



Annual Review 2023/2024

Chair's Statement

The work that ScreenSkills does in supporting the professional development of the screen industries workforce has never been more important. It has been a challenging year for the sector across the UK. The impact of the writers' strike and the advertising downturn has had an adverse effect on people working behind the camera. Despite this, the UK screen industries retain their preeminent global standing. To protect and build on that reputation, it's vital that we, as a sector, work together. ScreenSkills is grateful to our many partners and contributors for the work we have done together over the past year.

During 2023/2024, ScreenSkills and the Skills Funds continued to provide support to people at every stage of their career, helping them develop their skills, and reinforce their existing experience through training and continuous professional development programmes. The five Skills Funds delivered training across the UK, responding to the specific needs of the industry as well as continuing to offer programmes including First Break, Trainee Finder, Make A Move, Leaders of Tomorrow and Film Forward. Together with a comprehensive portfolio of digital e-learning and short courses, the Skills Funds have helped to attract, develop, and retain the skilled workforce which is fundamental to the sector's ongoing global reputation and success.

ScreenSkills also played a significant role in the work of the Skills Task Force, and the subsequent report, A Sustainable Future in November 2023, recognised ScreenSkills as the 'lead option' to develop a pan-industry skills strategy. In response, ScreenSkills is undertaking a Governance Review and concurrently has been consulting with a broad cross-section of industry stakeholders to develop a strategy for ScreenSkills. The results of both work programmes will be published later this year.

The departure of ScreenSkills' Chair, Richard Johnson and Chief Executive, Seetha Kumar, gave us an opportunity to reflect on all that they, and ScreenSkills, has achieved in recent years. Highlights include the transition from Creative Skillset to ScreenSkills and the move from public to industry funding; the creation of the Unscripted TV Skills Fund in 2021; securing BFI-awarded National Lottery Funding for the Future Film Skills Programme and ScreenSkills' response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

On behalf of ScreenSkills, I would like to thank Richard and Seetha, for their tireless commitment to the organisation, and welcome Laura Mansfield, the new Chief Executive who started in January with immense passion and energy.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues on the ScreenSkills Board as well as the members of the Skills Councils, Working and Steering Groups, who have continued to support and guide everyone working for ScreenSkills.

Lisa Opie
Chair

Chief Executive's Statement

Since before becoming Chief Executive in January and having worked in TV production for 30 years, I was always aware of the excellent work of ScreenSkills in supporting our talented workforce who work behind the camera. Since joining, I've met people across the UK benefitting from the training and development programmes provided by the five Skills Funds, and many of the training providers that ScreenSkills works with.

In 2023/2024, the Skills Funds invested £13.1m in training and development programmes across the UK for people at every career stage. For example, the High-end Television Skills Fund's inclusivity programme, First Break - for people who might never have considered a career in the industry - worked with industry and local partners to provide knowledge and taster experiences of working on a production. And more than 330 people successfully applied for Trainee Finder, ScreenSkills' early entrant placement programme provided by the Animation, Children's, Film and HETV Skills Funds.

Supporting people's progression through the industry, to retain the talented workforce is more critical than ever. Leaders of Tomorrow, from the HETV Skills Fund - in its third year - is supporting 66 participants with bespoke training, support and placements to nurture the next generation of decision makers. Make A Move and Make a Move Plus provide funding for HETV and film productions for on-the-job training for people ready to progress to more senior roles. This year, the Film Skills Fund's Film Forward programme once again offered Black and Asian professionals with at least five years' experience to progress into senior roles in the industry.

In terms of unscripted television, the impact of the downturn in production has been particularly acute. This year, the Unscripted TV Skills Fund continued to offer its popular Short Courses programme, expanding the number of courses to 69, and witnessing a 53% increase in course attendance.

Creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce remains a priority for ScreenSkills. Alongside programmes such as Film Forward and First Break, as lead partner of Discover! Creative Careers, ScreenSkills continued to actively engage with school pupils identified as facing the greatest disadvantage in accessing career information about the creative industries. Apprenticeships are also invaluable in improving the sector's diversity. This year our flexi-job agency pilot, funded by the Department for Education with lead supporter Amazon Prime and partners Sky with APX Content Ventures, Banijay, Lime Pictures and Fremantle ended. I am pleased that the vast majority of these apprentices have gone on to secure further employment. In the coming year, with the generous support of The Adobe Foundation, ScreenSkills will continue to design and deliver further programmes to help make the workforce more diverse and inclusive.

The benefit of collective investment in skills is at the heart of ScreenSkills offering. In 2023/2024, ScreenSkills developed a ScreenSkills Training Passport with partners BBC Studios, Sky and ITV Studios and with a steering group including Pact. Launched as a pilot in May 2024, the passport provides a record of standardised, industry-approved training that production staff can take from one production to the next.

Chief Executive's Statement Cont.

Since the start of this year, with the support of the Executive team and the Board and in discussions with colleagues across the industry, we have started to develop a new strategy for ScreenSkills that will enable the delivery of a wider skills plan for the entire screen industries. I will be very much looking forward to sharing and delivering this strategy which will be based on collaboration and partnership, for the benefit of the talented and creative workforce that we all support.

What is ScreenSkills?

ScreenSkills is the skills body for the UK screen industries. An independent charity, industry-funded and business-led, it helps to train people at every career stage who make UK content which everyone loves and trusts.

ScreenSkills invests industry skills levy contributions and funding secured through bids to commission and deliver targeted skills development programmes and support. By identifying key skills gaps using industry data and insight, ScreenSkills plays a leading role in the creation of high quality, accessible and standardised training and development programmes that creates and sustains a skilled and inclusive workforce, enabling growth and future innovation, and actively contributing to the future creativity, health and prosperity of the sector.

ScreenSkills is evidence-based and data-informed, a respected thought-leader across the sector, and an agile delivery partner embedded throughout the entire cycle of content production. Our unique position has enabled ScreenSkills to build a much needed unified, cross-industry, strategic approach to training and skills focusing on skills needed today and the likely skills tomorrow.

Priorities for 2023/2024

- Removing or reducing skills gaps and shortages. Implementing skills and training programmes to support consistent, high-quality and continuous professional career development.
- A fair and inclusive screen sector. ScreenSkills is committed to removing barriers to entry and supporting people from disadvantaged and disconnected communities to have equal and fair access to training and employment by embedding diversity and inclusion in all its activity.
- Opportunities for the whole of the UK. The screen industries operate UK-wide. ScreenSkills promotes and encourages easy to access opportunities for everyone pursuing a career in the screen industries.
- Enduring and impactful partnership and collaboration. Working across the screen and wider creative industries, ScreenSkills works with partners to shape and influence skills initiatives, innovation and growth, and policy.

ScreenSkills in numbers

Nations and Regions

	% of ScreenSkills beneficiaries	% of general population	% of screen workforce
East of England	6.1%	9.5%	6.8%
East Midlands	2.4%	7.3%	4.5%
London	33.9%	13.1%	42.5%
North East	1.3%	3.9%	1.7%
Northern Ireland	3.6%	2.8%	3.1%
North West	8.6%	11.1%	9.8%
Scotland	9.5%	8.2%	6.3%
South East	12.5%	13.9%	12.2%
South West	9.0%	8.5%	4.5%
Wales	4.5%	4.6%	1.0%
West Midlands	3.5%	8.9%	3.7%
Yorkshire and The Humber	5.0%	8.2%	3.9%

ScreenSkills beneficiaries

ScreenSkills supported 26,083 individual beneficiaries across the UK who took part in a total of 77,365 interactions.

Individual beneficiaries – **26,083**

Activities on average per beneficiary – **3**

Interactions – **77,365**

Satisfaction rate – **93%**

Diversity and inclusion

ScreenSkills supports beneficiaries at every career stage and right across the UK. With diversity and inclusion at the heart of its delivery plans and activities, it is committed to supporting a sustainable, and diverse pipeline of talent of people from all backgrounds and locations. In 2023/2024, ScreenSkills exceeded the majority of its D&I targets.

