

ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR WAYS OF WORKING BETWEEN PRODUCERS & DIRECTORS

Introduction

These Guidelines, which reflect the essential creative nature of the role of a principal director (the ‘Director’) and ensure respect for the role, have been drawn up and agreed by the Directors & Producers Forum. The Forum will oversee the operation of the Guidelines, and will agree any developments or amendments to them. These Guidelines replace all previously agreed contract guidelines and statements.

For the purpose of the Guidelines, the word ‘Producer’ means the relevant production company.

The Guidelines

1. Effective communication at an early stage is vital.

Successful, high quality production depends on the Producer sharing available information and material promptly with the Director. Where possible, full details of the following should be made available to the Director upon their engagement:

- Agreed subject matter of the programme;
- Any applicable scripts/treatments;
- The parameters of the Director’s intended role;
- The names of contributors, production team or crew already engaged;
- The parameters of any existing production budget;
- Any existing outline production and/or post-production schedule, where scheduling forms part of the Director’s remit; and
- The Director’s proposed credit.

The creative parameters of the Director’s intended role, and the proposed Credit, should be clearly described or referenced in the Director’s contract or deal memo (provided this is technically possible within the applicable producer’s contracting system) the contracting which should be made available to the Director within a reasonable timeframe prior to the Director’s first day of engagement.

It is acknowledged that late delivery and/or late stage amendments to scripts/treatments can adversely impact on the quality, cost and smooth running of a production, and every effort should be made to communicate changes promptly.

2. The Director has a right to consultation.

Where the Director has key responsibility for shaping the storytelling and the narrative, they should be consulted in a meaningful way on the role they will have, and where applicable:

- Significant changes to budgets;
- Significant changes to schedules; and

- Where not already finalised at the point of the Director’s engagement and taking into account other production requirements, such as regionality, diversity etc:
 - The appointment of key creative hires,
 - Music,
 - The selection of contributors, interviewees and narrators,
 - The selection of key crew members, and
 - Casting, where relevant.

It is acknowledged that early involvement of the Director in relation to these topics can have a beneficial impact on production, for example on trouble shooting, scheduling, and efficiency.

3. The Director’s creative role is to be respected.

It is acknowledged that the Director’s creative role is one which brings impactful storytelling and co-creative vision to a production. The Director shares responsibility for the successful delivery of the production and is skilled in:

- shaping the narrative;
- getting the very best performances from actors in scripted productions, and authentic contributions from contributors in factual productions;
- choosing the action and sound to be filmed;
- determining how that action and sound is to be filmed;
- conducting shooting as efficiently as possible within the limits of the overall schedule and budget;
- delivering high quality audio visual materials.

The Director’s collaboration with the Producer on final production processes shall be discussed and agreed as part of the engagement process. These can include:

- music selection;
- recording narration;
- sound mix or dub;
- visual effects and graphics; and
- delivery of a rough cut and final cut.

4. Prep time is vital.

The Director needs to be given adequate time and resources to complete all preparation work. The time allocated to this should be consulted upon in a meaningful way and agreed in advance. As part of this, the Director should not be required to do significant amounts of work outside core hours.

This prep time needs to be respected and shielded from avoidable disruption. If meetings are scheduled during this time, or if there are late script changes or other changes that require additional preparatory work, the Producer will work with the Director to identify how the prep time can be adjusted accordingly within the schedule and budget.

5. Health and Safety and Safeguarding are paramount.

The Producer and the Director should follow all applicable health and safety and safeguarding policies, including provisions about excessive working hours and travel hours, at all times. These policies need to be made clear to

everyone involved in the creation of the production and be easily available at all times. It is recognised that drawing on the Director's knowledge and experience early during the production process is beneficial to enabling compliance with such policies. The Producer recognises that the Director has a key role to play in ensuring the successful and safe running of the shoot on the ground.

6. Producers and Directors must comply with policies addressing respectful working conditions.

Producers and Directors must ensure they are familiar with and adhere to relevant applicable policies dealing with Respect at Work and Bullying & Harassment, which should be shared ahead of a Director's engagement commencing, made clear at the outset to everyone working on the production, and freely available online, i.e. not behind a staff wall.

7. The Director has a right to the appropriate credit.

The Director (and all other production roles) should be credited in accordance with the applicable commissioner guidelines and their role on production. The credit, and the prominence it is given in on-screen credits, and on the Call Sheet, will be agreed prior to the engagement and, where technically possible, reflected in the final engagement contract.

8. Producers and Directors will collaborate to deliver sustainability on production.

Directors will work with Producers to meet all applicable standards and requirements relating to sustainability on production.

9. Producers and Directors will work together to deliver the production's commitment to Diversity and Inclusion and production training.

Directors will work with Producers to enable compliance with the ambitions and applicable policies relating to Diversity and Inclusion on the programme, and will carry out any production training requirements such as involvement in ScreenSkills and apprentice schemes.