



BBC WRITERS

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



“I’m proud of the work BBC Writers does to discover, nurture, and champion new and emerging voices. It is a big part of the BBC’s commitment to backing the best homegrown storytelling from every part of the UK and plays a major role in helping to create diverse, vibrant programming for all our audiences.”

Tim Davie
BBC Director General

CONTENTS

Welcome	3
The Year in Stats	4
Open Call	5
Write Across Birmingham & the Black Country	6
Voices	8
Scripted	10
Pilot	12
Writers’ Access Group	13
Partnerships	14
BBC Writers Online	16
Other Schemes and Opportunities	18
Out & About	19
Alumni Updates, On Screen and On Air	20
The Year Ahead	24

“Writers are the driving force behind great drama and identifying and cultivating emerging television writing talent is essential not only to the BBC’s future but to the vitality of the entire UK TV industry. BBC Writers is dedicated to championing emerging talent and ensuring that the next wave of TV writers has every opportunity to thrive.”

Lindsay Salt
Director BBC Drama





WELCOME TO BBC WRITERS



Jess Loveland
Head of New Writing for BBC Writers
& BBC Drama Commissioning

Welcome to this annual review of BBC Writers' activity for the year 2024/25!

It's wonderful to reflect on the work of the past year and celebrate the achievements of the talented writers we've had the privilege to work with.

Within these pages, you'll find an overview of our core writer development programmes and introductions to the talented individuals who participated in them this year. You will also read about our work with partners, both within the BBC and externally. From shadow writing schemes to career mentoring and development labs, we have worked in partnership to uplift and upskill new storytellers.

Over the past year we have continued our search for new writers from across the UK and Republic of Ireland. From our five main BBC Writers' hubs we are dedicated to finding the most exciting new voices, whether that is via our annual Open Call script opportunity, or at one of the many industry events we attend. Notably, last year we shone a special spotlight on Birmingham and the Black Country as part of our latest grassroots Write Across programme.

As you will see, we work with a great many writers each year and our alumni network is wide. We have provided a snapshot here of just some of the exciting things our recent alumni have gone on to do in the past 12 months, including those whose work has hit our screens recently!

None of this would be possible without the generous support of our industry colleagues, who devote their time and expertise to panels, masterclasses, and mentoring. We're incredibly grateful for their contributions. Most importantly, thank you to the thousands of writers who trust us with their work — it remains an immense privilege to read and work with such remarkable talent, and one we never take for granted.

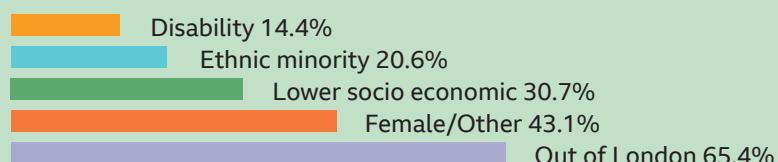
MEET THE BBC WRITERS TEAM

bbc.co.uk/writers/about/who-we-are

THE YEAR IN STATS

BBC Writers takes the responsibility of monitoring our activity and writer development support seriously. Reporting in this way allows us to ensure we are truly reaching writers across the whole of the UK and helps us to identify future priority areas.

DIVERSITY FIGURES FOR SUBMISSIONS



SUBMISSIONS to our opportunities via our online submissions system in the reporting period.



4972



763



256

OUR WRITER GROUPS:



68
WRITERS



12
WRITERS



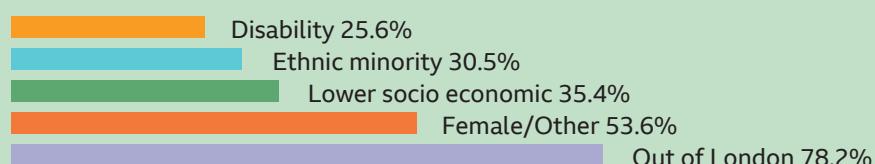
10
WRITERS



10
WRITERS

The following **VOICES** groups took place in 2024: Scotland, North and Midlands (England), Belfast (Northern and Republic of Ireland hub), Wales, London, South (England).

DIVERSITY FIGURES FOR OUR GROUPS



Our figures are derived from the most up-to-date data available. This is taken from self-reported and optional monitoring forms. We can't guarantee a 100% return rate.



BBC WRITERS OPEN CALL

The Path to Discovery

BBC Writers' Open Call is our primary platform for discovering fresh writing talent. Each autumn, we invite writers across the UK and Republic of Ireland to submit their original scripts.

Eligibility:

- Open to UK and Republic of Ireland residents aged 18+.
- One submission per year allowed.
- Must be a Drama or Comedy-Drama script (minimum 30 pages).
- Can be for TV, Radio, Theatre, or Film.

Process:

- All eligible scripts undergo an initial read of the first 10 pages.
- We prioritise unique voices and strong potential, seeking writers for development rather than immediate production.
- Promising scripts receive a more in-depth read.

Impact:

- In the Open Call, which closed in December 2023, we received a record-breaking nearly 5,000 submissions.
- Open Call is a cornerstone of our writer discovery efforts.
- Up to 100 writers are selected annually for our Scripted and Voices development programmes.

Our Vision:

We seek scripts with:

- Compelling narratives and engaging dialogue.
- Unique perspectives and distinctive voices.
- Strong characters and immersive worlds.
- The power to captivate and inspire.



“The BBC Writers' Open Call is one of the most vital initiatives in the UK for discovering and championing fresh writing talent. At a time when the demand for original, diverse, and ambitious storytelling has never been greater, this opportunity allows us to find writers with bold voices and compelling perspectives, writers who might not otherwise have access to the industry.”

