

BBC



## BBC Commissioning Supply Report 2023/24



# Welcome to the BBC Commissioning Supply Report 2023/24



**Cover:**  
Blue Lights, Two Cities TV,  
BBC One

**Left:**  
Sort Your Life Out, Optomen  
Television, BBC One – RTS award-  
winner

Introduction

Working  
with suppliers

Developing  
talent

Across  
the UK

Looking ahead  
and appendix

# BACKING THE BEST UK STORYTELLING



Our continued focus on commissioning content across the UK delivered strong returns. In scripted TV we had *Wolf* from Wales, *Dog Squad* from Scotland, *Blue Lights* from Northern Ireland, and *The Responder* based in Liverpool. In unscripted TV, *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland* won Grierson, Broadcast and RTS Awards, whilst *Scam Interceptors* from Scotland won at the Broadcast Awards, RTS and BAFTA TV Awards. In Radio, key daytime strands on BBC Radio 1, 1Xtra and Radio 2 moved from London and are now made across the UK, alongside moves for *Loose Ends* to Salford and *Pick of the Week* to Northern Ireland.

I know that it has been an extremely challenging year for the sector, with a difficult commissioning landscape across the board, and that producers are reporting considerable strain and instability. We recognise the pressures that both they and freelancers are under and will continue to engage

in how we can offer support. We're grateful to have worked with such talented producers again this year and are proud of the incredible content we make together.

In March this year we laid out three essential roles the BBC will prioritise to ensure it offers value for audiences: pursuing truth with no agenda, backing the best homegrown storytelling by investing in talent and creativity and bringing people together by connecting everyone to unmissable content. By working with producers, talent and partners we deliver on these priorities right across our output – championing quality, trust, and diversity of voice, delivering the most distinctive content with breadth and range for audiences across the UK, and supporting the UK creative industries.

**Charlotte Moore**  
BBC Chief Content Officer

## What we've achieved in 2023/24

In 2023/24 we commissioned over £1.5 billion of original TV content and just over 60% of our Network TV spend was from the Nations and English regions.

In Network Radio we originated 68,000 hours of new content and exceeded our December 2022 target to open up at least 60% of eligible hours to competition.

In a challenging year for the sector we have maintained our plurality of supply, working with a huge range of producers in every part of the UK. We have continued to focus on diverse-led companies and companies in the Nations and English regions, playing a key role in the creative economy outside London.

This year our talent schemes, some developed with brilliant partner organisations and some run solely by our BBC teams, supported both company growth and also individual career development, making sure that we are a proactive creative partner for the industry.

### Investing in the industry

**£1.5bn+**

Original TV content

**28k hrs**

Original TV content

**68k hrs**

Original Radio content

**£243m**

TV and Radio commissioning spend on diverse content across three-years

### Supporting suppliers

**326**

TV indies

**199**

Radio indies

**298**

TV indies in funded ideas development

**70**

Small Indie Fund and Indie Development Fund companies

### Working across the UK

**60%**

Network TV commissioning spend out of London

**69%**

Network TV hours out of London

**35%**

Network Radio hours out of London

**67%**

TV Small Indie Fund companies out of London



# WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS



**77%**

Eligible TV hours contested

**61%**

Eligible Radio hours contested

**95+**

Targeted TV and Radio  
commissioning briefs published

**£112m**

TV and Radio spend on diverse  
content 2023/24

Men Up, Quay Street Productions,  
BBC Wales/BBC One

## Our suppliers

We worked with 199 Radio and 326 TV companies, including 64 we hadn't worked with before, growing new relationships and finding the best ideas. We exceeded our TV independent production quota by 14 percentage points, an increase on last year. Radio's multi-award-winning in house production business BBC Audio established new production bases in Scotland and Wales.

# 326

TV indies  
2022/23: 351 ▼

# 199

Radio indies  
2022/23: 166 ▲



Icklewick FM, Daddy's SuperYacht, Radio 4

### TV independent production quota

39% of productions were made by qualifying indies, a 6 percentage point increase on 2022/23. The quota was exceeded by 26.5 percentage points on BBC Two and by 12 percentage points on BBC One.

# 39%

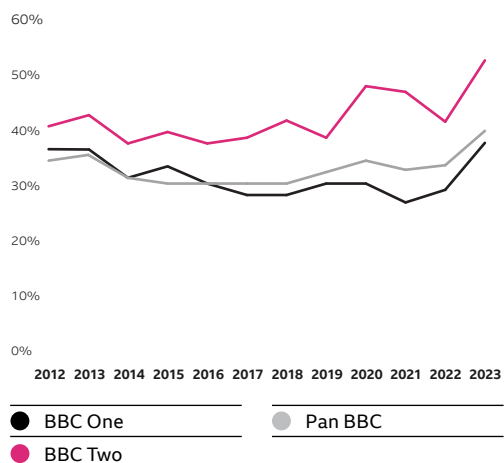
TV programme hours  
made by qualifying  
independent companies  
2022/23: 33% ▲

# 37%

Programme hours on BBC  
One made by qualifying  
producers  
2022/23: 29% ▲

# 51%

Programme hours on BBC  
Two made by qualifying  
producers  
2022/23: 41% ▲



### Q CASE STUDY

## BBC Comedy Audio and TV development opportunity

BBC TV Comedy and Radio 4 partnered on a new comedy development brief for independent producers to find the next accessible comedy hit with the potential to be developed from audio pilot to fully fledged TV broadcast. The teams were looking for ensemble ideas with strong new characters and exciting new performers.

Three suppliers each received an audio script commission for their sitcom idea. The successful scripts will progress to a broadcast pilot on Radio 4 as the next development stage.

Radio 4 and TV Comedy commissioning also co-funded two other series that aired on Radio 4, including *Icklewick FM* made by Daddy's SuperYacht.

*Icklewick FM* series two is in development and we continue to grow the writer-performers and characters alongside additional TV development.

# 3

Script commissions



# Ideas and opportunities

We commission throughout the year and also create targeted opportunities for content we want to commission from specific parts of the sector, including Nations and English regions opportunities. We're on track to meet our commitment to put 100% of relevant content out for competition by 2027 and have opened up other opportunities, including factual entertainment show *Destination X*.

## TV funded development

All genres have dedicated funds for paid development so indies can grow promising ideas into commissions, and we've increased the number of companies in funded development this year.

# 298

Companies in funded development  
2022/23: 258 ▲

# 90%

Development spend  
Indies  
2022/23: 95% ▼

# 10%

Development spend  
BBC Studios  
2022/23: 5% ▲

## Published briefs

We publish briefs online for all our genres and platforms along with targeted commissioning opportunities and tenders.

# 45+

Targeted TV briefs

# 50+

Targeted Radio briefs

## Levels of competition

We've significantly increased the percentage of our overall TV slate contested this year with tenders including *Blue Peter*, *Eurovision Song Contest*, *DIY SOS*, *Sports Personality of the Year*, the Women's World Cup and snooker coverage. In Radio, we continue to meet our commitment to put more than 60% of eligible hours out to tender.

# 77%

Eligible TV hours contested  
2022/23: 63% ▲

# 61%

Eligible Radio hours contested



Elis and John, Audio Always, 5 Live

## Podcast innovation

With investment and editorial support from 5 Live, indie Audio Always transformed their award-winning programme Elis James and John Robins into a new digital-first proposition, with the revamped twice-weekly podcast achieving a 23% uplift in listener requests.



Sports Personality of the Year, BBC Sport, BBC One

## Q CASE STUDY

### In My Own Words opportunity

This year the Arts commissioning team briefed out an exciting opportunity to make films for a new strand featuring leading British cultural figures looking back at their life and career – *In My Own Words*.

With intimate, unmediated first-person interviews mixed with archive and previously unseen actuality, the single films will give audiences unprecedented access to some of our major cultural figures.

Small indies Chalk Productions, Swan Films and Whisper won commissions, alongside Turbine Studios and BBC Studios (Scotland).

The companies brought a brilliant line-up of artists, including Alison Lapper, Hanif Kureishi, Jackie Kay, Billy Connolly and Jilly Cooper.

Additionally, one idea pitched was developed as part of a separate commission.

# 5

Films commissioned

# 59

Suppliers pitched

# Briefings and communications

We regularly communicate our commissioning strategy and available opportunities to all producers to enable companies to focus their development.

## TV briefings

All TV genres communicate their strategy and opportunities, either via large-scale industry briefing events like our Children's briefing day, or one-to-one pitching sessions. We held webinars around iPlayer, low carbon production and diversity insights and in-person networking sessions for indies and freelancers.

# 27+

Briefings and events

## Radio briefings

Radio briefing events included a 5 Live brief for a Scotland-based show featuring strong local portrayal and two comedy briefings.

# 10

Briefings

## Nations TV briefings

Commissioning teams in the Nations regularly brief their suppliers about new opportunities and hold networking events, audience insights and diversity and inclusion sessions.

# 6

Wales briefings

# 6

Scotland briefings

# 3

Northern Ireland briefings

## Updates and emails

New opportunities, requirements and resources are sent out regularly in our supplier newsletters and emails across TV and Radio.

