



Dumbo © Disney Enterprises Inc

FILM SKILLS FUND

Developing a world-class UK workforce
for film production



Gareth at work (centre) © Curtis Baker

Foreword

"The success of the UK film industry is built on three pillars – the infrastructure of stages and facilities, the tax credit and the skilled workforce. Other countries have financial incentives and studios. Historically, our quality of crew has been the clincher.

"The demand for this talent is greater than ever today, with production buoyant. This offers a wealth of opportunities, but also poses great challenges. Productions seeking to hire talent are already experiencing skills shortages in key roles and unless we invest in training and continuing professional development across the workforce, recruitment difficulties will continue to grow. We also need targeted investment to build a truly inclusive workforce who can help us tell a greater variety of stories, authentically. We need not just new entrants, but professionals at every stage of their career.

"That is why we urge you to contribute to the Film Skills Fund. In the short-term, a modest investment in the fund allows you to hire from the talent pool of ScreenSkills schemes such as Trainee Finder. But it is also an investment in the future, not a 'cash in, trainee out' transaction. It is about introducing new people to the industry and retaining those who have started their careers in screen and helping them move up. This is critical if the UK is to remain a destination of choice for film production."

Gareth Ellis-Unwin (AMPAS, BAFTA, PGA and PGGB)

About ScreenSkills

ScreenSkills is the industry-led skills body for the UK's screen industries – animation, film, games, television, including children's and high-end, VFX and immersive technology. We work across the whole country to help build a diverse workforce with the skills needed for continued success, now and in the future.

We manage the Film Skills Fund and have invested more than £13 million in skills and training for UK film production, distribution and exhibition since it was established in 1999. Productions are encouraged to pay 0.5% of their core UK expenditure, up to a maximum contribution of £41,800. The payment – commonly known as the levy – is mandatory for those receiving public funding.

Films that have contributed include: *Solo: A Star Wars Story*, *Wonder Woman 1984*, *You Were Never Really Here*, *Evelyn*, *Dirty God*, *Gwen*, *Mary Queen of Scots*, *Outlaw King*, *Aladdin*, *Peterloo*, *Dumbo*, *Yardie*, *Stan and Ollie*, *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* and *The Favourite*.

We also lead the delivery of the BFI's Future Films Skills strategy, investing National Lottery funds, and receive funding from the Arts Council England. All these streams of income are crucial in enabling us to tackle skills shortages and to improve diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

Support from productions gives us a strong voice to work – on industry's behalf – on resolving a number of key challenges. These range from inadequate careers information in schools, where we have just secured Government funding to improve advice to 2 million young people, to making the new apprenticeship system more suitable for screen.

Contributing to the Film Skills Fund is one of many ways in which industry helps widen the talent pool and create a workforce fit for the challenges of the 21st century. ScreenSkills has a Giving Back menu of opportunities to support UK screen including volunteering as a mentor and providing information to the Skills Forecasting Service to help us target investments better.

Please contact givingback@screenskills.com for more information on our Giving Back initiative.

Entry

Training and placement of new entrants into the industry is vital for the growth and sustainability of UK film. ScreenSkills helps find people interested in working in film and supports them to match their skills, interests and expectations with the jobs available.

Careers information

We offer comprehensive careers information about roles in the screen industries and the pathways in. We work with partners to reach a wide audience of those in education, new entrants to screen, parents and careers advisers. Find out more at www.screenskills.com/careers

Our activity includes:

- **Open Doors:** two-hour networking sessions for new entrants to get careers advice directly from industry experts.
- **Boot camps:** these taster days, delivered UK-wide, are designed to give talented new entrants an overview of the wide range of behind-the-camera roles available.
- **Careers events:** we attend creative careers events and skills shows to inspire and inform diverse young talent. We also host and attend events for careers advisers.

“I thought Open Doors was a fantastic event where I was able to gain a deeper insight into the industries' occupations, allowing me to plan ahead my future.”

- Open Doors Glasgow attendee -



Open Doors Belfast 2018



Trainee Finder

[Trainee Finder](#) is a paid placement scheme which matches trainees with productions to offer proper on-the-job experience. The year-long programme includes training courses and industry masterclasses on issues such as health and safety and set etiquette to prepare successful candidates for working in film and to improve their employability.

To be eligible to receive trainees from Trainee Finder, productions must pay in to the [Film Skills Fund](#). In return, the scheme will contribute £300 per week towards a trainee's salary for up to six months of their placement.