Sami El-Hadi, Head of Development, BBC Drama

The Vital Role of Our Freelance Readers

OUR READERS

BBC Writers receives a significant volume of script submissions annually. To effectively manage this volume, we rely on a dedicated network of freelance readers from right across the industry.

This network comprises approximately 25 experienced professionals, including script editors, writers, producers, literary officers and lecturers. They bring diverse creative backgrounds and expertise across various genres to the table.

Our freelance readers are carefully selected to reflect the diverse and complex nature of UK society. Their work is closely monitored and guided by senior editorial staff within BBC Writers.

FIND OUT HOW TO SUBMIT A SCRIPT TO THE OPEN CALL

bbc.co.uk/writers/opportunities/open-call



BIRMINGHAM & THE BLACK COUNTRY

2024 saw the BBC Writers team delivering the second of our Write Across series of regionally specific early career writer programmes. The focus for this year was Birmingham and the Black Country where we worked with our local partner stakeholder group - Create Central; Birmingham Rep; Script Sirens; Dudley Creates; Creative Black Country; and Black Country Touring – to design and deliver a programme for early career writers in the region.

We ran two free launch events in Birmingham and Wolverhampton in February 2024 attended by over 400 local writers and creatives. Our Write Across ambassadors - Sir Lenny Henry, Kit De Waal and Maya Sondhi - helped us to spread the word about the initiative and reach a wide group of writers in the region.

After a rigorous reading and selection process we chose ten writers to join the group from over 250 applications. These ten talented writers took part in an intense eight-week development programme, which ran from July to September 2024. This culminated with an event at BBC Birmingham's Mailbox with guest speakers including Sir Lenny Henry. The writers are now working with mentors while they embark upon writing the pilot episodes of the series ideas generated during the programme.

Aimee Berwick

“BBC Writers have a crafty way of holding you so you’re working on scary new stuff but with solid support - your feet aren’t quite touching the ground, but that’s ok.”



Rebecca Rogers

“As I move on to the next stage of my career with a strong network of peers from my cohort and with my writing style honed and developed for TV, it’s fair to say that Write Across has been truly transformative.”



MY WRITE ACROSS BIRMINGHAM & THE BLACK COUNTRY EXPERIENCE

bbc.co.uk/writers/blog/write-across-birmingham-and-the-black-country-experience

MEET THE WRITERS



The 10 Write Across Birmingham and the Black Country writers. From L-R: Neil Paul, Aimee Berwick, Benita Verdi, Rebecca Rogers, Aliyah Begum, James Allen, Rajinder Ram, Claire Rowlands, Elle van Lil, Lawrence Walker

MENTORS



Celia Morgan

“For early career writers, navigating the industry can be an absolute minefield. With so many different ways for a writing journey to go, new opportunities can become quite daunting. Having a mentor – someone on your side with no agenda other than to support, listen and give guidance to you based on inside knowledge and experience – is invaluable. It’s important for all of us in the industry, at all levels, to give time to those coming up behind us – that’s what keeps the business vibrant and thriving into the future.”



Maya Sondhi

“Having been mentored myself by various people in the TV industry, I really wanted to pass on all the invaluable skills and knowledge that I have gained. In these uncertain times, it is even more vital that we support emerging writers to give them the best possible start in their careers. Everyone’s voice matters.”



Rob Williams

“As a student on the BBC Writers Academy many years ago, the highlight of the week was always the guest speakers. Getting to ask experienced writers questions and receive honest answers was and is invaluable. Mentorship is worthwhile, rewarding and works both ways: you never stop learning in this game!”

Sir Lenny Henry

“This is a massive step forward for marginalised voices in the Midlands. I’m so proud to be involved and to meet and talk to our talented newcomers.”



BBC WRITERS VOICES

Developing the Next Generation of Voices

In 2024, our dedicated Voices development programme partnered with 68 talented new writers across the UK. Six distinct groups were formed, each situated in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and various regions within England, and overseen by the respective local BBC Writers hub.

Over a six-month period, these writers embarked on an intensive programme. This encompassed a comprehensive exploration of the television industry's inner workings, invaluable guidance through masterclasses, craft sessions, and insightful roundtable discussions. Furthermore, the programme equipped writers with essential skills and knowledge crucial for successful television writing.

Beyond the structured sessions, the programme fostered a vibrant peer-to-peer network through regular in-person meetups within each local group.

Throughout the programme, the writers worked to define and refine an original drama concept, culminating in the development of a unique series idea. This comprehensive approach provides a valuable platform for aspiring writers to hone their craft and gain valuable insights into the television industry.

NFTS

NATIONAL
FILM AND
TELEVISION
SCHOOL

Elevating Voices Through Collaboration

SCRIPT EDITING SUPPORT

The Voices programme fosters collaboration with the National Film and Television School (NFTS). Each year, selected writers receive valuable script-editing support from talented NFTS trainees. This collaboration aims to guide writers in developing their Voices projects to at least the first draft stage. In 2024, 17 writers benefitted from this valuable partnership.

Key Benefits:

- Creative Growth: Writers gain invaluable experience receiving and incorporating feedback, refining their writing process.
- Industry Preparation: The collaboration prepares writers for future industry interactions, such as meetings with development executives.
- Project Advancement: Writers retain all rights and can leverage the edited script for future submissions (Open Call, agents, etc.).



“Whatever happens next, I know I am a better writer than I was before I took part in Voices. BBC Writers’ Voices programme has equipped me with tools I will always have at my disposal as I continue my writing journey. The knowledge and support have been invaluable and I’m really happy with how I’ve developed and with the script I have written.”

