERAKI awarding, and potentially, later to sponsor some individual production.

I will integrate a little animation, if possible so that members can witness the progress as well.

For the Account section, I also want to integrate some technology to create a better UX. The idea is to leverage data technology and data visualisation to map out registered members' activeness on the platform and how many new connections they have made here, as well as their career progress. The platform will be realised via WebFlow because I have been encouraged by many people to carry on with the development so that real changes could be realised for Asian females.

Conclusion

The motivation for this research and design comes from a sincere wish to help Asian females, which I also identify as, to thrive in the career they love – Film&TV. As a documentary fan myself, I do wish to know more people in this industry as well. I gathered the preliminary insight from a very unexpected occasion where I was invited to take part in the production of a self-initiated reality show. They are a group of very talented Chinese Film&TV students in London, and it was through our conversation that I understand how many challenges they are facing. It was a huge shame to learn that many have given up their passion because of the frustration of job seeking.

By conducting desk research, even shocking facts and statistics have been revealed and I sense the unfairness for my fellows. Western culture has long pictured and stereotyped Asian females wrongly, this is very harmful to their social status. Furthermore, this has extended to influence people's opinion of Asian females who work in this industry, leaving them with almost no place to thrive. The literature review provides an overview of the historical factors and current phenomena within the industry. The competitive analysis investigates the existing solutions in the market to provide inspiration and fundamental guidance. The questionnaire and user interview, on the other, lead to a deeper dialogue between the target users and me. So that I can precisely identify their pain points and anchor my design opportunities.

The idea generation process has been really challenging because I have to take real-world factors into consideration such as the running and maintaining of the platform, the way to establish a member system and community, the mental and spiritual level changes that need addressing, etc. But I was lucky enough to meet the CookFilm company and have their support.

The current outcome is a multi-function website that will provide users with useful resources, work opportunities, industry connections, health support, a profile showcase platform, and so on. It pays attention to the UIUX design guideline and wishes to engage as many users as possible.

In the long run, I wish to continue to integrate advanced technology into this platform to provide an even better user experience. And I want to keep it running, prosperously, till it can actually bring good influence to the industry and society when Asian female Film&TV talents are treated and recognised the same as that of other ethnic groups.

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Index of Figures:

Acknowledgement:

"Faith is a bluebird you see from afar, it's for real and as sure as the first evening star. You can't touch it or buy it or wrap it up tight, but it's there all the same, making things turn out right." from the Rescuers (1977) seems to be a very suitable quote to cite here. A quote from a film to encourage my fellow Asian female talents to continue to defend their passion and thrive in this industry. It also recites my personal belief that as long as there is faith, there is a way.

It has been my greatest luck to be able to study at Politecnico di Milano and I wish to give my heartful thanks to everyone I meet during my study. Even though the pandemic had influenced my study experience, I still feel lucky to have been able to explore subjects such as Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Driving, which I would never image myself learning about if not by studying at Polimi. My vision has been expanded, thus allowing more potential into my life, and I cannot thank Polimi and my professors enough.

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