Target 10% – **Disability 12%**

Target 10% – **LGBT 12%**

Target 20% – **Minority Ethnic Groups 18%**

Target 50% – **Women 55%**

ScreenSkills Skills Funds

ScreenSkills manages five Funds, paid for by industry to deliver training and support for the screen industries. Four of the Funds - Animation, Children's TV, Film and High-end TV - qualify for specific tax relief.

The investments made by the Skills Funds are determined by the Skills Councils. Membership of the Councils is drawn from across the screen industries. The Councils ensure that the Funds respond and adapt to changing skills needs. Members are not remunerated and voluntarily give their time.

The Skills Fund Councils and industry working groups advise on skills initiatives which strengthen workforce inclusion. This enables employers to develop workforces which reflect their screen audiences and users.

Key training programmes and initiatives

First Break (HETV Skills Fund)

A pre-new entrant inclusivity programme for individuals from socially excluded and diverse groups based locally to a production.

Trainee Finder

An early-level work placement programme that places individuals on programmes across the UK and funded by the Animation, Children's TV, Film and High-end TV Skills Funds.

Leaders of Tomorrow (HETV Skills Fund)

A three-year programme to increase diversity among leadership roles in television offers mentoring, access to industry experts, funded placements, and leadership and management training.

Short Courses Programme (Unscripted TV Skills Fund)

An extensive range of free, online career and personal development training courses to help individuals move up to a new role, learn about workplace best practices and business affairs, such as finance and HR.

Film Forward (Film Skills Fund)

Supports experienced professionals from minority ethnic groups in advancing into more senior roles. The programme matches film professionals with at least five years' experience in a variety of below-the-line roles with paid opportunities, alongside professional development coaching and bursary support.

Dream Big! (Children's TV Skills Fund)

For new entrants from diverse backgrounds, the programme offered six beneficiaries six-month paid placements part-funded by industry.

E-learning for everyone

E-learning modules and topic-specific masterclasses and webinars from pre-entry to expert covering all aspects of career support and training, inclusion and diversity as well as health and well-being.

Training providers

ScreenSkills works with training providers across the UK to deliver high quality courses and programmes that target the skills gaps and shortages identified by the Skills Councils and working groups. ScreenSkills has launched a dedicated newsletter and information hub on its website for training providers.

Bursaries

Bursaries are a cost-effective way of tackling barriers to skills access and career progression. Bursary investment was funded from the BFI via National Lottery funds and through industry contributions to the Children's TV, Film, High-end TV and Unscripted TV Skills Funds.

1,925 bursary applications. £1.05m invested in 948 bursaries.

Bursary Case Studies

Christina Sinclair - Assistant Producer

"It was watching natural history programmes as a child that hooked me in..." she said. "I found them fascinating and just wanted to be on location bringing the stories to life."

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Sekayi Mauluka - Assistant Producer

"Originally I wanted to work in print journalism," she said. "This changed in my final year at university where I ended up self-producing a documentary for my final project."

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Digital and social reach

ScreenSkills continued to develop its platform and, focusing on Instagram and LinkedIn, delivered significant account growth.

- Total user accounts on ScreenSkills platform: **209,226**
- Up from 176,937 in 2022/2023
- Platform page views: **6.4 million**
- LinkedIn: **52,173**
- Instagram: **15,975**
- Facebook: **27,005**
- X: **74,508**

ScreenSkills Training Passport

This year, ScreenSkills developed a pilot Training Passport together with BBC Studios, ITV Studios and Sky, and with a steering group including Pact. The ScreenSkills Training Passport was launched in May 2024 and the first programmes to use the pilot included BBC Studios' Casualty, The One Show, Strictly Come Dancing and ITV Studios pilot with MultiStory Media's current affairs shows Tonight and The Martin Lewis Money Show Live Summer Special.