Of the Trainee Finder trainees in 2018/2019, 66% were women, 60% from outside London and 20% black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME).

In 2019/2020 we aim to place 150 trainees in departments including camera, art, assistant director, production office, locations, video assist, costume, hair and makeup, sound and film accounts.

“The Last Tree is eager to support the next generation of filming talent, so we were very pleased to be able to place trainees in camera, costume, art department and editing. All of the placements were a great success. We were particularly impressed with the trainees’ professional attitude, understanding of the filmmaking process and their ability to learn and consolidate their skills.”

- Myf Hopkins, producer of *The Last Tree* -

Nichola Hao
Camera trainee



Nichola worked as an assistant director on national TV in China before studying for an MA in film directing at Bournemouth University. After she gathered some experience in the camera department, she decided to apply to Trainee Finder to further her career.

Nichola appreciated the structure and the support provided by Trainee Finder, through which she completed a six-month placement on Warner Bros.' *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* at Leavesden Studios. Since then she has followed the same crew to work on BBC Films' *His House*, supporting her ambition to become a feature film focus puller.

“I completed two amazing placements during my time on Trainee Finder and it's given me an incredible base to launch my career. Also, Trainee Finder has provided some great new knowledge in a variety of topics outside of these placements - such as finance, networking, and even a first aid course! Whilst on the placements there is constant support if needed, and it's a very well respected scheme in the film industry...”

- Pete Blaxill, sound trainee, *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* and *Artemis Fowl* -

“Pete has been a great trainee and perfect addition to our team. He has the correct attitude and work ethic to become a great sound engineer. We look forward to stepping him up and becoming our second AS in future.”

- Colin Nicholson, sound mixer and Pete Blaxill's supervisor on *Artemis Fowl* -

Kirsty Wright
Sound trainee



While at university Kirsty did some work experience on a low-budget feature film, filling in for a member of the sound team. Having completed the production sound MA at the NFTS Kirsty was unclear about next steps and had little financial flexibility to support relocation for work opportunities.

A Trainee Finder placement on Universal's *Mamma Mia! 2* boosted her confidence and experience, as a result of which she has been working as a second assistant sound and boom op on projects in Yorkshire. Her ambition is to become a feature film production sound mixer who can inspire other women to pursue careers in sound.

Funded programmes

Programmes for new-entrants that we have supported include:

Art department: Absolute beginners

London Film School in London

This practical 15-day course is aimed at beginners looking to start a career in the art department. Participants learn about drafting, model-making, location surveying, storyboarding and script breakdowns and scheduling.

Different Voices: Neurodiverse film talent development

Biggerhouse Films and 104 Films in the South West

This training and development programme develops 15 neurodiverse filmmakers through the creative process of producing short films and involves mentoring and tutor support and developing wider industry understanding.



I Am Not A Witch © Soda Pictu

Producing for VFX

Escape Studios in London

The six-week intensive course is designed to take people from under-represented groups and regions and train them in the skills and knowledge they need to work in VFX production.

Diverse Voices

Northern Film and Media Academy in the North East

The programme targets emerging professionals in the North East through training including boot camps and masterclasses; the aim being to address social-economic inclusion in the region and the wider lack of diversity in the screen industries.



Grips for Heroes

Guild of British Camera Technicians

Working with the UK armed forces charity Help for Heroes and other military charities, ScreenSkills offers veterans an introduction to film and television via a new entry-level scheme, Grips for Heroes. In the programme, selected ex-military personnel are graded and paired with a grip mentor before being placed on the Trainee Finder scheme.

“It struck me that anyone that could keep an armoured vehicle working in the desert could probably cope with the physical, technical and logistical demands of working in film. I believe that opening up the world of film to people who might not otherwise have thought it possible could be an enormously powerful way to signal what these men and women are capable of doing while addressing genuine skills shortages in the industry.”

- ScreenSkills Head of Film Gareth Ellis-Unwin -

Early

We award funding to programmes that help people in the early stages of their film career find the right job and develop skills specialisms. Supported programmes include:

Pathway to location management

The Production Guild in Northern Ireland

Funded to address skills shortages on the ground, this programme aims to equip location assistants in Northern Ireland with the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to progress their careers as location managers.

Film On

104 Films in London

Disabled filmmakers learn about the camera department and are trained to shoot on 35mm film. The training, led by award-winning directors of photography Ben Hecking and Alex Ryle, is designed to give an overview of the structure of the camera team and the duties of a camera trainee or assistant.