Irshad Ashraf, Voices South 2024

BBC WRITERS VOICES - MY EXPERIENCE

bbc.co.uk/writers/blog/bbc-writers-voices

MEET THE VOICES 2024

Scotland: Rachelle Atalla, Colin Bell, Sarah Grant, Lorna King, Rachel Main, Conor McLeod, Liam Moffat, Laurie Motherwell, Dorothy Jane Stewart, Raymond Wilson

Belfast Hub: Shane Callaghan, Paul Carey, Patricia Downey, Rhys Dunlop & Alan Mahon, Cassiopeia Friel, Dale Leadon-Bolger, Caitlin Magnall-Kearns, Anthony Moriarty, Claire Sullivan, Shannon Welby

Wales: Matthew Bulgo, Mathew David, Siôn Eirug, Cellan Evans, Darren Ford, Ffion King, Jennifer Lunn, Sara Nourizadeh, Plum Savill, Elen Mair Thomas, Rhys Warrington, Matthew White

North & Midlands: Natalie Beech, Ashlee Elizabeth-Lolo, Christian Emanuel, Jim English, Lee Hodgetts, Chrissy Jamieson Jones, Maureen Lennon, Joe McNally, Nathan Queeley-Dennis, Ric Renton, Kirsty Taylor

South: Ruby Abbiss & Penelope Yeulet, Marlek al-Habib & Neet Mohan, Irshad Ashraf, Lee Daniel, Dave Florez, Alistair Hall, Nepa Khatun, Alexis Kirke, Martha Loader, Chase Olivarius-McAllister, Abby Vicky-Russell, Judy Upton

London: Maram Ahmed, Georgia Bruce, Maddie Dodd, Montel Douglas, Elham Ehsas, Toby Fell-Holden, Titas Halder, Tania Nwachukwu, Tommy Ross-Williams, Eleanor Tindall

MEET THE VOICES WRITERS

bbc.co.uk/writers/our-groups/voices

BBC WRITERS SCRIPTED

From autumn 2023 to early 2025, we once again had the pleasure of working with a remarkable cohort of twelve Scripted writers. These talented individuals stood out amidst the fierce competition of our Open Call and embarked on a transformative, year-long development journey designed to nurture distinctive voices and equip them with the skills to write for television.

The Scripted programme is dedicated to emerging writers who demonstrate originality, creative vision, and a strong grasp of storytelling fundamentals, but who are yet to secure a professional television credit. Throughout the year, participants took part in a series of craft-focused and industry-led workshops, gaining insight into the complexities of television writing and the broader industry landscape.

Central to their development was the opportunity to collaborate closely with a script editor, refining their skills and creating an industry-standard spec script. In addition, this year's writers were given a platform to pitch for exciting opportunities, including a place on CBBC's The Dumping Ground Shadow Scheme — a chance to gain hands-on experience writing for one of the BBC's flagship children's dramas, developing their skills and understanding of writing for a younger audience.

The dedication, creativity, and growth demonstrated by our Scripted writers this year exemplify the incredible potential of emerging talent across the UK. We are proud to support their journeys and look forward to seeing their stories continue to unfold on screens and airwaves in the years to come.

MEET THE SCRIPTED WRITERS 2023/24

Following the Open Call submission window, which closed in December 2022, the following 12 writers were chosen to be part of Scripted for 2023/24:



“Being on BBC Writers’ Scripted has been a brilliant and nurturing experience. I found the structure of the course provided an in-depth insight into TV screen writing.

The masterclasses were great and particularly those given by writers which I found inspiring. A huge benefit of the programme is the access it gives to other opportunities. I was fortunate enough to be selected for The Dumping Ground Shadow Scheme which has equipped me with the necessary tools, confidence and knowledge to seek more Children’s TV writing opportunities.

A real strength of the course is the support it provides in developing your original drama idea through to spec script. Overall, I’ve loved being on Scripted and I’m looking forward to putting all I’ve learnt into practice.

A big thanks to the BBC Writers’ Scripted team too whose hard work and care makes the course special.”

Eva Edo

“The course ran just over a year, and I feel I’ve grown as a writer across that period. I’ve worked in rooms, I’ve written my first episode of television, I’m excited for whatever opportunities come next. BBC Scripted helped me build my confidence as a writer, it prepared me for the world of the television landscape, it gave me a whole arsenal of new skills and opened so many opportunities. It also put me in a really incredible group of talented writers and I’m so excited to see what everyone does next.”

Cara Loftus



BBC Scripted writers with members of the BBC Writers team

MEET THE SCRIPTED WRITERS
bbc.co.uk/writers/blog/scripted-23-24

BBC WRITERS PILOT

After a rigorous selection process we were delighted to announce the 2024/25 Pilot cohort and their dedicated production company:



Alex Mathias



Paolo Chianta



Matthew McDevitt



Zak Zarafshan

LOOKOUT
POINT

FILMNATION
ENTERTAINMENT

HARTSWOOD
FILMS

company pictures



Alvin Yu



Daniel Katanchian



Danny & Lauren
McNamara



Ali Taylor

NEW PICTURES

AbbottVision

TWO CITIES
TELEVISION

MAM TOR
PRODUCTIONS



Sophia
Chetin-Leuner



Emma Ramsay



Lauren Bensted
& Adam Grant



Faebian Averies

GREEN
ACRE
FILMS

synchronicity

ACTS
5

KUDOS

"At Greenacre Films, we've loved participating in BBC Writers' Pilot scheme, as it's facilitated us forging brilliant, productive relationships with fantastic emerging writers. We're thrilled with the projects that were developed on the scheme, and we have continued to work with these writers to create further projects - one of which has recently gone into paid development with a key broadcaster, securing the writer their first paid development commission as a lead writer from a broadcaster outside of the BBC scheme."