TV Access Project (TAP)

In 2023/2024, ScreenSkills partnered with The TV Access Project (TAP), an alliance of the UK's biggest broadcasters and streamers working together to improve access provision for deaf, disabled and neurodivergent talent. ScreenSkills is hosting guidelines produced by TAP for disability inclusion in the UK television production industry called The 5As.

[**Read More**](#)

Discover! Creative Careers

ScreenSkills has continued to lead the delivery of the Discover! Creative Careers programme in partnership and collaboration with over 25 organisations that represent the breadth of the creative industries.

Re-launched in February 2023, this industry-led programme, funded by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, with additional support from Arts Council England, aims to inspire young people aged 11-18 across England to consider a career in the creative industries.

Activity includes a dedicated website, industry insight sessions, creative industries awareness training and Discover! Creative Careers Week, the annual flagship event that engaged with more than 25,000 young people in 2023. The focus of the work is on 77 priority areas in England selected based on the Department for Education's Opportunity Areas and Arts Council England's Levelling Up for Culture Places.

Film and Animation Skills Funds

We made significant strategic decisions to build on the strengths and revitalise both the Film and Animation Skills Funds in 2023/2024. We reviewed the membership of our Councils to ensure they are truly representative of the nations and regions, the production companies and animation houses, from the very small companies up to the big household names. While we maintained a high level of experience to ensure stability, we've brought in really passionate people to help drive us forward. We are focused not just on what we have achieved, but most importantly discussing and debating what we need to do next.

We've made significant changes for the productions and animation houses who pay into the Funds. For animation houses, we have extended opportunities to support employed staff - not just freelancers.

The film team has been reorganised to streamline the way we operate and make us more effective at working with productions. The team is able to develop a deep knowledge of what productions want, helping us deliver a much more bespoke offer for them. We're seeing the impact of that already in 2024/2025 with a high proportion of our contribution target already being achieved, which is extraordinary.

We are particularly proud of our Make a Move programme for film where productions can get up to £15k in funding to help an individual get the support they need to step up to a more senior role. We've also focused on transferers programmes such as finance into film accountancy and architects to art department.

In animation we have really listened to what industry wants and focused on mid-level support, while also committing to another round of our flagship new entrant scheme Trainee Finder.

One of the highlights, personally, has been for me – and members of my team, to get out and about around the UK, both at events and meeting our colleagues in production companies, animation houses, and, of course, our beneficiaries. In the coming year, we will continue evolving as we celebrate 25 years of the Film Skills Fund.

Emma Turner

Head of Film, Animation and Future Skills

Film and animation Case Studies

Jamie Chua – Animation Trainee

“When a story is animated there’s no limit to how it can be told, and animated stories never fail to transport me into fantastical and vivid worlds.” It was this endless possibility that first drew Jamie Chua to animation.”

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Charanprite Dhami – 2nd Assistant Director

“Being part of the ScreenSkills family has been wonderful, they have given me so many opportunities to get involved in things.”

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Merv Lewis – Production Manager

Merv is a great fan of ScreenSkills and acknowledges its contribution to the industry; as well as going on its training courses - “Its help is invaluable.”

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Chair, Film Skills Council

A real focus for us this year was supporting mid-career progression. It’s a hugely important stage for the workforce and one that can often get overlooked by industry. That’s why programmes supported by the Fund, like Make a Move, were put in place to direct relevant training, guidance and on-set experience to provide a pathway for those looking to make that key next step in their careers. That’s mirrored in Film Forward which aims to offer candidates the vital hands-on experience and tailored learning opportunities to help Black and Asian professionals advance to more senior roles.

In 2023/2024 there was a move to review and change the membership of the Fund’s Skills Council in order to more fully reflect and represent the UK film industry. The new members help bring together experts from production companies, studios, broadcasters and producers as well as post and VFX houses. It also ensures the Council has representatives from all nations and regions as well as members from minority ethnic groups. Their input and expertise will have a direct impact on the income and investment of the Fund to support the industry workforce. It will help shape training strategy, develop new talent and put in place programmes that provide people with the tools needed to take that next step in their film careers.