“The training was amazing, this was so special and I'm glad to have been able to take part. Watching back the rushes and working with the colourist was my favourite part. It was magical.”

- Film On trainee Ellen Dunn -



Stunts introductory workshop

Screen Nation Media in London

A workshop introducing more black, Asian and ethnic minority (BAME) talent to the world of action stunts with features, talks and practical advice from industry practitioners. Due to a significant shortage of BAME stunt performers, it is vital to continue to promote working in this area.

Introduction to set decorating

Talking Point Film and Television in Shepperton

A four-day practical course examining all areas of set decoration, from script to screen, and covering how the team collaborates with the art, props and construction departments, the roles within the art department and which skills and knowledge are required for each.



The Favourite © Element Pictures



Yardie, photo by Alex Bailey © Warp Films

Experienced

We fund a number of training programmes that offer support in helping professionals acquire more experience or specialise further in their fields, enabling them to step up. Courses we support include:

Production management course

BECTU in London and Manchester

This five-day modular course equips individuals working in production with the skills required to become an effective production manager. Using interactive seminars, practical exercises, workshops and case studies from industry, participants come away with a strong foundation for advancing in their career.

“It has been a real pleasure to train these groups of people, and I am pleased the feedback has been so positive. It is not always easy to find the right level, as so many are from different areas of production and have knowledge levels that vary greatly, but response has been fantastic, and I look forward to seeing how they progress in future.”

- Production management course trainer Addie Orfila -

Production Finance Market's New Talent Strand

Film London in London

Promising emerging filmmakers with projects budgeted up to 1 million euros are offered the chance to pitch and connect to international financiers at the Production Finance Market (PFM). The event takes place alongside the BFI London Film Festival and gives and offers new talent an amazing opportunity to network with industry stalwarts.

Industry Sessions – Art Directing

Talking Point Film and Television Ltd in Brighton, Manchester and London

The Art Directing Industry Sessions is a programme of informal panel sessions with established practitioners sharing their recent challenges and the solutions they have found in a safe, film-focused environment.

Draughting

Creative Media Skills in the South East

Bespoke five-day draughting 'learn and connect' courses designed especially for working professionals who want to upskill and broaden their network.



Calibre, photo by Anne Binkebank © Calibre Films / Netflix



Expert

Enforcing the need to support talent at all levels, we continue to deliver training to professionals in later career stages. Supported programmes include:

Future Leaders in Distribution

Birds Eye View in London

A leadership training programme for women, those who identify as women across the spectrum: transgender, non-cisgender and non-binary, with distribution experience and who have the ambition to run or own a distribution business or operate at a higher executive level, addressing the lack of representation in UK film distribution and sales

Leading Lights in Distribution

Film Distributors' Association in London

A senior management course for distribution executives with a minimum of five years' industry experience or professionals with an established career. This course has been designed to address the commercial demands of operating a business, focusing on best-practice in managing employees, as well as dealing with standard financial and legal issues.

Unconscious bias training

British Independent Film Awards in London

ScreenSkills worked with the British Independent Film Awards (BIFA) to offer training to its membership to recognise where their unconscious bias influences their voting decisions.

“We're thrilled to be working with ScreenSkills on creating this ground-breaking training programme. Our aim is to ensure the playing field remains level for all filmmakers regardless of their budgets, subject matter, industry profile, ethnicity or gender – an ethos we hope will benefit not just BIFA's process and voters but also the wider industry.”

- Amy Gustin and Deena Wallace, co-directors of BIFA -

Moving up to production accounting

The Production Guild in London

This five-day course, run at Pinewood Studios, gives participants the skills and knowledge they need to make the next step up in their career confidently. The programme introduces participants to the Movie Magic Budgeting tool and covers topics such as insurance claim procedures and corrections, forecasting and monitoring and dealing with unexpected scenarios.

Inside Pictures

Inside Pictures and NFTS in London and Los Angeles

Designed to fast track the business careers and leadership potential of its participants, Inside Pictures gives them a 360 degree overview of the international business of film, unparalleled access to senior industry professionals in the UK and USA and increased industry profile.



The Souvenir © BBC Films, JWH Films and BFI

Career progression

Craft and tech bursaries

We offer grants of up to £800 for freelancers working in eligible craft, technical and production departments in the UK film industry to undertake training in skills areas identified as a priority.