Lily Slydel, Development Producer, Greenacre Films

Nurturing the Next Generation of Television

Pilot is BBC Writers' most high-profile programme designed to cultivate exceptional screenwriting talent.

This unique initiative offers selected writers the opportunity to receive a paid commission to create the pilot episode script of a potential original series or serial for the BBC.

Every two years, 10-15 gifted writers are paired with leading independent production companies from across the UK. Within this collaborative environment, writers work closely with seasoned professionals to define and develop a new groundbreaking television drama, culminating in the creation of a pilot episode script.

At the same time as working with their dedicated production company, BBC Writers engages with the cohort to hone their craft to the highest level. The group has been working with some of the country's most prestigious professionals including John Yorke on story and Emma Frost on the skills required to be a showrunner. The writers also enjoyed a session with (recent Pilot alumnus) Daf James who spoke about his journey from getting onto the Pilot programme right through to seeing his project, Lost Boys and Fairies, hit the screens in 2024.

This paid script commission signifies the BBC's commitment to nurturing these writers with the ultimate goal of full development and potential broadcast.

MEET THE PILOT WRITERS

bbc.co.uk/writers/blog/pilot-2024-2025-announced



BBC WRITERS ACCESS GROUP

We're thrilled to introduce the talented cohort of writers selected for the third iteration of the Writers' Access Group. This dedicated programme, designed to bolster the careers of the most promising deaf, disabled, and/or neurodivergent writers, remains a cornerstone of our commitment to inclusion and accessibility.

This year marks a milestone as the group was chosen through our first open call submission process, reflecting our mission to be as open and accessible as possible. In partnership with TripleC DANC, we've ensured the programme remains welcoming, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of the disabled writing community. The newly selected writers began their journey with us in late 2023, and we are delighted to introduce them as they approach the end of this exciting 18-month development programme.

Over the course of the programme the writers met regularly for a series of masterclasses looking at story and structure, pitching and treatments, audience insights and craft skills, alongside hearing from A-list writers, script-editors, producers and BBC Drama Commissioners.

All participants are presently working with a freelance script editor to define and develop a brand new Drama or Comedy/Drama spec script. As they graduate from the programme in Summer 2025, the writers will take part in a round of introductory industry meetings with production companies, agents and commissioners.

SCRIPT ESSENTIALS WEBINAR SERIES

To support as many writers as possible, we launched the Script Essentials webinar series for applicants who reached the second stage of the open call but weren't selected for the programme. Over six months, we worked with over 100 deaf, disabled, and/or neurodivergent writers, delivering insights and advice to help them hone their craft. The series has now concluded, and we hope the skills gained will empower these writers to create new scripts and apply to the next Writers' Access Group.

MEET OUR NEW WRITERS ACCESS GROUP:



Benjamin Bee



Neil Ben



Hollie-Jay Bowes



Lou Burns



Angela Franklyn



Kathryn Golding



Mared Jarman



Steph Lacey



Sai Karan Talwar



Nina Thomson

MEET THE WRITERS ACCESS GROUP

bbc.co.uk/writers/blog/writers-access-group-23-25

PARTNERSHIPS

KAY MELLOR FELLOWSHIP

We were delighted to announce Jasmin Mandi-Ghomi (North and Midlands Voices 2022) from West Yorkshire as the third recipient of the Kay Mellor Fellowship. This prestigious fellowship, created to honour the legacy of the late, great Kay Mellor, continues to champion bold, authentic voices from the region.

Jasmin's compelling storytelling and distinctive voice impressed the selection panel, and we are excited to support her as she embarks on this next phase of her writing journey.

The Kay Mellor Fellowship — delivered in partnership with Leeds City Council, Rollem Productions, and Leeds Playhouse — embodies Kay's commitment to supporting writers from underrepresented backgrounds and nurturing new talent from Yorkshire.

Previous recipients of the fellowship were Kat Rose-Martin and Kirsty Taylor.



“With the support of this Fellowship, I hope to challenge myself and explore how to tell the diverse personal stories I love on a larger scale. I feel incredibly lucky to be part of a legacy that includes previous Fellows Kat Rose-Martin and Kirsty Taylor. I hope to continue in their footsteps and tell stories that make Yorkshire proud.”

Jasmin Mandi-Ghomi



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE KAY MELLOR FELLOW
bbc.co.uk/writers/blog/third-yorkshire-writer-announced-as-recipient-of-the-kay-mellor-fellowship

CLIMATE SPRING

In 2024 we partnered with Climate Spring for the second time on their Hot House writer development lab. Each winner received £1,000 from Climate Spring alongside tailored editorial and high-level industry support from Climate Spring, Film London and BBC Writers.

Selected from a competitive pool of submissions, the six winning projects each explore different facets of the climate crisis and span a variety of genres and formats.

Selected writers for Hot House 2024: Brid Arnstein, Billie Collins (North and Midlands Voices 22), JIJO, Ross Mackay and Col Gordon, Jessica Riches, and Sebastian Schlecht and Alison Cummins.



“The Hot House has given me access to feedback from a range of industry experts, a platform for my work, and has helped me develop a story that is (I hope) surprising, entertaining, and with a broad appeal. I feel lucky to have been part of the programme — not just because I got to geek out about human composting — but because I think it serves a really important purpose. We need climate stories to help us truly engage with the crisis, and to imagine possible futures. The range of projects supported by the Hot House is evidence of how varied, moving, funny and universal-yet-specific these narratives can be.”

Billie Collins

POPCORN AWARD



The writers of VL – Gary McNair (L) and Kieran Hurley (R) with Brian Watkins, the writer of Weather Girl (centre)

EAST MENTORING PROGRAMME

In Autumn 2024 we partnered with EAST, an organisation dedicated to supporting British East and South East Asians in scripted television, to deliver a mentoring programme for promising emerging screenwriters.