The popularity of the Working With Physical Celluloid Film training proved that, while we are braced for exciting changes, there remains a place for some of the more traditional methods of filmmaking and I’m incredibly pleased that we can be there to cater to it. That filmmaker support was seen again in the returning First Time Feature Filmmakers, offering both expert guidance and financial support to those looking to develop their first films. These continuing professional development (CPD) initiatives are a vital part of what the Fund and Council do.

In the coming year, we look forward to celebrating 25 years of the Film Skills Fund and building on the positive changes we've made to enable us to better support industry and the workforce.

Anita Overland

Chair, Film Skills Council

Chair, Animation Skills Council

Providing pathways to both enter and progress within animation have been central to the Fund's planning this year. This was highlighted in the returning Animation Trainee Finder, which once again offered vital production placements to new entrants, the Fund's support for the 3Dami's Summer Camp and the development and funding of CPD courses and mid-level training programmes.

Those programmes focused on new entrant support ensured we were able to welcome people into the industry in great numbers – 27 from the 3Dami Summer Camp alone received training and teaching in animation skills that will serve them well on their career journeys. A further 30 joined as trainees with some great stories coming through about their time on production placements. For those at more of a mid-senior level, we were able to offer progression support through the delivery of programmes sharpening the creative and technical skills needed in our industry.

I've been particularly pleased in the way the Fund has been able to respond to industry – both through external studies and our own knowledge via fellow council members – to develop training that is best placed to respond to its needs. Our continuing professional development (CPD) courses offer key training to those at a level in their career when they're looking to make that next step-up. We were also able to work with some of the other Funds to promote industry awareness around accessibility requirements.

We'll again be working with industry to shape training and opportunities that work for those at each stage of their career, providing them with the tools that both they, and the wider industry, needs. A host of training has already been agreed that aims to support the workforce and serve industry. There's a Direct to Company programme that will provide training targeted to meet the company's needs, a Make a Move initiative that provides further support and hands-on experience to mid-level professionals, a continuation of our CPD courses and further development of co-funded courses that aim to improve the workplace for everybody.

Tom Box

Chair, Animation Skills Council

High-end Television Skills Fund

The uniqueness of the High-end TV Skills Fund is that we are people-led, not initiative-led. We build strong, trusted relationships with those we support in the workforce for the life of their careers and with the productions we serve for the long term.

Our inclusive Leaders of Tomorrow programme is a good example of that. Its purpose is to remove barriers for individuals aspiring to move into senior leadership roles. The three-year cycle means we can make sustained and bespoke investment to help individuals to reach their career potential and they know that even when they've graduated from the programme, the Fund is always here to help them thrive and progress.

I am really proud of our job share programme. Guiding productions to better understand how to make job shares work in any grade, and offering funding for a cross-over day. We have invested in this programme for several years, which has made a massive difference in normalising job sharing, which means we can keep more talent in the industry and provide tangible ways to return post a career break. It's about changing behaviour and culture in the industry for the long term.

2023/2024 was the 10-year anniversary of the Skills Fund. We ran events across the UK, hand-in-hand with local beneficiaries and production companies to highlight the solid impact of the Fund's investment across the UK. It was moving to hear how people's careers have been transformed by the work of the Fund and a powerful reminder that joined up sustained skills investment can make a real difference.

Looking to 2024/2025, it will be an exciting year for our Leaders of Tomorrow programme, with the graduation of our very first cohort as well as recruiting for a new fourth cohort. We are launching a third iteration of our access coordinator training and I am looking forward to introducing a new HETV unscripted working group, that will complement the wider and very successful established Unscripted TV Skills Fund to reflect the increasing number of tax incentive benefiting unscripted productions being made out of the UK.

There continue to be challenges for our industry. We ended the financial year with £6.3m in contributions from 185 productions, which was a reduction from the previous year, driven mostly by the impact from the US strikes. Despite the challenges, the HETV market remains incredibly buoyant in the UK and continues to make this industry an exciting, creative place to work. I am excited to look to the future and the continued impact the Fund will deliver to ensure a first-class workforce.

