Twenty budding sports journalists enjoyed the first workshop of their Diversification of Sports Media programme run by London Sport and the Black Collective of Media in Sport (BCOMS) this week.

The programme, which will see the young BAME journalists offered media access to the London Youth Games, was hosted by London Sport as we continue sharing the social benefits of an active community.

While we know that the whole of London would be healthier and happier if it were to be more active, we acknowledge that some backgrounds are far less likely to be active.

In the capital, one in five people identifying as White British are inactive but for those identifying as South Asian or Black the figure rises to one in three.

For South Asian women, the figure is closer to two in five.

For many people who are inactive, the idea of sport may not even be on their radar and the right media messaging be it online, in print or broadcast is crucial in getting them to consider participation.

London Sport’s strategy includes the ambition to ‘harness the power of elite sport’, but when – according to research from the Sutton Trust – one-third of Britain’s Olympic medallists in London and Rio attended fee-paying schools, a media that seeks out stories that a wider community can relate to becomes increasingly important.

Leon Mann, journalist, broadcaster and founder of BCOMS points out that the under-representation of ethnic minorities and women in sports media in the UK has been well-documented.

“In 2016, BCOMS research looked at 456 sports media roles across the four major sporting events that summer – Wimbledon, Euro 2016 and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Brazil,” he said.

“We found that there were only 12 female newspaper reporters. There were also only eight black journalists who were not former athletes across the 456 roles and only six ethnic minority women.”

At the recent BCOMS hosted D-Word Conference, [Anne-Marie Batson](https://twitter.com/AnnemarieBatson?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor), sports broadcaster with BBC 5 Live Sports Extra, spoke of the frustration that diversity in media is not improving quickly enough.

She suggested that news organisations could do more and hold masterclasses for people that want to work both behind and in front of the camera.

London Sport believe that the masterclasses ran by BCOMS will support our strategy to help build a bigger, better sporting workforce more reflective of London.

And those on the Diversification of Sports Media programme will have a fantastic opportunity to report from Europe’s largest youth sports festival, the 2019 London Youth Games.

But real long-term success will be measured by whether others in the sports media world see this programme and pick up the baton from here.