Four writers were selected and partnered with experienced industry mentors:



“The EAST X BBC Writers’ mentorship scheme came at the perfect time for me and has already provided me with invaluable support for my confidence and future direction as an emerging writer. I have been paired up with the wonderful and inspiring Daisy Coulam, who has been nothing but generous and kind with her advice and time. I even got to spend a day on the Grantchester set, which was not only super exciting (as a fan of the show!) but also incredibly valuable in helping me understand the process from script to screen.”

Kayla Hendy

DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA

WEB & SOCIAL MEDIA

The vast majority of people first engage with our work via our website, which received over 3.5 million page views in 2024. The website includes a wide range of information and resources. The audience ranges from people with a general interest in scriptwriting to new writers taking their first tentative steps to writers with existing experience and credits who want to understand more about the drama commissioning process.

The aim, with all our online content, is to demystify and make more accessible what can be a confusing and at times an opaque industry, full of jargon and insider knowledge.

Resources include a comprehensive Scriptwriting Glossary, covering terms from 3-Act Structure to Writers' Rooms, Pitches, Treatments, Scene by Scenes and much, much more. We also offer a series of short, animated videos which break down Scriptwriting Essentials into eight parts, plus advice and examples of how to format scripts together with script templates.

VISIT THE BBC WRITERS WEBSITE

bbc.co.uk/writers

SCRIPT LIBRARY

Our online Script Library contains well-over 1000 scripts from BBC TV, Film, Radio and Childrens productions. It is one of the most comprehensive script libraries on the web.

Recent additions include Blue Lights (both series), Dodger, Domino Day, The Following Events are Based on a Pack of Lies, Lost Boys and Fairies, Magpie Murders, Men Up, Nightsleeper, Shetland, Silent Witness, The Split, Ten Pound Poms, Vigil and World on Fire.

We are also part of the Whoniverse! Over 200 scripts from the archive of the show are available to read, including Doctor Who, Torchwood, The Sarah Jane Adventures and more, with the scripts from Ncuti Gatwa's first series of Doctor Who recently added.

The Script Library is made possible due to the generosity of the writers and production companies who have granted permission for their scripts to be published online.

VISIT THE SCRIPT LIBRARY

bbc.co.uk/writers/scripts

BLOG

Our blog, which is now fully integrated with the rest of the website, offers regular articles and features which include interviews with the writers of the latest releases from BBC Drama, information about our opportunities and updates from writers who have taken part in our development groups. These posts are packed with useful tips and advice for other budding writers. In our Writing Today strand we throw open the doors to guest bloggers to talk about the issues that are affecting the industry from their point of view. Writing Today posts in 2024 have covered topics including a candid insight into running a new playwriting competition and some potential impacts on the growth of AI for the scripted entertainment industry. We have also started a series on the journey of a script through to broadcast, with the first two posts covering spec scripts, agents, pitches and the BBC Drama Commissioning development slate.

GET NEWS AND UPDATES ON OUR BLOG

www.bbc.co.uk/writers/blog



OPPORTUNITIES

The most popular part of our website is our Writing Opportunities page where we post a continually updated listing of free-to-enter writing opportunities from the BBC and across the industry. These range from callouts by theatres and scratch-nights for one-minute monologues through to development openings in film and television. The page offers those vital things for any writer: a deadline to meet and a tangible chance to get their work in front of an audience. Many writers tell us that they have achieved their first success through an opportunity they have spotted on the page.

EXPLORE WRITING OPPORTUNITIES

bbc.co.uk/writers/opportunities

BE INSPIRED

In our Be Inspired series of video interviews we speak to writers and industry professionals who share their advice and top tips. Recent additions to the growing list of interviews to watch include Peter Straughan (Wolf Hall), Lauren Sequeira (Domino Day), Daf James (Lost Boys and Fairies), Stephen Merchant (The Outlaws) and Neil Forsyth (The Gold).

WATCH NOW:

Be inspired by interviews with these great writers and many, many more.



Lauren Sequeira



Nick Leather



Peter Straughan



Neil Forsyth



Tony Schumacher



Matthew Barry



Helen Black



Jimmy McGovern



Daniel Rusteau



Jesse Armstrong

BE INSPIRED - WATCH INTERVIEWS

bbc.co.uk/writers/resources/be-inspired

SOCIAL MEDIA

You can keep up to date with BBC Writers news and opportunities on social media and watch interviews and advice on our YouTube channel.

 X (TWITTER)

 FACEBOOK

 INSTAGRAM

 YOUTUBE

OTHER SCHEMES AND OPPORTUNITIES



THE DUMPING GROUND SHADOW SCHEME

BBC Writers in collaboration with BBC Studios Kids & Family and BBC Children's Commissioning, launched The Dumping Ground Shadow Scheme in May 2024. This was the fifth time we have run this opportunity which was made possible with funding from the BBC Children's & Education Diversity Fund. Six writers were invited to attend a two-day workshop where they met the team, took part in a set tour and spent time brainstorming ideas and developing story outlines. The writers selected to take part in the workshop were: Eva Edo (Scripted 23/24), Kenton Thomas (Scripted 23/24), Neil Ben (Writers' Access Group), Harriet Ghost, Paul Hunt (Scripted 23/24) and Tom Smith.

Two writers – Eva Edo and Tom Smith – were selected to take part in the shadow scheme.



"I was overjoyed to be awarded a place on a BBC Shadow Scheme to write a trial script for The Dumping Ground. Working closely with a script editor has allowed me to develop skills I would not have been able to without this scheme."