# 18+

Emails and newsletters



Scam Interceptors, BBC Studios, BBC One – RTS, BAFTA and Broadcast award-winner

## Q CASE STUDY

## Comedy Festival Cardiff

In 2023, our BBC City of Comedy was Cardiff, and the location for our May Comedy Festival, supported by a year-long focus on new schemes and initiatives to support Wales-based production companies and talent. The festival included a stellar line-up of talent-led talks, panels, screenings, short film nights, live stand-up comedy and a Radio 4 record.

Nearly 6,000 people came, and all sessions were sold out including the last two nights of stand-up which were open to the public as well as industry professionals.

We launched a Regional Partnership Scheme and Short Film Night opportunity for Wales-based talent, a scheme for deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent assistant editors and edit assistants, and also announced the ten recipients of the Comedy Collective Bursaries.

# 6,000

Attendees



Mawaan Rizwan, Diane Morgan and Danielle Vitalis at the BBC Comedy Festival



# Small Indie Fund and Indie Development Fund

## TV Small Indie Fund

This year's Small Indie Fund included a strong cohort selected by BBC Film alongside our regular participating genres – children's, comedy, daytime, drama, entertainment and factual. The Small Indie Fund ring-fences £1 million a year to back talented small independent production companies with turnovers of less than £10 million, with a special focus on diverse-led companies and those based in the Nations and English regions.

This year we invested nearly £1.5 million, and the cohort of 57 companies includes 77% (44 companies) with at least two individuals from underrepresented groups in leadership roles and 67% (38 companies) based outside London, with an increase in the number of companies in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the West Midlands.

Commissions in 2023 for the previous year's cohort included *24/7 Pet Hospital* from Twenty Six 03 and *7/7: Three Weeks in July (w/t)* from The Slate Works.

57

Companies

77%

Diverse-led

67%

Based outside London

“

**As a deaf-led company, we are proud to champion diversity and encourage new perspectives on the world around us. We collaborate with the best to make children's series, formats, and documentaries and aspire to do so much more. We cannot wait to use the fund to accelerate our growth and reach new audiences.”**

**Mark Perry**

Flashing Lights Media, TV Small Indie Fund recipient



My Life – I Was Bullied, Yeti Television, CBBC – RTS Wales award-winner and TV Small Indie Fund recipient

## Radio Indie Development Fund

BBC Radio continues to commit more than £250,000 annually to developing the indie sector via the Radio Indie Development Fund. The fund supports our strategic priorities, including increasing content from all parts of the UK, allowing the BBC to better reflect, represent and serve all audiences. Thirteen indies from all four Nations benefitted this year – 85% (11 companies) are based in the Nations and English regions and 38% (five companies) have diverse leadership.

In Music, Asian Network and 1Xtra are growing their Birmingham indie bases, awarding funding to three indies from the Midlands. Moving Water Media, based in Wolverhampton, won funding towards employing a local assistant producer to help develop fresh editorial ideas. True Thought Productions from Leicestershire and Birmingham-based Glenvale Media won funding for the second year. True Thought will this year work with Midlands universities to recruit trainee production talent and partner with Radio 1Xtra, generating ideas to reflect the Midlands music scene.

In Speech, 5 Live selected two indies who committed to hire development producers to help make content with a focus on 5 Live's 'Beyond the Heartland strategy'. Radio 4 selected five indies including one from each nation. Edinburgh-based Bespoken Media will hire a trainee producer for 12 months to help build a talent pipeline from Scotland.

13

Companies

38%

Diverse-led

85%

Based outside London



Little Wander, Radio Indie Development Fund recipient

“

**We're committed to building a strong, inclusive and flourishing production community in Scotland. This financial support and creative mentorship from the BBC will go a long way to helping us to do that.”**

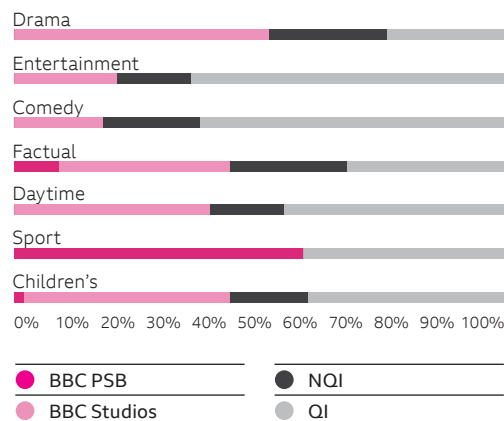
**Dave Howard**

Bespoken Media, Radio Indie Development Fund recipient

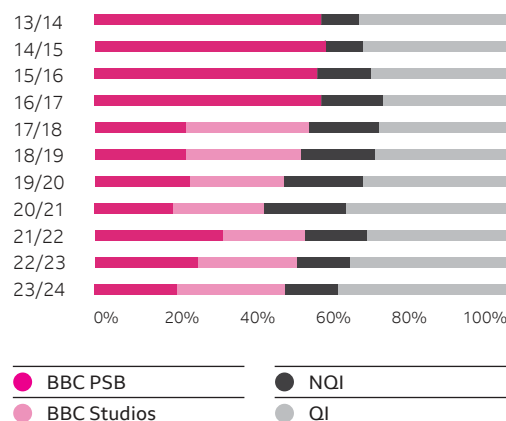
# Sector development

We support the development of individual companies and also collaborate with partner organisations, including those below to create long term changes in the industry.

## TV levels of business by genre hours



## TV levels of business trend by hours



## Comedy Grants

Grants for organisations delivering comedy outreach for underrepresented groups across the UK, including workshops for working class comedians in the North West and a sketch comedy programme for young parents in North Edinburgh.

## Pact

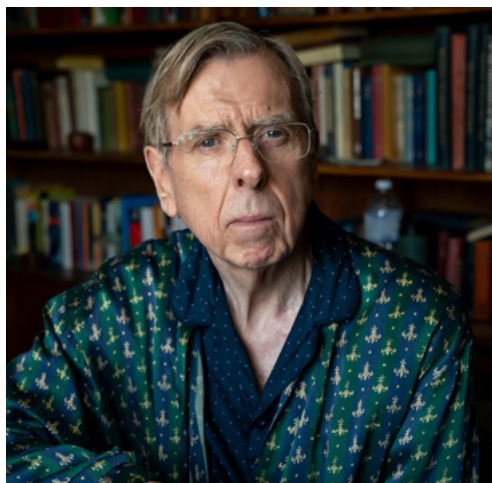
We co-fund a diversity executive to support indies and co-invest in training and online resources.

## Indielab

We co-fund Indielab's TV business accelerator programme to support the growth of small companies.

## TRC Media

We partner with the Scotland-based training provider on a range of development schemes for companies and individuals. See page 20.



The Sixth Commandment, Wild Mercury Productions, BBC One – BAFTA and RTS award-winner

## Q CASE STUDY

### Wild Isles

Partnerships were fundamental to the creation, execution and success of our major landmark series *Wild Isles*. Co-producers The Open University (OU), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) helped extend the promotional reach on their platforms, whilst the RSPB, WWF and National Trust commissioned a special documentary inspired by *Wild Isles* available exclusively on iPlayer.

The OU created a UK species map and WWF and RSPB ran a campaign to highlight nature loss and potential actions. Organisations such as

Scouts, Girlguiding, The Wildlife Trusts and The Woodland Trust all created content and activities for their members inspired by the show, and, led by Art Fund, and supported by Arts Council England, 532 museums and galleries took part in The Wild Escape, encouraging children to create animal inspired artwork.

# 500+

Museums and galleries took part in The Wild Escape



Wild Isles, Silverback Films, BBC One



# Sustainability

This year a focus on drama resulted in a significant drop in the carbon footprint of multiple productions, whilst the launch of EcoAudio formalises the process to decarbonise Radio production. Inspiring audiences will always be the way we can make the most impact, so we continue to support suppliers to authentically embed sustainability themes on-screen and on-air.

## Albert certification

The proportion of in-scope productions achieving certification rose by 4% this year. Key reasons for missing certification included lack of evidence for the sustainable measures taken and the introduction of stricter guidance around domestic flights. Starting the certification process late also remains an issue, and we continue to update guidance around this.

**97%** **779**

TV productions certified in scope in 2023/24\*  
2022/23: 92% ▲

TV productions certified in 2023/24\*  
2022/23: 872 ▼

## EcoAudio

EcoAudio is our new sustainability certification which drives greener behaviours in audio production. After launching internally, it's now being piloted with indies with a view to a wider roll-out.

**155**

Radio productions EcoAudio certified in 2023/24

## Events

The annual BBC Academy Climate Creatives Festival and pre-COP28 briefing had 900 attendees online or in person and a further 1.5k+ rewatching or accessing related resources in the following six months. The event featured BBC speakers, including Tim Davie, Charlotte Moore and guests including comedian Bryony Kimmings, Poet Laureate Simon Armitage, rapper Louis VI, *The Rig* writer David MacPherson, and Radio 1Xtra DJ Swarzy, on subjects from connecting emotionally with audiences to giving legal rights to nature. Elsewhere, our sustainability team engaged producers through sessions and panels at events like the Edinburgh TV Festival. BBC Radio joined with AudioUK to spend an hour with 50 suppliers discussing sustainability in programme making and editorial.