Kaye Elliott

Director, High-end TV Skills Fund

HETV Case Studies

Jenny Balmer – Costume Designer

“When a story is animated there's no limit to how it can be told, and animated stories never fail to transport me into fantastical and vivid worlds.” It was this endless possibility that first drew Jamie Chua to animation.”

[Read More](#)

Karlwyn Dove – Producer

“It was through ScreenSkills’ Make a Move programme that a step into HETV became possible. The initiative encourages on-the-job training to those identified by colleagues as ready to make the next step in their careers.”

[Read More](#)

Chair, High-end TV Skills Council

We have a world-class television industry in the UK and the High-end TV Skills Fund is one of the things that makes it world class. I was inspired to work with the Fund because I see how it can give people the opportunity to have a long-term career in television, not just go from job to job. The Fund has created an environment and culture that appreciates training.

The industry as a whole is maturing and the Fund is maturing with it. Over the years, production has increasingly moved out of London and into the nations and regions. The HETV Skills Fund team is based all around the country and because of this spread they really understand the nuances of how production works in a slightly different way in each area and have great relationships with local freelancers and production companies.

We celebrated the tenth anniversary of HETV Skills Fund with UK-wide roadshows running throughout 2023/2024. It was great to be able to show producers what their money is doing. And it's not just about delivering training, it's actually looking after people for the longer term.

Looking back over the 10 years, we've been able to reflect on the evolution of the industry, how it has exploded, and how the Fund has reacted to that.

The job share scheme is a really good example of the tangible impact of the Fund's work. There was a lot of resistance in the industry to job sharing, but because the programme has run over multiple years, a producer can see the practical ways it can work for them and see the impact.

I am also seeing the impact that the Fund's long-term mid-level training and support is having. I meet people on productions all the time who have been supported by the Make A Move programme in the past and are now championing it for people in their own teams.

As a producer, you get a financial benefit from training people using the trusted programmes, but contributing to the Skills Fund gives you so much more than that. It amplifies your ability as an industry leader to make a difference. Thanks to the Fund, we as producers appreciate crew more, recognise their value and are inspired to support their career development.

We are a nation of storytellers and we're part of the amazing cultural output of the UK. I think we are in a position to show the rest of industry – the whole world – how amazing all the ScreenSkills industry Funds are and the impact they have on the careers of our crew.

Barry Ryan

Chair, High-end TV Skills Council

Unscripted TV and Children's TV Skills Funds

This year, we continued to work hand-in-hand with industry representatives to identify the gaps and shortages in the unscripted TV sector. The landscape has changed significantly and continues to shift. Despite this, we've been really impressed with how production companies have engaged with training programmes that include paid placements. 73 indies took part and that really speaks to how much industry wants to play an active role in upskilling the workforce. We've also found that production companies have, in many cases, kept individuals on for longer than their original placement period. It's a testament to the quality of the training delivered by our great network of providers, and evidence that the Unscripted TV Skills Fund is answering the needs of production companies.

In 2023/2024, we recommissioned training programmes that worked well and had impact for beneficiaries. We also listened carefully to industry when developing new opportunities. An example is edit producing skills for future SPs – a specific skill in a job role that people don't always have the opportunity to develop and, as such, can present a real barrier to progression.

Online short courses have been a real success. The ability to offer people the chance to upskill during their downtime has been really well received and attendance increased by 53% in 2023/2024.

The challenge going forward remains the uncertainty in the sector, but we are in a strong position to respond quickly to industry need. There are also clear opportunities to pursue. We are expanding our coaching offer and I'm excited about the assistant TM training for OB that we've got coming up. It's new but an indication that there are parts of unscripted that are buoyant where we can have impact.

Similar to unscripted TV, there is uncertainty around children's live action TV. One of the key goals for the Children's TV Skills Fund this year has been to signal that working in children's TV is a worthy destination in its own right. I've been really impressed by the companies who have been keen to engage with programmes such as Dream Big! and Trainee Finder by supporting placements at entry level.