<https://www.screenskills.com/opportunities/bursaries/>



Hair and make-up artist Heather Pitchford was awarded a bursary to attend a course on applying facial hair. She said:

"It will change the entire level of what I can do and have a hugely positive impact in terms of my confidence. I feel a lightbulb has gone on and I have finally grasped the skills I was hoping to achieve. I feel very lucky to have benefited from this bursary."

Art assistant Lili Lea Abraham was able to attend Art Department Masterclass: World Building, an international education programme that took place in Vilnius in June 2018. She said: *"It's hard to express in words how inspiring and invaluable the experience of attending the masterclass was."*



Props and model maker Noel Kellett secured a bursary to attend a compositing for visual effects course, to develop his skills and understanding of the tools used in 2D compositing. He said the course *"...broadened the range of potential work available to me in a new medium in the film and television industry. I've gained skills and confidence around moving over into digital effects."*

Mentoring

ScreenSkills has worked with partners to develop guidelines of best practice and create a pan-UK mentoring network, helping support industry professionals at all levels develop their career.

Programmes funded in 2018/19

In 2018/19 ScreenSkills has been able to fund the following programmes:

Programme	Partner	Location
Location manager	Sgil Cymru	Wales
Film On	104 Films	London
Industry Sessions - art directing	Talking Point Film and Television Ltd	Brighton, Manchester and London
Draughting	Creative Media Skills	South East
Pathway to location management	The Production Guild	Northern Ireland
Script supervision	GBCT	London
Future leaders in distribution	Birds Eye View	London
Leading lights in distribution	Film Distributors' Association	London
Different Voices: Neurodiverse film talent development	Biggerhouse Films and 104 Films	South West
ShortFLIX	Creative England	West Midlands
Introduction to set decorating	Talking Point Film and Television	South East
Boot camps	Screen Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber
Diverse Voices	Northern Film and Media Academy	North East
Runner Ready	Signal Film & Media	North West
Widening the lens - Developing new talent	Encounters Festivals Ltd	South West
Producing for VFX	Escape Studios	London
Create jobs: Rushes	A New Direction	London
Art department: Absolute beginners	London Film School	London

Step into Production Accounts	The Production Guild	Northern Ireland
Grips for Heroes	GBCT	Yorkshire
Manimation	The Children's Media Conference	North West
Stunts introductory workshop	Screen Nation Media	London
Script supervisor	UWE	South West
Grips and cranes	Buckinghamshire College	South East
Unconscious bias training	BIFA	London
Production Finance Market's New Talent Strand	Film London	London
Moving up to production accounting	The Production Guild	London
Production management course	BECTU	London and Manchester
Inside Pictures	Inside Pictures and NFTS	London and Los Angeles



Boot camp, photo by Lisa Stonehouse © Screen Yorkshire

Contact the team

To keep up to date with our opportunities, to apply for funding or to pay into the Film Skills Fund, please get in touch with the team.

Head of Film:

Gareth Ellis-Unwin | Francesca.Brasington@screenskills.com

Gareth, a BAFTA and Academy Award-winning producer of films including *The King's Speech*, leads the delivery of the BFI's Future Film Skills 10-point action plan and sets the overall strategic direction for the Film Skills Fund.

Film production liaison manager:

Tariq Wahr | Tariq.Wahr@screenskills.com

Liaises with film producers, studios and distributors, outlining the benefits of contributing into the Film Skills Fund.

CPD lead for film

Hannah Corneck | Hannah.Corneck@screenskills.com

Hannah commissions continuing professional development (CPD) to support people working in the UK film industry.

Inclusivity manager:

Michelle Moon Lim | MichelleMoon.Lim@screenskills.com

Leads on diversity and inclusion strategies and action plans for ScreenSkills.

Production liaison executive:

Lauren Grace Bergin | LaurenGrace.Bergin@screenskills.com

The contact for Film Skills Fund enquiries and payments.

Film Trainee Finder lead:

Tom Holmes | Tom.Holmes@screenskills.com

Oversees Trainee Finder, including recruitment and training, and handles production placement queries.

Film coordinator:

Francesca Brasington | Francesca.Brasington@screenskills.com

Organises Gareth's diary and handles all film team-related queries.

Trainee Finder administrator:

Jo Myall | Jo.Myall@screenskills.com

Advises prospective trainees about applying to Trainee Finder and liaises with productions about trainee's paperwork.

Screen mentoring associate:

Jane Saunders | Jane.Saunders@screenskills.com

The contact if you are interested in finding out more about being a mentor or mentee.

The Film Skills Fund....

... develops and sustains a
world-class UK workforce for
film production