**900**

Attendees at Climate Creatives Festival and pre-COP28 briefing

## Resources

As well as sharing regularly updated audience insights and data, more in-depth information was added to the Environmental Sustainability Topic Guide for editorial teams and we published guides on reducing travel and energy emissions along with budgeting for sustainability.

## Q CASE STUDY

### Decarbonisation in drama productions

This year we've focused on decarbonising dramas – our highest impact shows. Our bespoke support for key programmes revealed targeted early interventions could have dramatic results. For example, *The Responder* reduced their footprint by 69%, with a switch to eco-friendly accommodation saving almost 200 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e alone compared to series one, and *Blue Lights* reduced theirs by 64% (excluding biogenic emissions), eliminating diesel fuel by using HVO in generators and production trucks, as well as plugging into shore power. With actions including using trains instead of flying to Paris and using hybrid vehicles, *Death in Paradise* saved 643

tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e in total and brought the series footprint down by 44%, demonstrating that with strategic interventions productions filmed abroad can still make significant carbon reductions. We continue to focus on supporting regional productions to transition to low carbon practices, taking part in a Screen Alliance North sustainability day to spread knowledge and share insights.

**900+**

tCO<sub>2</sub>e saved across four drama productions (excluding biogenic emissions)



The Responder, Dancing Ledge, BBC One – International Emmy award-winner

\* Projected completion rate, including confirmed and pending certification. Figures include Nations and Network productions.

## Our £112m diverse content commitment

A focus on diversity and inclusion remains at the core of everything we do. In 2021 we committed to spending £112 million of our existing commissioning budget over the course of three years on diverse content across TV and Radio.

We have now exceeded our target, spending over £243 million on content that met our criteria. More detail can be found in the Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice Progress Report. With the efforts of our suppliers, we are proud to have exceeded our target. Going forward, what we've learnt over the last three years will enable us to strengthen our creative diversity commitments even further in the future.

# £112m

Diversity commitment over three years  
TV and Radio

# £243m

Diversity spend over three years  
TV and Radio

# £112m

Diversity spend 2023/24  
TV and Radio



Rose Ayling-Ellis: Signs for Change, Rogan Productions, BBC One

### Q CASE STUDY

## Rose Ayling-Ellis: Signs for Change

Rose Ayling-Ellis took audiences on a personal journey into the deaf community with *Rose Ayling-Ellis: Signs for Change*, from Rogan Productions. This BBC One prime time documentary had a cast and crew of both deaf and hearing talent with key roles on the production, including producer Cathy Heffernan and director Ted Evans, who are both deaf and BSL users.

Ayling-Ellis' personal experience of deaf culture brought insight to the programme and production, and her ability to convey the nuances of deaf experiences to the audience was instrumental in ensuring an accurate and sensitive portrayal.

Having a bilingual cast and crew bridged the communication gap between both deaf and hearing contributors and crew. The shared experience from Rose and the producer and director offered an understanding, which became essential in aligning the documentary's content with the realities of the deaf experience.



## Resources and access

We provide audience insight information and resources to help producers develop ideas for our channels and services, and our commissioning websites reflect the latest editorial strategies across genres and stations.

### Online resources

This year our commissioning website carried updated short-form and social media guidance and tips for budgeting for sustainable productions. We continue to grow our audience portal and online archive, and this year we relaunched our Radio commissioning site to reflect the new commissioning structure for Music, Speech and Sounds with a single online destination for producers to find contacts and opportunities.

### Fair access

Our new pitching system PiCoS launched for TV suppliers in February, and will roll out across Radio during 2024. Over 1,360 TV producers had active Pitch accounts imported to the new system, and in Radio 659 accounts were registered on the Proteus pitching system.

**141**

New TV suppliers approved  
2022/23: 103 ▲

**59**

New Radio suppliers approved

**64**

New TV suppliers invited by commissioning teams  
2022/23: 68 ▼

### Speed of response

Our speed of response to ideas in TV fell this year, with 93% of ideas getting feedback within our stated time frame. We're aware how important speed of response is to suppliers and we are looking at our processes to address this.

**93%**

Final decision in 20 weeks  
2022/23: 97% ▼

### Mix of suppliers TV

**54%**

TV Network hours indies  
2022/23: 50% ▲

**46%**

TV Network hours BBC Studios and Public Service  
2022/23: 50% ▼

### Mix of suppliers Radio

**32%**

Radio Network hours indies  
2022/23: 31% ▲

**68%**

Radio Network hours BBC Audio and BBC Studios  
2022/23: 69% ▼



Celebrity Race Across the World, Studio Lambert, BBC One – BAFTA award-winner

### Q CASE STUDY

## Welfare and duty of care events

BBC Unscripted demonstrated its commitment to contributor welfare with a series of events to support producers and freelancers across all our unscripted programmes, particularly content with high levels of contributor involvement.

We held an in-person event for suppliers discussing all aspects of duty of care. Hosted by Director of Unscripted Kate Phillips and led by Sam Bickley, our Duty of Care Executive, the day featured panel discussions with senior editorial figures, including how to ensure productions can be inclusive and accessible. The event was attended by 80 industry professionals.

Following this was the first in a series of regular webinars aimed at suppliers and freelancers, with over 137 tuning in to find out more about 'Looking after contributors, your team and yourself'.

**80**

Attendees in person

**137**

Attendees online

# DEVELOPING TALENT



## £3m

Diverse Talent Development Fund

## 122

Productions supported via  
Diverse Talent Development Fund

## 91

Writers supported

## 90

Creator Lab places

## 5

BBC Sounds AudioLab podcast  
producers

Such Brave Girls, Various Artists, BBC Three –  
BAFTA award-winner



# The Diverse Talent Development Fund

Our TV Diverse Talent Development Fund ring-fences over £2 million of TV development spend a year to support and accelerate projects that need exceptional extra funding, beyond the usual production budget.

The fund helps companies to develop on and off-screen talent from underrepresented groups, including writers, actors, presenters, production staff and contributors. This year the actual spend was £3 million, going to programmes including *The Outlaws*, *Dinosaur*, *Survivor*, *Ambulance*, *Game on Grandparents* and *The Responder*. Find out more about how we used the fund in the Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice Progress Report 2023/24.

## £3m

Spend

## 122

Productions supported



Man Like Mobeen, Tiger Aspect Productions, BBC Three

### CASE STUDY

## Man Like Mobeen

*Man Like Mobeen* (Tiger Aspect Productions), filmed in the West Midlands, used the Diverse Talent Development Fund to offer roles for a sound trainee, camera trainee, trainee assistant director, trainee production assistant, art department trainee and costume trainee.

Each trainee was allocated to a department and worked alongside experienced colleagues who were available to guide and answer questions whilst training.

The trainees were an integral part of the crew and played a key role in bringing authentic perspectives to the production.

The placements helped the trainees to decide their future career direction, with some pivoting to editorial roles, some finding further opportunities via ScreenSkills, and others gaining work on productions such as *Doctor Who*.

## 6

Placements

# Inspiring the next generation of production talent

## Where It Begins Scheme

Four paid placements on the ten-month scheme for entry level Radio trainees: two in Radio 1 and two in 1Xtra. After full training all are now in the BBC Audio freelance pool, with two working as BBC content assistants and another in our social team.

4

Trainees

## Radio Production Fast Track Apprenticeships

Ten Production Apprentices joined BBC Audio on 18-month contracts in September. These roles are important in feeding the skills pipeline in Radio, with 14 people from the previous Production and Production Management intake now employed in the industry.

10

Apprentices

## Production Unlocked

Working with UK media organisations to deliver free insight and careers events in Cardiff, Bristol, Birmingham and Glasgow for emerging broadcast creatives with panels, masterclasses, career advice and behind the scenes insights.

6,500+

Attendees

4

Locations across the UK

## Screen Academy Bradford

Working with indie Magical Society and Bradford Council, ScreenSkills, West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Screen Yorkshire to create a production training scheme on BBC One drama *Virdee*, designed to address skills gaps, develop a talent pipeline in the region, and increase diversity in the industry.

26

Production placements

## BBC Bring the Drama Festival

Events and resources aimed at those exploring a career in film, TV and theatre to coincide with the BBC Two arts series of the same name. Over 150 creative organisations delivered behind the scenes events and a new series of short films on the BBC website spotlighted different creative roles.

150+

Partners



Stacey Dooley: Inside The Undertakers, Firecracker Films, BBC One

## Q CASE STUDY

## Comedy Collective Bursaries

The second year of our supercharged bursary scheme gave ten places to the next generation of comedy writers, producers and directors, and this year we also invited editors to be part of the Collective. Each bursary winner receives paid shadowing on a BBC Comedy production, a production mentor, and a development grant to put towards new material.