Make a Move is an important initiative to help people step up to more senior roles. It's always harder to support training while you are busy on a production, so it's really great that productions have been willing to commit in this way.

Last year, we added Movie Magic budgeting and scheduling to the children's slate. We've also expanded our online training provision to include topics such as negotiating skills and dealing with difficult people. We continue to co-fund training with the Animation Skills Fund, including leadership and management and mental health awareness. We also continue to promote bursaries which offer grants to remove barriers to people taking training and progressing their careers.

Our main priority in 2024/2025 is to build awareness of the Fund, by harnessing the engagement we have with industry colleagues and Council, we want to strengthen and widen a commitment to training and career development across the whole of children's TV.

Sarah Joyce

Head of Unscripted TV Skills Fund and Children's TV Skills Fund

Chair, Unscripted TV Skills Council

A key ethos for me is that we are an industry that is only as good as the people in it. When we set up our company, Raise the Roof Productions, we were determined it would value the people we work with and ensure that we invested in the people and skills. Becoming really interested in this skills landscape is why it's important to me to work with the Unscripted TV Skills Fund.

The industry has gone through a radical change over the past couple of years with a huge downturn in production. Our working groups are represented by people from all four Nations in the UK. They are the people at the coalface who are bringing the intelligence into the Fund and are able to identify any changes really quickly so that we can react to the needs on the ground. The Unscripted TV Skills Fund has really risen to that challenge. One example is the expansion in 2023-24 of the online short courses provision, which saw a huge spike in attendance. Not only has it allowed people to upskill during the downturn, it has also helped freelancers maintain their connections and their networks.

There is a lot of discussion in our working groups about flexibility and adaptability. For example, finding alternative routes for funding to get productions commissioned that ultimately means our workforce is employed. And building the flexibility of the workforce, so that people can move between genres, or from short form to long form and vice versa.

I'm really proud of how the Fund has evolved and the direction of travel. Since its inception, we have found that what's really important for people and their training is funded placements for meaningful periods of time. We have conversations all the time about what has worked well, how can we make it better and more effective for our workforce.

The industry is undergoing a bit of a reset at this point. We can have all these high level conversations about what the industry is going to look like next year, but the one key essential is that we need a skilled workforce, because without one we can't actually meet the challenges of whatever this new landscape is going to be. The key message for everyone is that we must change and adapt. The way to do that is through using the pan-UK intelligence we have through our working groups to invest in and deliver meaningful training.

Jane Muirhead

Chair, Unscripted TV Skills Council

Chair, Unscripted TV Steering Group

The Steering Group is made up of representatives from all the major broadcasters and streamers in the UK who have signed up to support the Unscripted TV Skills Fund. Our main purpose is to work closely with the Council, chaired by Jane Muirhead, to ensure that the USF is focussed on the appropriate areas for its training spend, that the training providers are sourced in a fair way and are best placed to provide quality training for the industry.

The Unscripted Skills Fund is so important to our industry to ensure it is open to everyone and anyone, wherever they are from and whatever level of education and training they already have. We have to offer people real opportunities and training that's relevant and highly regarded. We also need to keep looking for the next generation of talent. With so many leaving our industry right now this has become even more important.

The Steering Group gives us a chance to discuss the challenges facing all of us right now as the content landscape shifts in a seismic way. It also gives us a chance to feel positive and good about the future, knowing that this Fund is helping people either to enter the industry, upskill in their current role to make the next move or to reskill entirely to a different role. It's a fantastic resource.

I'd love to see the Fund get more credit for the amazing work and impact it's having in the industry, so one of my key focusses as Steering Group Chair in the coming year will be encouraging our group to support that ambition and really promote the Fund in their organisations and externally. We have to do all we can to ensure people know about the opportunities and training available to them and that those contributing to the fund understand what positive impact their money is having in the industry.

Helen Killeen

Chair, Unscripted TV Steering Group

Co-Chairs, Children's TV Skills Council

We became Co-Chairs of the Children's TV Skills Council this year. Our goal is to work as a team of professionals with other industry colleagues to identify training requirements and support needed by the freelance community. We also focus on helping new people come into the industry.