Tom Smith

FIND OUT ABOUT THE DUMPING GROUND SHADOW SCHEME
bbc.co.uk/writers/blog/dumping-ground-shadow-scheme

AUDIO DRAMA WORKSHOPS

In October 2024, we were thrilled to host an exclusive online Audio Drama workshop with Alison Hindell, Commissioning Editor for Drama and Fiction at BBC Radio 4 and 4 Extra. This special event gave 30 emerging writers an invaluable opportunity to gain insight into the world of audio drama. Participants were invited to submit short pitches for their own original radio drama ideas. From these submissions, twelve writers were selected to take part in an exclusive pitching opportunity with producers in December 2024. This networking opportunity provided them with direct access to industry professionals, offering a platform to pitch their ideas and take the next steps in the world of audio drama.



"The event was such an exciting experience that managed to make pitching really fun! It was great practice in pitching the same idea multiple times. There was a really warm, encouraging, supportive atmosphere to it. It's definitely made me less nervous and intimidated to pitch in future. I'm currently in conversations with a radio producer and hoping to pitch the idea I developed for the next Radio 4 commissioning round!"

Florence Espeut-Nickless

VIRDEE SHADOW SCRIPT SCHEME

BBC Writers and BBC Drama partnered with the independent production company, Magical Society, to launch a paid shadow script opportunity for the new BBC Drama Series, Virdee, based on the best-selling Harry Virdee books by AA Dhand. BBC Writers selected seven South Asian writers to take part in a workshop in Bradford where they met the series creator and editorial team behind the show and had the opportunity to brainstorm ideas. Following the workshop two writers, Mandip Singh Dhesi (BBC Northern Voices and Scripted alum) and Saima Mir, were selected to write a shadow script as a paid commission.



"I was thrilled to join the creative team on Virdee as shadow script writer. To be in the room with the author AA Dhand and series script editor Callum Dodgson to discuss elements of the show was the creative fulfilment I had been craving and I was even able to pitch some ideas for the show. It was during the third draft when I found another gear and a greater depth to my writing, which resulted in my most complete and rewarding script to date."

Mandip Singh Dhesi

THE VIRDEE SHADOW SCRIPT OPPORTUNITY
bbc.co.uk/writers/blog/virdee-shadow-script-scheme

OUT & ABOUT

NORTHERN IRELAND	NORTH & MIDLANDS	SOUTH	LONDON	SCOTLAND	WALES
Belfast – Production Unlocked (BBC) – W5 Life, SSE Arena	Create Central Coventry Expo	Bristol – Production Unlocked (BBC)	Muslim International Film Festival	Glasgow – Production Unlocked (BBC)	Hay Festival
Belfast Book Festival – Crescent Arts Centre		Dorchester – Dorset Scriptwriting Festival	BFI London Film Festival	Edinburgh – Pleasance Courtyard Masterclass	
Belfast Media Festival – The Mac	York – Aesthetica Short Film Festival	Poole – Lighthouse New Writing Showcase		Glasgow – BBC Comedy Festival	Cardiff – Celtic Media Festival
	Newcastle – It's Grin Up North	Norwich Film Festival	Birkbeck Festival of Writing	ONLINE	
Derry – Screenskills Careers Panel – The Nerve Centre	New Writing North – Newcastle Screenwriting Weekender	Cambridge Writers Showcase	Writers' Guild Event	Scribe Lounge Labs	
Derry – Foyle Film Festival/ BFI Film Academy Rehearsed Reading – The Nerve Centre		Bath Writers Workshop		Universities Digital Events	
BBC Comes to Town – Ballymena	Liverpool Accelerator			Shooting People – Screenwriting with Purpose	
BBC Comes to Town – Downpatrick	Birmingham – WABB launch in Birmingham Rep				
BBC Comes to Town – Enniskillen	Birmingham – Production Unlocked (BBC)				
BBC Comes to Town – Armagh	Lincoln – Indie Lincs International Film Festival				
	Wolverhampton – WABB launch at Arena Theatre				
BBC Comes to Town – Coleraine	Nottingham Playhouse Writers Showcase				
BBC Comes to Town – Omagh	Bolton Short Film Festival				

NEWS FROM OUR ALUMNI

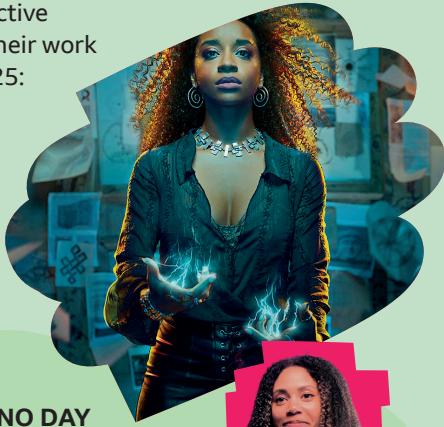
ON SCREEN

At the time of publication 24 recent alumni of BBC Writers have projects in active development on the BBC Drama slate. Nine recent alumni writers have had their work on screen over the past 12 months with more slated for broadcast across 2025:



THE RESPONDER series 2
BBC One/BBC iPlayer
Tony Schumacher (Voices)

"I was on the BBC Writers' North group. You have people coming in who I would have never in a million years got the opportunity to listen to."



DOMINO DAY
BBC Three/BBC iPlayer
Lauren Sequeira (Pilot)

"I did the BBC Writers' (Pilot) programme a few years ago. That was such a cool scheme where you were paired with a production company.... I got to really work with my voice and stories I wanted to tell."