In addition, delegates attend the BBC Comedy Festival, the Belfast Media Festival and other industry events. Last year's winners also attended a directing session with director and producer Christine Gernon, an 'Editing for Comedy' session with editor Gareth Heal, and a private round table with writer and producer Jesse Armstrong.

Previous year's winners have gone on to make BAFTA-award-winning TV series, land script commissions, secure agents and produce radio shows.

**"It's a massive privilege to be joining the BBC Comedy Collective ambassadors, and it's an honour to be part of bringing the next generation of comedy talent through."**

**Gareth Heal**  
Editor Representative

10

Bursaries



Things You Should Have Done, Roughcut Television, BBC Three – director and writer bursary placements



## Q CASE STUDY

## The National Film and Television School

We continued our rewarding partnership with the NFTS, part of our commitment to nurture off-screen talent at all stages of their careers in locations across the UK.

20

BBC Scholars per year

10

BBC-sponsored MAs and Diplomas

20

Participants on Female Self-Shooters course

**The Sean Connery Talent Lab**

This year saw the launch of the Sean Connery Talent Lab, with the participation of BBC Film – a transformative 12-month talent programme focused on nurturing outstanding talent, with 30 filmmakers (writer/directors, producers, cinematographers, editors and production designers) selected to participate. After an intensive year-long development programme they will graduate having made a short film that will be showcased to the industry.

**Female Self-Shooters course**

We support a twice-yearly six-day course aimed at women TV producers and APs. This practical training in self-shooting for documentary makers is delivered with input from BBC factual commissioners in our Network and Nations teams. The course ran in April in Cardiff with ten participants and in December in Belfast with ten participants.

**Industry training**

The NFTS has delivered UK-wide training in partnership with the BBC. In October the NFTS delivered 20 free webinars as part of Freelancer Focus events, attracting 14,000 signups and 7,000 attendees. The NFTS also worked with the BBC Academy on Production Unlocked sessions in Cardiff, Bristol, Glasgow and Birmingham.

**BBC Scholars**

Each year up to 20 students from underrepresented groups are given BBC bursaries to benefit from the fantastic teaching at the NFTS. This scholarship scheme enables us to increase diverse off-screen talent across genres and specialisms. Impressively, from the first intake of BBC Scholars in 2020, Yasmin Afifi and Elizabeth Rufai this year won the BAFTA for British Short Film for *Jellyfish and Lobster* which was based on their final project, and Mia Harvey's graduation film *With Woman* won Best Student Film at the 2023 Grierson Awards.

**BBC MAs and Diplomas**

Every year we support ten BBC MA and Diploma courses at the NFTS, with at least one of our sponsored BBC Scholar placements on each. The courses have a high level of BBC commissioner engagement across the courses, many taking part in masterclasses, mentoring and networking sessions, as well as arranging visits to BBC sets and recordings to meet production management and crew on some of our most high-profile shows.

**BBC Writers**

Those on the BBC Writers (formerly Writersroom) 'Voices' schemes gain script-editing support via a collaboration with the NFTS to help develop projects to first draft script stage. In 2023, 15 'Voices' writers were supported through the partnership.

*Jellyfish and Lobster*, BAFTA-award-winning film from BBC Scholars Yasmin Afifi and Elizabeth Rufai

# Working with writers and animators



The Golden Cobra, Beastly Media, BBC Wales/BBC Three

## BBC Writers

This year BBC Writers (previously Writersroom) ran 'Voices' development groups for emerging talent in locations, including Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the North and Midlands, and the South, supporting 59 up-and-coming writers based right across the UK to help them develop an original new spec' script. It also brought back the one-year Scripted scheme, working with 12 new writers identified via open submissions and offering monthly masterclasses and training sessions along with an established script editor to help develop their original script. The 'Pilot' scheme also returned and saw ten early-career writers paired with indies to work on a paid script commission with the potential for it to be commissioned for a full series on the BBC.

91

Writers supported

8

Schemes

## Young Films Foundation

In partnership with Screen Scotland, Channel 4, Film 4, Sky, Torabhaig Distillery and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, BBC Films and BBC Drama worked with the Young Films Foundation on a year-long scriptwriting programme for seven up-and-coming Scottish screenwriters culminating in a week's residency on Skye. Participants developed a screenplay for a feature film or TV series with support from industry mentors and masterclasses.

2

Guaranteed script commissions  
BBC Films and BBC Drama

## Supporting Welsh animation talent

BBC Wales funded Welsh YouTube writer Adam Llewellyn to develop an eight-minute comedy script aimed at a younger audience which developed into an animation set in an Indian takeaway – *The Golden Cobra* – broadcast on BBC Wales. He was then paired with emerging small Welsh indie Beastly Media for the eight-part series commission for BBC Wales/BBC Three. Several young animators from further education colleges around Wales were also given animation opportunities on the show.

8

Episode commission

## CASE STUDY

### BBC Children's Ignite Animation scheme

Building on the success of the first initiative, BBC Children's and Education launched a second year of their Ignite Animation scheme. Creators receive funding to co-develop their idea in partnership with the BBC, developing it into an industry-standard proof of concept which is then considered for a potential commission.

Ignite demonstrates the BBC's commitment to UK animation, investing in the development of home-grown UK shows that reflect the lives and culture of UK children.

The first Ignite initiative led to commissions of *Duck and Frog*, *Captain Onion's Buoyant Academy* for *Wayward Youth* and *The Underglow*.

"Whether you've been in the industry for years or just starting out, the beauty of Ignite is that it is open to anyone. We need a buoyant children's sector and more culturally relevant content for UK kids on our screens."

Patricia Hidalgo  
Director, Children's & Education

1,620

Submissions

1,214

Individuals

406

Production companies  
and collectives



The Underglow – BBC Ignite pilot



# Supporting content creators

## CASE STUDY

### BBC Creator Lab

We launched Creator Lab in October, an exciting collaboration with TikTok aimed at social and digital creators interested in TV.

We offered a two-day in-person development programme, including meetings with commissioners and producers from our top Network shows, TV training, and a masterclass from TikTok.

We received over 500 applications and awarded more than 90 places at sessions which we held in locations across the UK.

Each event had different guest speakers, including Zara McDermott, Munya Chawawa,

Joe Daly (aka Joe the Magician) and Poppy O'Toole, who shared insights with creators about their transition from social media to TV.

The selected creators presented their ideas at each session, and following that we worked with some of them on digital coverage for *The Eurovision Song Contest*, with more opportunities to be announced later in the year.

# 90

Individuals



BBC Creator Lab participants

### Scotland Emerging Directors Scheme

BBC Scotland and Screen Scotland partnered on an initiative to help emerging factual talent step up and receive director credits on new documentary commissions. The Emerging Directors Scheme paired new talent based in Scotland with established production companies to work on BBC commissions, with indies providing training and guidance to the directors alongside industry masterclasses co-ordinated by the BBC.

Tern TV worked with filmmaker Isa Rao to direct an episode of their three-part series on junior doctors, and other directors worked with Firecrest Films, Storyboard Studios and Specky Productions.

# 6

Directors supported

### BBC Sounds Audio Lab

The eight-month development programme returned, supporting five new audio creators to grow original ideas into multi-episode podcasts. Scheme alumni are also offered leadership support from the Radio Academy Mentoring Programme. Next year a partnership with charity Multitrack will explore new ways to develop underrepresented audio talent.

# 5

Emerging producers/presenters



Scars: Surviving a Stabbing, Summer Films, BBC Three

### New Comedy Awards

Our annual nationwide comedy talent search saw 30 emerging comedians performing in televised regional heats. As well as a £1,000 prize and guaranteed paid commission to write and perform a 30-minute audio pilot, winner Joe Kent-Walters signed with a high-profile agent and has been sponsored by a theatre for his first Edinburgh hour. 2022 winner Dan Tiernan won British Comedian of the Year and was nominated for Best Newcomer at Edinburgh.

# 30

Performers supported

### New Documentary Directors' Scheme

The BBC scheme championing up-and-coming documentary talent returned in 2023, giving aspiring documentary filmmakers the chance to direct their first longform documentary for BBC Three and iPlayer.

# 4

New directors

# Developing off-screen talent

## BBC Film Associate Producer Programme

Funding the placement of emerging producers to step up on eight BBC Film productions per year, with a particular focus on individuals from under-represented groups.

8

Placements per year

## Fast Track Wales and West

Co-funded with Channel 4, Creative Wales and S4C, Factual Fast Track is placement-based development for senior off-screen factual talent in the Nations and English regions.

3

Places in the West

7

Places in Wales

## Radio Assistant Commissioner Scheme

Four assistant commissioner roles created across Network Radio with the aim of increasing our commissioning footprint outside London and diversifying our talent pool. The AC programme has a strong track record developing talent from underrepresented groups with alumni going on to further success across the industry.

4

Roles



Juice, Various Artists, BBC Three – BAFTA and RTS award-winner

## ScreenSkills

Alongside other broadcasters we invest in ScreenSkills training programmes for broadcast professionals, including the Children's TV Skills Fund, the High-end TV Skills Fund, the Unscripted TV Skills Fund and the Leaders of Tomorrow scheme.

59

BBC productions  
HETV Skills Fund

9

Courses Unscripted  
Skills Fund

## Freelancer events

BBC networking events for freelance off-screen talent to meet with commissioners and indies in Manchester, Cardiff, Birmingham and London.

4

Events

365

Freelancers

## CASE STUDY

## Production Management Skills Fund

This year the Production Management Skills Fund supported the careers of production co-ordinators and managers to take the next step in their career whilst being actively supported by their head of production.

In comedy, the fund was used for stepping-up placements, including a North West-based production co-ordinator becoming a junior production manager on *Inside No. 9*, a Wales-based production co-ordinator moving up to junior production manager on *Mammoth*, and on *Such Brave Girls* three stepping-up roles were funded at different levels.

In factual, *Miners' Strike: A Frontline Story* by Minnow, *The Proms* by Livewire and *7/7: Three Weeks In July (w/t)* and Panorama 'Bounty' from The Slate Works all had investment from the fund to progress junior production managers to full production managers.

£1m

Invested across broadcasters



Miners' Strike: A Frontline Story, The Garden Productions, BBC Two





TRC FormatLab delegates meet BBC commissioners

## Q CASE STUDY

### TRC

We partner with experienced Scotland-based training expert TRC to provide an impressive skills offer for creatives and companies. Despite the challenges of the market this year, TRC continued to help indies respond to the needs of the sector by aligning their programmes with current market demands. In 2023/24 we worked with TRC on seven courses, reaching 75 delegates.

# 7

Targeted courses

# 75

Delegates supported

#### SuperSizer

We co-fund the SuperSizer scheme to help companies and individuals hone their ideas and development skills. The development programme is aimed at ambitious development executives based in the Nations and English regions. Fourteen delegates completed the programme, with six in Scotland, one in Northern Ireland, one in Wales and six in the English regions.

#### FormatLab

FormatLab in collaboration with Channel 4 and Screen Scotland aims to create the next wave of entertainment development talent for Scotland. Participants were placed with established indies, including Hungry Bear, Tuesday's Child, Bandicoot, Ricochet, and Objective Scotland. The programme had strong outcomes, with alumni winning development funding and securing commissions. Five out of seven trainees have been offered employment contracts with their host company. Seven trainees completed the programme.

#### Factual Fast Track

We helped develop the careers of off-screen senior factual talent with Factual Fast Track. The programme is co-funded by BBC, Channel 4, Screen Scotland and Northern Ireland Screen. This year's production placements included blue chip BBC series *Surgeons: At the Edge of Life* by Dragonfly Film & TV and BBC show *Expert Witness* by Rare TV. The scheme worked with five individuals from Scotland and four from Northern Ireland.

#### rad

We partner with Screen Scotland, Creative Wales, BBC Studios and Channel 4 on TRC's rad programmes in Scotland and Wales to help new entrants from underrepresented groups into the industry, with placement-based training from edit assistants to researchers. This year TRC worked with Gorilla Academy to tailor training to the delegate and company needs and added a 'Data Wrangling' session to give trainees the skills to support productions out on location. Ten trainees completed the programme in Scotland and six in Wales.

#### TRC shorts

TRC shorts is a series of short interactive training sessions held online. Fourteen delegates from across the Nations and English regions took part in the programme, with eight from Scotland, three from Northern Ireland, one from Wales and two from the English regions.

#### Leading Creative Companies

Programme aimed at creative business owners and those at a senior level based in the Nations and English regions to help grow management skills and networks in the creative sector. Twelve delegates took part, with seven from Scotland, one from Northern Ireland, two from Wales and two from the English regions.

# ACROSS THE UK



## 60%

Network TV commissioning spend  
outside London

## 69%

Network TV hours out of London

## 62%

Network TV suppliers based in the  
Nations and English regions

## 44%

Radio and Music qualifying  
spend out of London

Dog Squad, Hello Halo, CBeebies



# Our Across the UK strategy

## TV commitments

In 2023/24, 60% of commissioning spend was from outside London, which means we are on track to achieve our Across the UK target of reaching over 60% sustainably by 2026. This year 62% of suppliers were based in the Nations and English regions, up from 55% last year.

We achieved our target of commissioning more than 100 scripted titles which deliver strong portrayal across all four Nations this year, including *Shetland*, *Steeltown Murders*, *Blue Lights*, *This Town*, *Guilt*, *Boiling Point*, *Boat Story* and *Two Doors Down*.

Our Pan-UK co-commissioning strategy continues to produce fantastic content that authentically depicts the lives of local audiences whilst appealing to viewers across the UK. In March 2021 we committed to doubling our co-commissioning spend, which we have achieved and continue to exceed.

We have 41 Network commissioners based in the Nations and English regions and named commissioning leads in each Network genre team responsible for companies and talent from each Nation.

We are meeting or exceeding our partnership agreement commitments in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the West Midlands and the North East – and have continued to support the development of the creative sector in all those places through talent, skills and business development.

**60%**

Spend  
Outside London  
2022/23: 58% ▲

**100+**

Scripted titles with  
Nations and regions  
portrayal over three years  
(Target 100)

**49%**

BBC Three spend  
Outside London  
2022/23: 56% ▼

**20+**

Titles with Nations  
portrayal over three years  
(Target 20)



This Town, Kudos Film & Television, BBC One

## Q CASE STUDY

### Scotland development opportunities

In November BBC Scotland and the Network Factual Entertainment and History teams jointly briefed out two development opportunities for Scotland suppliers.

Commissioners were looking for large-scale, ambitious, premium series or singles for each genre. The brief outlined the ask for strong Scottish portrayal in terms of location and voices, with talent that would resonate with both a Network audience and an audience in Scotland.

They were pitched almost 100 ideas in response to each brief, with some selected for further funded development with a view to finding returning series.

**2**

Development opportunities

## Radio commitments

Forty-four percent of eligible spend on Network Radio and Music (including performing groups) is now beyond the M25 and we are on track to meet our commitment for 50% of spend to be outside London by 2027/28.

We completed the move of BBC Audio's science unit to Cardiff and the relocation of key daytime strands on each of Radio 1 and 1Xtra and Radio 2 to Salford and Cardiff, where Huw Stephens' new weekday drivetime show on 6 Music also launched.

Radio 3, with plans including its leadership moving to Salford, has now moved three of its shows from London. Five more will move this year. Four Asian Network shows are now in the station's new home in Birmingham, with 12 more to follow in 2024/25. And, whilst Today and PM now come more frequently from studios across the UK, Radio 4 has also completed its move of three factual strands to Cardiff.

**44%**

Radio and Music qualifying spend 2023/24



Huw Stephens, Radio 6 Music

# Developing the West Midlands and the North East

We committed to supporting sustainable production ecologies in the North East and the West Midlands through production support, commissioning focus and training. Our Enabler Fund ringfences £500k to support skills and training in the West Midlands.

## North East

### Production placements

The Enabler Fund supported production placements for a camera trainee, a production secretary and a junior researcher on Chatterbox Media's *Charlotte in Sunderland* series two.

3

Trainee roles

### Writers' Voices scheme

Drama commissioner Alice Ramsey and BBC Writers development producer Usman Mullan worked with 11 talented writers in our BBC Writers' 'Voices' development group in the North and Midlands, developing a distinctive series outline ready to go to script.

11

Writers supported

### Daytime commissions

New daytime commissions – Joanna Page's *Wild Life* and *The Big Idea Works* from indie Twenty Six 03 – benefited from additional investment from the Enabler Fund.

2

Commissions

## West Midlands

### Writers' schemes

Two regional writers' schemes, with 'Write Across Birmingham and the Black Country' offering emerging voices training in collaboration with Create Central and others and 'The Break: Coventry' giving writers an opportunity to script a collection of short monologues written specifically for BBC Three and iPlayer. For the majority of writers it was their first television broadcast credit.

2

Writers' schemes



Champion, Balloon Entertainment/New Pictures, BBC One



Robson Green's *Weekend Escapes*, Signpost Productions, BBC Two

### Our new creative hub at Digbeth

In Birmingham, the home of BBC 1Xtra, BBC Asian Network, BBC Three and Newsbeat, we've been a catalyst for a creative quarter in Digbeth by relocating our West Midlands HQ, as well as announcing plans to move *MasterChef* and *Silent Witness* to the region. It's also the home of the BBC Apprentice Hub, leading on skills and training.

### Indie apprentices

Apprenticeships organised with creative employers in and around Birmingham, with many going on to work on large-scale productions like *This Town*, *Fifth Gear*, *The Gadget Show* and *Phoenix Rise*.

37

Apprentices since 2022

### Creative Cities Newcastle

The Creative Cities Convention was held in Newcastle in April 2023 with speakers including BBC Chief Content Officer Charlotte Moore. The event was supported by the 12 local authorities and three combined authorities in the North East, which form the North East Screen Industries Partnership.

## Q CASE STUDY

### Morning Live VTs

In October we went to suppliers in the West Midlands and the North East with a *Morning Live* inserts brief, looking for producers to make seven-minute VT inserts for our popular BBC One daytime show. We wanted ideas with broad appeal that would work for a wide range of audience demographics and age groups, with the films co-funded by the Enabler Fund and the daytime team.

We commissioned 15 films in total across a wide range of subjects from the walking groups aimed at combating loneliness, the truckers working together to clean up the motorways, and a fight to re-wet the UK's peat bogs and absorb more carbon dioxide than French, German and British forests combined.

The North East commissions went to Small Indie Fund alumni Sea & Sky Pictures, their first commission for any broadcaster, diverse-led company Wander, also a Small Indie Fund company, and Second Draft, also their first commission.

The West Midlands commissions went to Small Indie Fund companies Full Fat and Rural, and Leamington Spa-based Common Story.

3

Indies commissioned in the North East

3

Indies commissioned in the West Midlands



## Regional partnerships

We partner with organisations to help deliver our Across the UK strategy, maximising sector growth whilst driving value for money. We are meeting or exceeding our partnership agreement commitments in the Nations, the West Midlands and the North East, working with screen agencies and others to support the creative sector. Some of these include:



Gladiators, Hungry Bear Media, BBC One

### Bectu Vision

Targeted short courses and training programme to support skills development of drama crew in Scotland, funding script editors at indie STV and Freedom Scripted and an electrician with River City.

### Create Central

Building production partnerships in the West Midlands, including Digbeth Loc Studios and skills development initiatives, including 'Write Across Birmingham and the Black Country'.

### Creative Wales

BBC Comedy and BBC Wales partnered with Creative Wales on their Regional Partnership Scheme with Expectation Entertainment.

### North East Screen

Connected community event in Hartlepool attended by BBC disability executive who presented on the 'Overcoming Barriers in Film and TV' panel, and support for new North East programme *Smoggie Queens*.

### Northern Ireland Screen

Partnered with BBC Northern Ireland on the Aim High entrant-level training programme for unscripted producers and The Creative Industries New Entrants programme as well as series two of drama *Hope Street*.

### Screen Alliance North

As well as working together on a sustainability event, as part of the BBC's Bring the Drama Festival we partnered on a series of in-person and online Connected Communities events in Hartlepool, Liverpool and Manchester.

### Screen Alliance Wales

Finding film and TV opportunities for people from underrepresented groups in Wales. This year 14 trainees were placed on *Doctor Who*, including costume, sound and post-production roles.

### Screen Scotland

Partnered on initiatives including BBC Scotland Emerging Directors Scheme and history and fact ent development opportunities and short film commission *Calamity James* and *Dog Days*.



Eurovision Song Contest Handover Ceremony and Draw, Modest Television, BBC One

### Q CASE STUDY

## It's My Shout

BBC Wales continued its partnership with It's My Shout – the independent film production company and training scheme based in Wales. The scheme provides training for people interested in gaining experience in film and TV.

This year ten short films were produced on the scheme: six scripted dramas under the It's My Shout title and four documentaries called *New Voices from Wales*, all broadcast on BBC Two Wales and available on iPlayer. Short drama *Small Change* was nominated for a Celtic Media Award.

Each production links up industry professionals, drama groups and schools to find the best new talent in Wales.

Conversations are now underway with the team behind BBC's Creator Lab to explore new opportunities for talent across the two schemes.



The Hunger Pang Gang, It's My Shout, BBC Wales/BBC Three

# Our Regional Production quotas

This year we exceeded all our Regional Production quotas across Radio and TV, exceeding our Network TV hours quota by 18% points and our Network TV spend quota by 10% points. In TV we worked with 26 new Nations and regions indies. In Radio, 35% of hours and 39% of spend were delivered out of London.

## Radio Regional Production quota

This year we began including the contribution made by BBC Sounds to our Ofcom Regional Production quota. As more of Network Radio is made out of London, we are looking at how best we can align Ofcom's regionality definitions, designed for TV production, to Radio.

**35%** **39%**

Radio commissioning hours qualified as out of London

Radio commissioning spend qualified as out of London



Boiling Point, Ascendant Fox, BBC One

## TV Regional Production quota

This year we are sharing information about how we have delivered our Ofcom Regional Production commitments which will be published by Ofcom later in the year. We are doing this to provide greater transparency to the sector and our partners as well as to explain our performance and strategy. Ofcom's Regional Production definitions state that if a production qualifies as regional, it's substantive base is the primary driver of where a regional production is allocated if neither of the other two criteria are met and spend is spread across different Nations or regions. Our ambition in the Nations and English regions is to support talent development and strengthen regional production in the UK. This means we are looking to grow the volume of productions that deliver at least two of the three Ofcom criteria in the Nations and regions and reduce the volume of productions that qualify on base alone. Details for how we've delivered our commitments are in the following pages.

**69%**

Network TV hours qualified as regional productions (Quota 50%)  
2022/23: 70% ▼

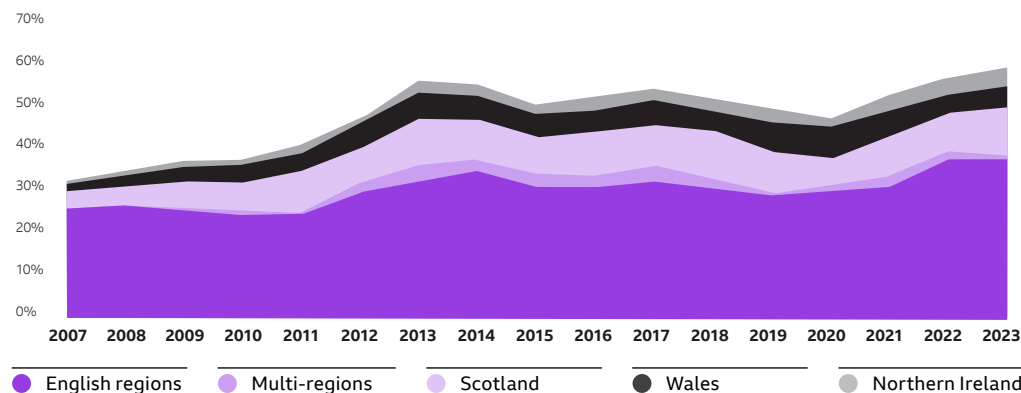
**60%**

Network TV spend qualified as regional productions (Quota 50%)  
2022/23: 58% ▲

Spend by Nation	Quota	2023
Scotland	8%	9.0%
Wales	5%	7.9%
Northern Ireland	3%	4.2%
English regions	30%	38.2%
Multi-region		0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>60.2%</b>

Hours by Nation	Quota	2023
Scotland	8%	17.3%
Wales	5%	6.4%
Northern Ireland	3%	3.0%
English regions	30%	41.8%
Multi-region		0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>68.7%</b>

## Yearly TV spend trend by Nations/English regions



## Q CASE STUDY

### Comedy Regional Partnership Scheme

This year BBC Comedy ran their Regional Partnership Scheme with BBC Wales, Creative Wales and established comedy supplier Expectation Entertainment. Sixteen Media, an emerging indie based in Wales, were chosen to co-develop a slate of original comedy projects.

The aim of the scheme is to strengthen an indigenous production company, support local talent and help diversify the production pipeline from Wales, putting more Welsh talent in front of and behind projects on our slate.

In addition, we are also supporting Sixteen Media to house a part-time development producer for 12 months to maximise the partnership opportunity and upskill a producer based in Wales.

Last year's partnership saw BBC Comedy and North East Screen supporting Hat Trick Productions and Sea & Sky Pictures, resulting in a script commission and a character development commission.

**2**

Development opportunities



## Across Scotland

This year BBC Scotland announced a £500k development fund for scripted titles and invested in partnerships designed to grow Scottish off-screen talent, including The Emerging Directors Scheme, as well as briefing out two premium factual commissioning opportunities run with BBC Network and Screen Scotland. We met all our Scotland-focused targets for spend and hours.

# 40%

BBC Scotland TV commissioning spend indies

# 100%

BBC Scotland TV development spend indies

### Nations and Network co-commissions

Content commissioned jointly between the dedicated Nations and Network teams, working together to maximise portrayal, authenticity and impact. Co-commissions this year include *Murder Trial* (Firecrest Films), *Martin Compston's Norwegian Fling* (Tern TV), *Highland Cops* (Firecrest Films), *Body on the Beach: What Happened to Annie?* (Rogan Films) and *Darren McGarvey: The State We're In* (Tern TV).

# 19

Co-commissions

### BBC Scotland targeted commissioning opportunities

Opportunities this year included a Hogmanay special, awarded to The Comedy Unit for *Get the Tunes On*, and a Burns Night opportunity awarded to BBC Scotland Productions.

BBC Scotland also briefed out a Euros opportunity and an *Our Lives* opportunity.

