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For immediate release

## British television stars proudly support ERA 50:50 at the BAFTA TV Awards

ERA 50:50's iconic badges and rings were prominent at last night's British Academy Television Awards.

Dozens of actors and actresses showed their support for ERA 50:50's campaign for equal gender representation in the entertainment industry, and for the TimesUp movement against sexual abuse and harassment, on the red carpet and onstage at the event at Royal Festival Hall.

Among the stars wearing ERA 50:50's badges and rings were Jodie Whittaker who presented the first award of the evening – Best Drama Series - and Toby Jones, who accepted the award for Best Male Comedy Performance. They were joined by Julie Hesmondhalgh who was nominated for Best Supporting Actress, Samson Kayo, Toby Jones, Oliver Chris, Wunmi Mosaku, Richard Goulding, Charlie Covell, Ria Zmitrowicz and Alex Lawther.

**Polly Kemp, co-founder of ERA 50:50, said:** “So many of the nominees in this year's TV BAFTAs have female talent at their heart, from *Motherland* to *Chewing Gum* to *The Handmaid's Tale*. In fact, three of the four nominated shows in the International category are strongly female-led stories, the kind of stories many TV producers will say are 'risky'. We hope that the undeniable success and creative brilliance of this year's offerings from female writers and actresses demonstrates that these are risks worth taking.”

#era5050 @era5050 #5050by2020

For more information, or to request interviews with spokespeople from ERA 50:50, please contact Emma Draper at Draper Conway on [emma@draperconway.com](mailto:emma@draperconway.com) | +44 (0) 7910 837008

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About ERA 50:50

ERA 50:50 was founded in 2015 by actresses Polly Kemp and Lizzie Berrington, and is run by working actresses of different ages and disciplines within the entertainment industry.



ERA 50:50 champions the equal representation of women in film, television and theatre, working with the industry and with Parliament to secure 50:50 gender balance on UK screens and stages across annual programmes of content.

ERA 50:50 believes that audiences deserve to see women represented in a variety of personal and professional realities, as central protagonists of their own narratives rather than bit parts in someone else's. We believe that we need vastly more stories written by and about women on stage and screen. We believe that women and men should be represented equally in cast and crew, and that actresses deserve equal pay and roles that make the most of their skills, at every stage of their careers.

The ERA 50:50 badge has been worn by actors and actresses such as James Nesbitt, Phoebe Waller-Bridge and Armando Iannucci at the BAFTAs, Claire Foy and Emma Watson at the Golden Globes and Suranne Jones at the National Television Awards.

The ERA 50:50 badge was also worn last night in Cannes where 82 key women players of the film industry joined a silent protest led by Cate Blanchett and Ava DuVernay to highlight the film festival's failure to recognise the work of female directors. The protest was organised by 5050 en 2020, a French group mirroring ERA 50:50's demands in the UK for 50:50 gender representation in the film industry by the year 2020.

Watch ERA 50:50's campaign film here: [https://youtu.be/wcWNhvx\\_CRI](https://youtu.be/wcWNhvx_CRI)

### **About equal gender representation in the entertainment industry**

In the real world, gender equality creeps slowly forward. But on our screens and stages, it's a different story. Women are outnumbered two to one by men in film and television. When they do appear, they have fewer lines. They are often presented as victims, of crime, of rape, of violence. They lack agency. They play the lovers of men twenty years their senior, or the mothers of men their own age. They are paid less to play larger roles, and those above 40 often struggle to find roles at all.

### **Why does this matter?**

The entertainment industry shapes how we live our lives. *The Hunger Games* films caused the number of girls taking up archery to double. The BBC series *Call The Midwife* sparked a 17% surge in UCAS applications to midwifery courses. A third of undergraduates on forensic science courses admit they were inspired to apply by TV shows like *CSI* and *Silent Witness*. And in 2014, the largest ever global study of depictions of gender on screen found that with each additional hour of television a boy watches per day, the likelihood of him holding sexist views increases. For girls, each additional hour sees a corresponding reduction of her self-esteem.



On a vast scale, we are telling our children that women are less important than men - and they are listening.

Contemporary mass culture is showing us a distorted image of society, one in which women are disproportionately marginalised, victimised or simply absent. It perpetuates and entrenches the idea that women have less power and social currency than men. We have a responsibility to future generations to redress that imbalance.

### **Statistics**

Women account for 51% of the UK population but only...

33% of acting roles on our screens

36% of acting roles on our stages

17% of crowd scenes in our films

**Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London, said:** *"In 2018, a century since the first women got the vote - it is simply unacceptable that your gender can still determine your opportunities in life, how much you get paid and your career prospects. There are still too few women in public life, in boardrooms and on our screens. It's so important for young women pursuing their career to have positive role models to aspire to. That's why I'm proud to support the ERA 50:50 campaign, telling the world that Behind Every Great City is equality, opportunity and progress regardless of your gender. Throughout this year and beyond, I will be working with every sector to redouble our efforts in the fight for gender equality, and doing all we can to remove any barriers to women's success so that everybody can unlock their full potential."*

**Actress Emma Thompson said:** *"It is absolutely vital that all persons in this industry help this group of women to bring about the change that has to happen if any of our generation are going to be able to hold up our heads and say we actually did something instead of ignoring it. So please, get involved with what is the most important initiative in our culture."*

### **ERA 50:50's supporters include:**

Emma Thompson, Dame Penelope Wilton, Olivia Colman, James Nesbitt, Rory Kinnear, Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Denise Gough, Lena Headey, Kim Cattrall, Anne Marie Duff, Suranne Jones, Rebecca Front, Phyllida Lloyd, Nina Sosanya, Josh O'Connor, Kobna Holdbrook-Smith, Jonathan Munby, Adrienne Warren, and Sonia Friedman. Tobias Menzies, Tom Glynn Carney, John Standing, Nikesh Patel, Shazad Latif, Oliver Chris, Phoebe Fox, Charity Wakefield, Charlie Murphy, Chloe Pirrie, Indira Varma, Emily Berrington and Joan Lyiola