Children's is a really good entry point into the TV industry. We believe it is important to inform and educate people on how, where and why they should be working in the industry and what training and opportunities are out there. We want to encourage people to think about driving their careers and not being afraid to move across genres and skillsets.

Ours is a changing industry and we need to keep skills relevant, retain talent and support the reskilling and upskilling of the workforce. That's why programmes such as Make A Move and practical training in things like leadership and management are so important. Day-to-day, we can also see the impact of ScreenSkills' online learning, particularly around sustainability. There is a conscious effort to advocate for this in all our productions, as well as how we demonstrate this on and off screen.

For new entrants, it's great to see that Trainee Finder is becoming quite a success with 13 places across six productions so far. We are also pleased to offer another year for the Dream Big! programme, which focuses on attracting people from underrepresented communities.

The work of the Skills Fund cannot single-handedly address all of the challenges in this sector given the current climate we're in. What we can do is offer the tools, training and advice to people to support each other in the best way possible. In 2024/2025, we are excited to see how Dream Big! does and looking forward to increased applications for programmes such as Make A Move. Our focus is to build on these successes for the benefit of the whole sector.

Paul Kearney and Natalie Bolton

Co-Chairs, Children's TV Skills Council

Vocational Skills

In 2023/2024 we retained a focus on work-based learning through the completion of our apprenticeship pilot initiative. Having started in 2022 it ran through to January 2024 and it was incredibly heartening to have some of the results come through this year.

High progression rates, in conjunction with the positive feedback we received from the apprentices first-hand, indicate that apprenticeships remain a hugely rich and valuable way to prepare new entrants from a range of backgrounds with the necessary set-ready tools to succeed.

The results help demonstrate the need to create further opportunities through apprenticeships, while helping us understand what improvements could be made and where flexibility can be increased. We welcome the new government's early comments about the importance of apprenticeships in unlocking skills potential and plans to reform the apprenticeship levy to increase flexibility for employers, and look forward to further collaboration in the coming years.

2023/2024 was a year that saw us enhance and grow our online learning offering, resulting in over 60,000 e-learning completions across the year.

We worked with BAFTA environmental arm Albert, to launch a new sustainability e-learning to help productions and their workforce adopt practices to reduce their carbon emissions. Another new module, developed with TripleC on disability, access and inclusion, aims to explore how everyone can play a part in breaking down barriers that exclude deaf, disabled or neurodivergent people from the screen industries.

These new offerings, in conjunction with existing modules, resulted in the highest number of e-learning completions since Covid and up 43% on 2022/23.

We continued to develop ways to encourage workplaces to adopt best practices. The HR Toolkit offered a practical guide to good recruitment in the screen industries. The toolkit includes advice and resources for employers and hirers on fair and transparent recruitment processes and the importance of good onboarding, feedback and offboarding.

It was launched alongside the Skills Checklists, industry-approved lists created for both scripted and unscripted, to help crew plan their professional development through learning the necessary skills and responsibilities required to progress in each department.

I remain continually impressed and grateful by the level of collaboration that enables us to create these programmes. It was in evidence again this year as we continued to deliver ScreenSkills Select courses, National Occupational Standards and the Production Safety Passport, the last of which endorsed 11 more courses across eight providers.

That level of collaboration will again be key as we look forward to working closely with the new government to develop the talent pipelines. It was heartening to hear some of our recommendations around apprenticeship reforms echoed in their early reporting.

Tim Weiss

Director, Vocational Skills

Screen Apprenticeship Case Studies

Nekabari Tamana

“Yes, I would recommend as it gave me an insight into the screen industry through trainings and workshops.”

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Darya Tretyak

“Why not? You are guaranteed work within your chosen department and with respectable companies.”

[Read More](#)

Ellen Brookes

“The broad range of experiences has contributed significantly to my growth and curiosity in the screen industry.”

[Read More](#)

Emily Wright

“It has made the transition to freelance work much easier as I have some experience on my CV.”

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