

Our People, Racing's Future

A Workforce Strategy for the British
Horseracing Industry



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What will the strategy actually deliver?

This strategy will bring the industry together and set a direction for people to join and remain working in racing by:

- Increasing work-based training and development to close skill gaps for both employers and employees, with new entry routes and progression opportunities
- Improving health, safety and wellbeing
- Bringing cultural change that is inclusive and improves the workplace for all.

The plan includes 15 priority projects with specific three-year targets. A summary of the projects can be found in the Executive Summary on page 12, with detailed information given on pages 49-53.

2. What is the scope of the strategy?

The HIPB was tasked with addressing the issues facing racing's people. Our research examined both external factors and internal factors unique to racing. We also established which issues, such as the fixture list or wage negotiations already had recognised resolution forums. The remit of HIPB is the people challenges that we can uniquely address, and to work in collaboration with leaders on key strategic issues and act as advocates for the workforce. We aim to be a respected advocate for the industry's people.

3. How will the strategy be funded?

The work to date has been funded by HBLB and Racing Foundation and we are grateful for their continuing support. We have funding in place for some activities which are already underway and are working closely with funders to determine funding for our remaining priorities as part of their usual application processes. Other projects have been funded utilising existing industry resources. Our plan is to work towards sustainable funding solutions by identifying and utilising the most relevant alternative sources of funding which may include sponsorship, industry contributions and increasing our ability to receive funding from government for our training.

4. How is this different from what has come before?

This is the first time an agreed industry-wide workforce strategy has been developed on people-related activity encompassing the views and requirements of all areas of racing. This overarching piece of work was something that the funders – the HBLB and Racing Foundation – were very keen to see in place. We have consulted across the industry to identify what should be done in the short, medium, and long terms to safeguard the future of our sport and make meaningful and coordinated change.

5. What is the priority?

Guidance from the industry has led us to prioritise improving the working lives of our horse-facing workforce: employers and employees at studs and training yards. We want to grow the size and develop the skills of our workforce and improve the wellbeing and skill level of everyone who works across the industry. The full list of priority activities is given on page 49-53 of the strategy document. Whilst our focus is on these horse-facing roles, there will be further benefits across the sport for everyone involved – for example, a properly resourced workforce will be essential to delivering quality horseracing year-round.

6. What are the biggest people challenges facing racing?

Our industry faces various workforce challenges, many of which relate to external factors beyond our control. Of the factors racing can influence, restrictive/inflexible work practices and a culture that doesn't always align with the expectations of a 21st century workforce present the greatest challenge. There is no doubt that these challenges are compounded by the demands of the fixture list.

7. What is the biggest opportunity?

Our people are our greatest opportunity. We are a strong, passionate and vibrant community which looks out for, and supports, each other. We have a huge opportunity to develop and grow our people to be happier, healthier and fulfil their potential.

8. What is the commitment of racing's leaders?

This strategy has the full approval and support of the BHA Board and Industry Programme Group. We conducted extensive consultation across the industry from the workforce to senior executives to ensure we have put the views of them and their members at the heart of this work.

9. How much will this strategy cost to deliver?

The 2025 priority activity has an estimated cost of £450,000. The available resources, both human and financial, will determine over what period and to what extent that cost will be required. The industry currently spends £11.8m a year on people-related programmes from a range of sources including the HBLB, Racing Foundation, Government and contributions from the industry.

10. How will we know if this strategy has been a success?

This strategy includes a list of indicators that will determine success. The HIPB will conduct regular reviews to ensure projects are hitting these targets and ensure projects are making a tangible difference to our horse-facing workforce.

11. What happens after three years?

The strategy will be regularly reviewed to identify which projects are delivering the most impact. Some will come to a natural end. Others will need to continue. HIPB will work with the industry to find the most appropriate homes for activity that is required long-term.

12. Who are the delivery partners?

HIPB is currently developing the implementation plan with a dedicated team at the BHA. This team includes specialists in recruitment, training and inclusion, as well as support from the BHA's Data, Insights and Analytics team. Other stakeholders including the National Trainers Federation and the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association are part of the delivery team, as well as a range of dedicated providers.

13. What happens next?

This strategy represents the culmination of HIPB's work identifying opportunities, costing them, and considering how they can be implemented in a programme of activity. The next stage of seeking funding, allocating resource and responsibility for delivering this work is well advanced with a third of activities already underway; a third developed and awaiting funding decisions; and another third due to be initiated during the course of 2025.