Working with Network, BBC Scotland and Screen Scotland issued development briefs for factual entertainment and history ideas.

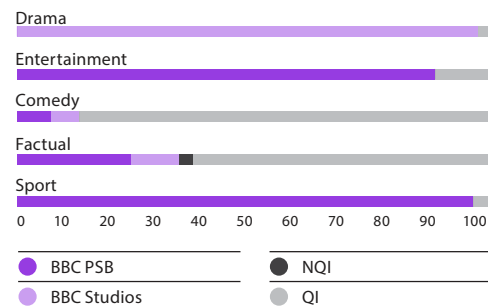
### Companies supported by Network

Indies supported through funded ideas development and strategic development, including the Diverse Talent Development Fund, Small Indie Fund and Production Management Skills Fund.

# 36

Scotland-based companies supported by Network

### Levels of business by genre



Data is for BBC Scotland and BBC One Scotland



Dog Days, Channel X Hopscotch, BBC Scotland



Shetland, ITV Studios, BBC One

## Across Scotland continued



Darren McGarvey: *The State We're In*, Tern Television, BBC Scotland



*Body on the Beach: What happened to Annie?*, Rogan Films, BBC Scotland/BBC Three

### Radio Scotland

Radio Scotland continues to provide output for Scottish audiences across News, Speech, Music and Sport. Our reputation for podcasts continues to grow, with *Shiny Bob: The Devil's Advocate* winning Gold for Best News Coverage at the ARIAS and *Trumped*, our co-pro with The Big Light, was the top performing podcast of 2024 on BBC Sounds at the time of writing.

**10%**

Audio commissioning spend indies

**6**

Supplier briefings

**8,308**

Hours of original audio content

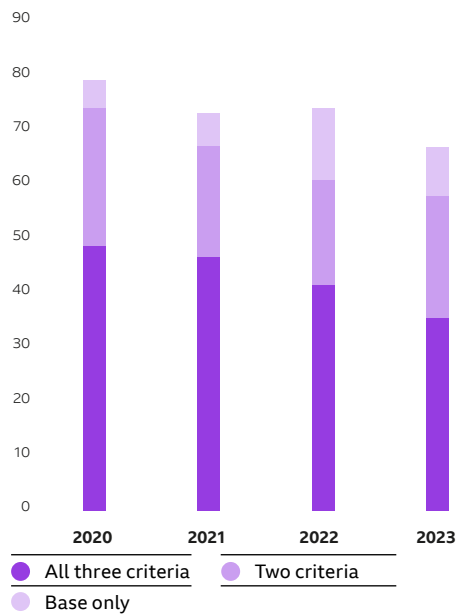


*Vigil*, World Productions, BBC One

### Scotland Network TV quota

In Scotland the volume of titles was slightly down on last year. Fifty-seven programmes met at least two Ofcom criteria, with nine titles qualifying on base alone – a slight improvement on 2023. We exceeded our hours commitment by more than double at 17.3% and also exceeded our spend commitment with 9%, and are focused on increasing the number of titles which qualify on at least two criteria.

#### Number of titles



### Q CASE STUDY

## Scotland Scripted Development Fund

Building on the success of award-winning series *Guilt*, *The Scotts*, *Granite Harbour*, *Scot Squad* and *Float*, BBC Scotland has introduced a new development fund of £500k to be invested over two years into drama and comedy ideas to build on its track record of attracting emerging and established talent on and off-screen.

There was a strong response to the fund from the independent sector, doubling the usual volume of pitches received.

Outcomes already include two new fully funded local drama development scripts, six new local comedy writing talent developments in play, and over 15 co-commissioned longform scripts across drama and comedy. This has led to an increase in Scottish-based projects on the Network scripted slate and a growing awareness of BBC Scotland's achievements in the scripted space.

**£500k**

Fund



## Across Wales

Over the last year we've been growing the comedy expertise of small Welsh indies with the Comedy Regional Partnership Scheme, a collaboration between BBC Wales, BBC Network and Creative Wales, and BBC Wales' short-form comedy initiative. We met all our Wales-focused targets for spend and hours.

# 59%

BBC Wales TV commissioning spend indies

# 100%

BBC Wales TV development spend indies

### Nations and Network co-commissions

Content commissioned jointly between the dedicated Nations and Network teams, working together to maximise portrayal, authenticity and impact. Co-commissions this year include *Paranormal* (twenty twenty), *Men Up* (Quay Street Productions/Boom Cymru), *Mammoth* (BBC Studios), *Steeltown Murders* (Severn Screen) and *The Way* (Red Seam/ Little Door).

# 18

Co-commissions

### BBC Wales targeted commissioning opportunities

Opportunities this year included *Our Lives* which saw indies Afanti, Cwmni Da, Rondo Media, Carlam, DocShed and Brown Bob Cymru produce 30-minute programmes and a *Legends of Welsh Sport* strand.

Two indies secured factual entertainment six-part series commissions: Barn Media for *All At Sea with Wynne Evans* and Joanna Page and Cwmni Da for *Chris Roberts Cooks Cymru*.

As well as our Regional Production Partnership with BBC Comedy which was won by Cardiff's Sixteen Media, we put out a co-commissioning brief with BBC Network for a factual entertainment series which now has two projects in development.

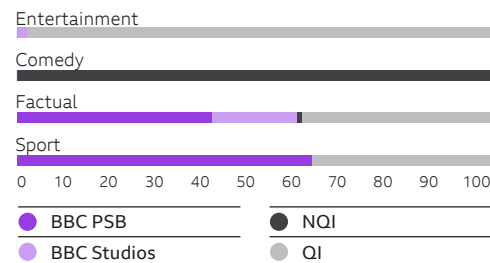
### Companies supported by Network

Indies supported through funded ideas development and strategic development, including the Diverse Talent Development Fund, Small Indie Fund and Production Management Skills Fund.

# 22

Wales-based companies supported by Network

### Levels of business by genre



Data is for BBC One Wales and BBC Two Wales



Steeltown Murders, Severn Screen, BBC Wales/BBC One



Mammoth, BBC Studios, BBC Wales/BBC Two

## Across Wales continued



The Way, Red Seam, BBC Wales/BBC One



Doctor Who, Bad Wolf, BBC One

### Radio Cymru/Radio Wales

In Wales, commissions on Radio Cymru included regular programming from indies Telesgop, Astud, Goriad and Cwmni Helyg, plus series on the music of brass bands, *Byd y Bandiau Pres* from Meicro Cyf, and a psychedelic rock opera based on alien abductions, *Cofiwch Roswell*, from Gruffudd Ab Arwel. For Radio Wales, indies produced a range of high-performing podcasts, including Overcoat Media's *The Crossbow Killer* and *A Positive Life: HIV from Terrence Higgins to Today*, which won Podcast of the Year at the prestigious British Podcast Awards.

# 10%

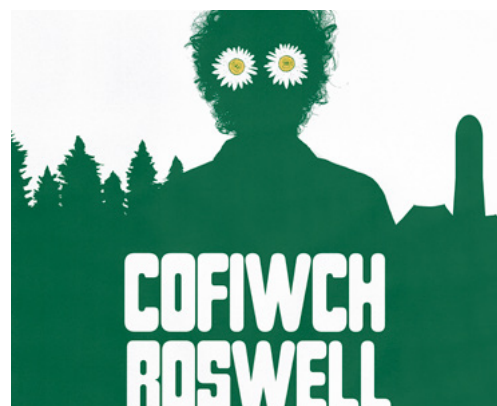
Audio commissioning spend indies

# 1,170

Hours of original audio content indies

# 5

Supplier briefings

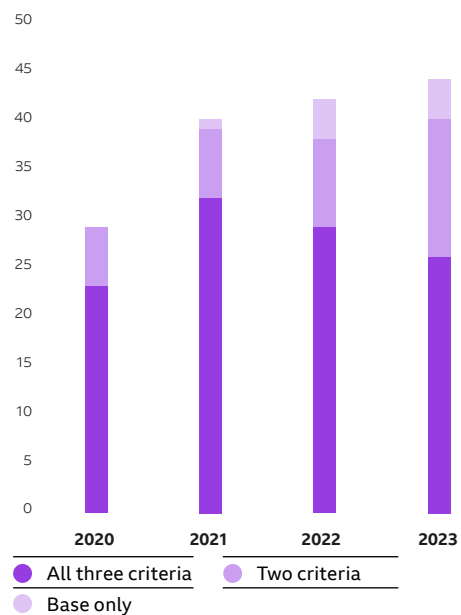


Cofiwch Roswell, Gruffudd Ab Arwel, Radio Cymru

### Wales Network TV quota

In Wales this year we had 40 titles with at least two Ofcom criteria being met and only four titles qualifying on base alone. Supported by an increased volume of titles compared with previous years, we exceeded our hours commitment by 1.4 percentage points at 6.4% and our spend commitment by 2.9 percentage points at 7.9%, and are focused on sustaining this growth.

#### Number of titles



### CASE STUDY

## BBC Wales short-form

Our short-form comedy initiative saw us give development opportunities to smaller Welsh indies. Three companies were commissioned to make films, delivering great content for BBC channels.