THE JETTY
BBC One/BBC iPlayer
Cat Jones (Alfred Bradley Bursary Award winner)



MR LOVERMAN
BBC One/BBC iPlayer
adapted by Nathaniel Price (Pilot) from the book by Bernardine Evaristo



ONLY CHILD
BBC One/BBCiPlayer
Bryce Hart (Comedy Room) for BBC Scotland and BBC Comedy

"I was given a place in the Comedy Room development scheme which is where everything changed for me."



LUDWIG

BBC One/BBC iPlayer

Mark Brotherhood (previous winner of a BBC Children's new writing opportunity) for BBC Comedy

“Eventually there was something through the BBC Writersroom. I ended up producing a show called 'Worst Year of My Life Again' which got made in Australia.”



LOST BOYS AND FAIRIES

BBC One/BBC iPlayer

Daf James (Voices; Pilot)

“Lost Boys and Fairies came about because I was part of what's now called the Pilot scheme through BBC Writers.”



DINOSAUR

BBC Three/BBC iPlayer

Ashley Storrie (Voices) for BBC Scotland and BBC Comedy



DADDY ISSUES

BBC Three/BBC iPlayer

Danielle Ward (Pilot) for BBC Comedy



Ellis Howard (Write Across Liverpool) is playing the lead role in **WHAT IT FEELS LIKE FOR A GIRL** also set to hit screens in 2025



Billy Mager (Scripted) has his first original series, **REUNION** set for broadcast on BBC One later in 2025

“Sending my script in to the BBC Writers' Open Call was one of the best decisions I ever made. I agonised over my script, making sure it was perfect, before sending it, but what happened next was beyond my wildest imagination: the script was passed up to BBC Drama commissioning and greenlit for production. Don't overthink it. Don't procrastinate. Write your best script and send it in, and who knows what might happen next?”

NEWS FROM OUR ALUMNI

REGIONAL ROUND-UP

SCOTLAND HUB

Ali Taylor (Voices) selected for Pilot 24/25; selected for BBC Studios' EastEnders Writers' Studio

Alice Clark (Voices) selected for Scripted 23/24

Ashley Storrie (Voices) BAFTA Scotland win for Dinosaur Best Writer and Audience Award: Favourite Scot on Screen

Ben Tagoe (Pilot) selected for BBC Studios' Writer Spotlight programme

Bryce Hart (Comedy Room, Scottish Comedy Writers' Programme) Only Child was broadcast on BBC One and BBC iPlayer winter 24/25

Emma Ramsay (Voices) selected for Pilot 24/25

James Ley (Voices) selected for Scripted 23/24

Maryam Hamidi (Voices) guest writer for one episode on Lockerbie: A Search for Truth (Sky Atlantic)

Paolo Chianta (Voices) selected for Pilot 24/25. Best Original Single Drama in the Audio Drama Awards 2024 (finalist) commissioned for second BBC Radio 4 Audio Drama.

Ross Dunsmore (Pilot) Brit List 2024

Stef Smith (Voices; Scripted; Pilot) BAFTA Scotland win for Float, Television Scripted

WALES HUB

Alex Mathias (Voices; Scripted) selected for Pilot 24/25

Azuka Oforka (Voices) selected for the Brit List 2024

Daf James (Voices; Pilot) Lost Boys and Fairies broadcast 2024; winner of Virgin Atlantic Attitude Award for TV; and the Seriencamp Official Competition Award

Faebian Averies (Voices; Wales Writer in Residence; Scripted; Pilot) selected for Pilot 24/25, winner of the Brit List 2024 (for the best unproduced screenplays)

Martha Reed (Voices) commissioned to write an episode of Beyond Paradise series 3

Niall Grant Rowlands (Voices) selected for BBC Studios' EastEnders Writers' Studio

Rachel Harper (Voices) selected for BBC Studios' Writer Spotlight programme

Zia Holloway (Voices; BBC and World Production Wales Writers' Award) selected for Scripted 24/25

Four Welsh BBC Writers' alumni were selected for the prestigious Blaidd new writers' opportunity with Bad Wolf: **Alyn Farrow** (Voices; Scripted), **Emily Burnett** (Voices), **Faebian Averies** (Voices; Wales Writer in Residence; Scripted; Pilot), **Mared Jarman** (Writers' Access Group)

BELFAST HUB

Aisling Corristine (Voices) co-writer on feature film No Ordinary Heist, shooting 2025 and starring Eddie Marsan

Caitlin Magnall-Kearns (Voices) wrote Safe Space, Audio drama for BBC Radio 4

Cara Loftus (Scripted) wrote and executive produced her debut feature film Spilt Milk which has been nominated in the Script category of the IFTA Awards; commissioned to write an episode for the third series of Hidden Assets for RTE Drama

Cathriona Slammon (Voices) selected for Scripted 24/25

Matt McDevitt (Voices; Scripted; Element Pictures NI Writer's Award) selected for Pilot 24/25; member of the Blue Lights series 2 writers' room; commissioned to write an episode of Casualty



Noel McCann, Belfast Hub

Noel McCann (Voices; Pilot) commissioned to write an episode on Blue Lights series 2; wrote all three episodes of Gunpowder Siege for Sky History broadcast autumn 2024, a Broadcast International Hot Pick

Oliver Doone (Voices) selected for Scripted 24/25

ENGLAND: NORTH & MIDLANDS HUB

Anna Mason (Pilot) selected for BBC Studios' EastEnders Writers' Studio

Billie Collins (Voices) BBC Radio 4 Drama, Saga

Billy Mager (Scripted) debut original drama, Reunion, in production for BBC Drama

Charlie Swinbourne (Writers' Access Group) Waterloo Road episodes

Georgia Affonso (Voices; Scripted) first Audio Drama commission Wholesome broadcast on Radio 4 & BBC Sounds