*Pobl Bachyn* from Little Wander written by Welsh sketch troupe Tarot was the directorial debut of Welsh stand-up Kiri Pritchard-McLean. The dark comedy-horror was produced with BBC Three.

Beastly Media worked with emerging Welsh stand-up comedian Anna Thomas on *Lady Bigfoot*, a whimsical comedy set in Pembrey Country Park.

Grandfather Rights from Welsh writer Paul Allen made by Small and Clever was set in a risk-averse future where health and safety rules all.

All three films demonstrate the brilliant capabilities of the companies and have helped identify performing and writing talent for the future who have the potential to be developed further.

# 3

Short films commissioned



# Across Northern Ireland

We met all our Northern Ireland-focused targets for spend and hours this year. As well as the success of factual co-commission *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland*, we welcomed the return of drama *Hope Street*, co-commissioned with BBC Daytime. The success of the Northern Ireland Hothouse Development Scheme continued, with four indies receiving co-commissions from BBC Northern Ireland and Network.

## 57%

BBC Northern Ireland TV Commissioning spend indies

## 100%

BBC Northern Ireland TV development spend indies

## Nations and Network co-commissions

Content commissioned jointly between the dedicated Nations and Network teams, working together to maximise portrayal, authenticity and impact. Co-commissions this year include *Hope Street* (Long Story TV), *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland* (Keo Films/Walk on Air Films), *Hunting the Catfish Crime Gang* (Strident Media) and *The Fast and the Farmer-ish* (Alleycats TV).

## 11

Co-commissions

## BBC Northern Ireland targeted commissioning opportunities

Opportunities this year included an Ulster-Scots commissioning brief co-funded with support from Northern Ireland Screen's Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund for factual and factual entertainment singles and short series.

Additionally, we briefed on a wide range of factual opportunities from single documentaries as part of BBC Northern Ireland's *True North* brand to high-impact landmark factual documentaries.

Our BBC Gaeilge commissioning brief supported by Northern Ireland Screen's Irish Language Broadcast Fund offered opportunities for programming across music series, documentaries, and factual entertainment.

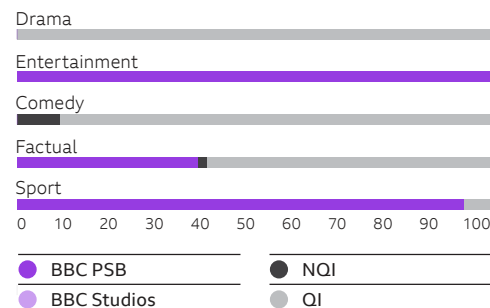
## Companies supported by Network

Indies supported through funded ideas development and strategic development including the Diverse Talent Development Fund, Small Indie Fund, the Comedy Regional Partnership Scheme, and Production Management Skills Fund.

## 20

Northern Ireland-based companies supported

## Levels of business by genre



The Fast and the Farmer-ish, Alleycats TV, BBC NI/BBC Three



Hope Street, Long Story TV, BBC Northern Ireland/BBC One

## Across Northern Ireland continued



Hunting the Catfish Crime Gang, Strident Media, BBCNI/BBC Three

### Radio Ulster/Radio Foyle

We work with indies across a number of programmes and strands on Radio Ulster and Radio Foyle. Indie commissions span specialist music, such as *Bandstand* from Blackthorn Productions, plus comedy, entertainment and programming in minority languages, such as *Scribhneoirí an tSléibhe* from Corcra Media.

7%

Audio commissioning spend indies

8%

Audio commissioning hours indies

4,623

Hours of original audio content

2

Supplier briefings

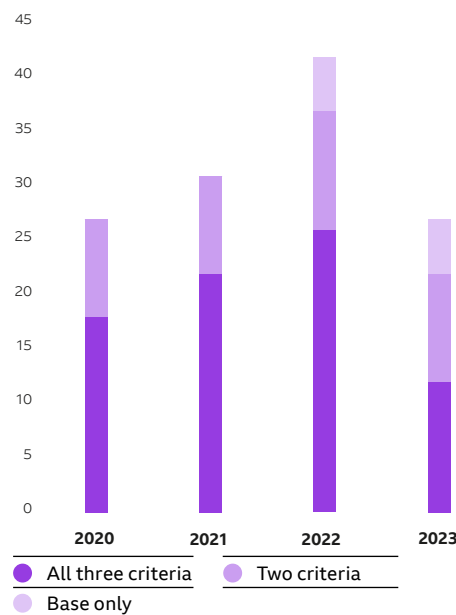


Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland, Keo Films/Walk on Air Films, BBC NI/BBC One, BAFTA, Broadcast and RTS award-winner

### Northern Ireland Network TV quota

In Northern Ireland this year we had 22 titles with at least two Ofcom criteria being met, and five titles qualifying on base alone. With a lower number of titles, we met but didn't exceed our hours commitment at 3%, though spend was up year-on-year at 4.2%. We are focused on increasing the number of titles which qualify on at least two criteria.

#### Number of titles



### CASE STUDY

## Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland

Co-commissioned by BBC Northern Ireland and Network in conjunction with The Open University, and produced by Keo Films/Walk on Air Films, *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland* told the story of The Troubles across five powerful episodes, with unfiltered personal accounts combined with archive footage, telling the stories of the people and communities that lived through it.

Made by the BAFTA and Emmy award-winning team behind *Once Upon a Time in Iraq* and acclaimed director James Bluemel, the series won several prestigious awards, including Best Documentary Series and Best History Documentary at the 2023 Grierson Awards.

The BBC and the Northern Ireland Education Authority hosted a special theatre screening for 180 teenagers from ten schools, alongside teachers and school leaders. The event was hosted as part of a pilot to explore how the series might be used as a resource in schools, to help the next generation to better understand Northern Ireland's past.

4

Major awards



## Looking ahead

In 2024/25 we're looking forward to some incredible content – with new series of *The Night Manager*, *The Traitors* and *Sherwood*, and the final episode of *Gavin and Stacey* next Christmas, all bringing us great stories that draw inspiration from different parts of the UK. Radio 1Xtra will celebrate 30 Years of Garage, as well as marking events, including Afro Nation, UK Black Pride, the Notting Hill Carnival and more. All alongside a calendar of huge sporting events that brings communities together, from the Olympics in France to the FA Cup to the Euros.

Celebrating and championing home-grown storytelling is a key priority for us and something we will continue to focus on across the year, protecting it in an extraordinarily competitive global media landscape by investing in UK talent and creativity. Our platforms will commission content from across the UK that authentically reflects our many cultures, stories and voices, and events that connect us across sports, news, music, and entertainment. We will continue to grow our audio supplier base across the UK, with more programme teams moving out of London.

This year we also concluded our three-year commitment to invest £112 million in diverse content across TV and Radio, and we've surpassed our target by spending over £243 million since 2021. A refreshed commitment building on successes and learnings from the past three years will be outlined later in 2024.

Thank you for your ongoing creativity and support, and we will look forward to working with you in the year ahead.



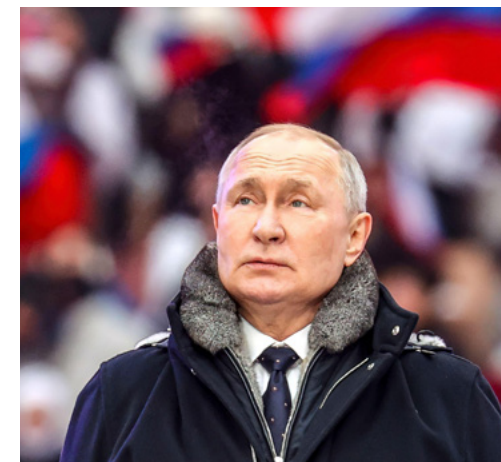
Henpocalypse!, Various Artists,  
BBC Two



Poet Laureate in the Arctic, BBC Audio, Radio 4



The Traitors, Studio Lambert, BBC One – Broadcast and National  
Television award-winner



Putin vs the West: At War, Zinc Television,  
BBC Two

# Appendix

## Top ten TV indies

### Top ten TV indies by spend

- 1 Wall To Wall Television
- 2 Remarkable Television
- 3 ITV Studios
- 4 Bad Wolf
- 5 Naked Television
- 6 Sister Pictures
- 7 Mammoth Screen
- 8 Red Planet Pictures
- 9 Hungry Bear Media
- 10 Neal Street Productions

### Top ten TV indies by hours

- 1 IMG Media
- 2 Remarkable Television
- 3 Cactus TV
- 4 Whisper Films
- 5 Naked Television
- 6 Lion Television
- 7 STV Productions
- 8 Tern TV
- 9 Shine TV
- 10 Mentorn Media

## Useful links

[BBC Commissioning website](#)

[BBC Radio Commissioning website](#)

[Commissioning Supply Report 2022/23](#)

[Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice Progress Report 2023/24](#)



Beyond Paradise, Red Planet Pictures, BBC One





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