Jasmin Mandi-Ghomi (Voices) selected for Kay Mellor fellowship 2025 with Leeds Playhouse and Rollem Productions

Karen Featherstone (Writers' Access Group) selected for BBC Studios' EastEnders Writers' Studio



Faebian Averies, Wales Hub

Kat Rose-Martin (Voices and Kay Mellor fellow) commissioned to write an episode of Dinosaur for BBC Comedy, Beyond Paradise for BBC Drama and 3 episodes of Waterloo Road. Kat has also written an episode of The Good Ship Murder for Channel 5

Liv Parkinson (Voices) selected for Scripted 23/24

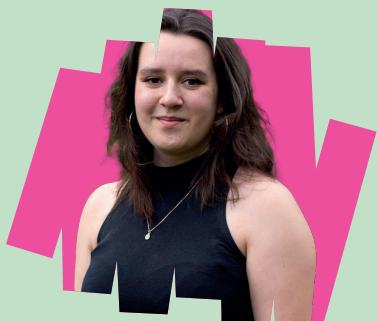
Mandip Singh Dhesi (Voices) Virdee Shadow Script scheme

Mark Williams (Voices) selected for Scripted 24/25

Nina Thomson (Write Across Liverpool) selected for Writers' Access Group

Paul Rigby (Write Across Liverpool) selected for Scripted 23/24

Sharma Angel-Walfall (Voices) selected to write for Season 2 of Doctor Who



Georgia Affonso, North & Midlands Hub

Tom Smith (Voices) selected to take part in the Dumping Ground shadow scheme

Four BBC Writers' alumni from the North and Midlands were selected for the prestigious Warner Bros Discovery Scheme: **Joe McNally** (Voices), **Katie Mulgrew** (Kudos North Writers Award), **Kamal Kaan** (Scripted), **Natalie Beech** (Voices)

ENGLAND: SOUTH HUB

Amy Trigg (Pilot; Writers' Access Group) co-written an episode of Toxic Town for Netflix with Jack Thorne

Florence Espeut-Nickless (Voices) selected for Dancing Ledge's Screenskills HETV New Talent Scheme 2023/4. Recipient of the Film 4/Peggy Ramsay Playwrights Award 2024. Writer in Residence at the Bristol Old Vic

Laura Horton (Voices) new play Lynn Faces Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2024

Martha Loader (Voices) Bruntwood award-winning play Bindweed premiered on stage in Summer 2024

Miles Sloman (Voices) commissioned to write an episode of Beyond Paradise series 3

Paul Holbrook (Voices) Brit List 2024

Tim X Atack (Pilot) BBC Radio 4 Drama series Vidya Wade

LONDON HUB

AJ Yi (Pilot) selected for EAST mentorship programme 24/25

Alan Flanagan (Scripted) selected for BBC Studios' Casualty Writers' Studio

Alvin Yu (Voices; Scripted) selected for Pilot 24/25

Amarjit Bassan (Voices) selected for BFI NETWORK's Early Development Fund with original feature film idea Bol Lalit Bol

Angela Franklyn (Writers' Access Group) part of BBC Studios' Casualty Writers Studio

Archie Maddocks (Voices) Crongton adaptation of Alex Wheatle's children's books with New Pictures for BBC Children's, broadcast scheduled Spring 2025

Chloë Mi Lin Ewart (Pilot) commissioned to write two episodes of Beyond Paradise for BBC

Daniel Katanchian (Scripted) selected for Pilot 24/25

Eva Edo (Voices; Scripted) selected to take part in the Dumping Ground shadow scheme



Eva Edo, London Hub

Insook Chappell (Pilot) commissioned to write two episodes for A Thousand Blows for Disney+

Jeffrey Aidoo (Comedy Room; Pilot) commissioned to write an episode for Boarders series 2

Jenny Takahashi Stark (Voices) Brit List 2024

Kat Golding (Writers' Access Group) BBC Radio 4 Drama Dragons of the Pool

Lydia Rui Hang (Voices) Brit List 2024

Maram Ahmed (Voices; Hot House Development Lab) won the 2024 FAB Publishers' prize

Matilda Ibini (Writers' Access Group) Dumping Ground episode

Nk'iru.Njoku (Voices; Scripted) selected for BBC Studios' EastEnders Writers' Studio

Sian Ejiwunmi-Le Berre (Pilot) co-created and co-wrote the Channel 5 series Ellis

Sophia Chetin-Leuner (Scripted) selected for Pilot 24/25; Sophia's play This Might Not Be It was at the Bush Theatre in 2024

Sorcha Kurien-Walsh (Pilot) writing an episode of season two of Rivals for Disney+; she was previously staff writer on season one

Theo Toksvig-Stewart (Scripted) wrote Endless Second, Audio drama for BBC Radio 4

Tom Melia (Pilot) commissioned to write an episode of Brassic for Sky

Zain Dada (Voices; Scripted) new play, Dizzy, premiered at Sheffield Playhouse in Autumn 2024

THE YEAR AHEAD



2025
2026

What we're looking forward to in the year ahead:

We will welcome circa 90 new writers to our new **SCRIPTED** and **VOICES** groups.

We will be working with partners in Bradford to design and launch a new **WRITE ACROSS** programme to align with Bradford City of Culture.

A new group of high profile writer mentors will be appointed to support the ongoing development of our **PILOT** writers.

Our **WRITERS ACCESS GROUP** writers will take part in a series of industry networking opportunities.

OPEN CALL will be back in November 2025 looking for exciting new writers for our **VOICES** and **SCRIPTED** programmes.

Our new short form production offer for emerging writers, directors and producers across the UK and Republic of Ireland will land on BBC Three and BBC iPlayer.



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR A DOWNLOADABLE
VERSION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT