



Pact Indie Diversity Scheme 10th Anniversary Report

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October 2023

Introduction

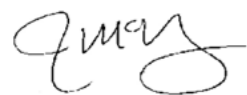
Talent is the backbone of our sector. Over the last 10 years Pact has actively supported and worked to create a more diverse and inclusive film and television industry. We believe that diversity of thought, ideas and talent is vital for our growth, and tackling the challenges within our workplace cultures is vital to survival. We continue to grapple with talent and skills shortages across the sector to try to ensure a sustainable and future-proof skills pipeline.

The Pact Indie Diversity Scheme was created 10 years ago by Pact and a group of indies who wanted to invest in an initiative that worked for talent and for their businesses. An entryway for talent that would normally find it difficult to get in and find a foothold in our sector.

Over the past decade, the Pact Indie Diversity Scheme in London has brought through and supported 97 individuals from underrepresented backgrounds with on the job paid experience, training and career support. The Scottish edition of the Scheme has been running since 2017 and has done the same for 36 individuals.

We could not have done it without our brilliant indie partners, they are the ones who work on the ground to manage and support our new entrants.

Looking forward, we continue to be committed to work with the wider industry to embed inclusion across our productions and our businesses, to ensure that talent from all backgrounds can thrive.



John McVay OBE
Chief Executive, Pact



John McVay, OBE
CEO, Pact

“We believe that diversity of thought, ideas and talent is vital for our growth, and tackling the challenges within our workplace cultures is vital to survival.”

The Numbers

133

PARTICIPANTS HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE SCHEME OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, 97 IN LONDON SINCE 2013 AND 36 IN SCOTLAND SINCE 2017.

60

INDIES HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE SCHEME OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, 47 IN LONDON SINCE 2013 AND 13 IN SCOTLAND SINCE 2017.

£1,900,000

TOTAL INVESTMENT FROM UK INDIES TO DATE.

£250,000

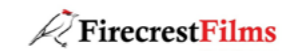
TOTAL INVESTMENT INTO TRAINING TO DATE.

75%

**RETENTION RATE
IN THE INDUSTRY**

The Indies

OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, 60 UK INDIES HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE SCHEME.



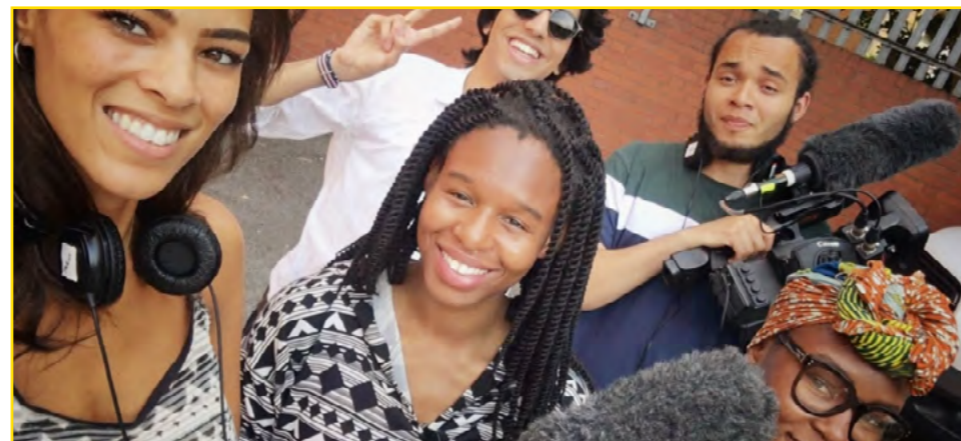
The Pact Scheme in London

RUNNING SINCE 2013.

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London Participants

OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, 97 NEW ENTRANTS HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE LONDON EDITION OF OUR SCHEME.



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London Participants

2013

Dean Webster

Head of Development, Ten66 Television

I started off as an intern at Shine Group, rotating across multiple departments at their Head Office in Primrose Hill. After the six month internship, I was extended for another year before I moved into production at Shine TV on **The Island with Bear Grylls**.

I spent years working up in production, moving to Researcher and then Assistant Producer before working in development, creating ideas and pitching them to different networks. I straddled production and development for a few years and moved up to Producer/Director, shooting factual entertainment series and documentaries, before taking on my role as Head of Development at Ten66 Television.

The best thing is the people you meet across the world and the privileged access they give you to their lives; you get to meet and share experiences with people you'd never usually cross paths with.

I want to continue creating and producing large scale factual entertainment and reality formats and, eventually, move up to Managing Director of a production company or Commissioning Editor at a broadcaster or streamer.

“The scheme gave me access to a network of television professionals and, in an industry where networking is crucial to success, this helped me find work after the scheme ended and move up later on in my career.”



London Participants

2013

Priya Biring

Producer, Factual and Docs/Development

I have freelanced, been all over the world and worked my way up from runner to producer. I started my career at KEO Films who gave me great experience in specialist factual and docs and I was there for two years before freelancing at a number of companies, including Betty, Swan Films and Firecrest Films. I worked in Scotland for a year as well as travelling the world, working with Al Jazeera and The Guardian. In the past two years I've been learning Edit Producing as well as managing a team as a Story Producer on true crime series at Arrow Media.

I love diving into and researching niche topics that no one has ever heard of. I'm also just fascinated by people and I think this makes me a great interviewer. Embedding myself into the communities I'm filming and finding common ground is a lot of fun.

The scheme was great to get me into TV, I would have had no other way to do this. I didn't know anyone who worked in TV, my role models growing up worked in finance, law and IT. I didn't even know this type of job in the media was even possible! I really thought I would become a journalist and in a way, I did. The scheme gave me invaluable community and skills that still serve me today.

“The friends I made are connections forever and I'm sure we'll be helping each other out in the future years to come in this industry.”



London Participants

2016

Adam Al-Samarea

Assistant Producer – Global Entertainment Development, Fremantle

I joined the Pact scheme with a background in scripted and was keen to move over to factual. During my time on the scheme I was lucky enough to work at Endemol Shine across two different production companies.

After my time on the scheme I left with a handful of researcher credits - working in a number of popular factual series as researcher on shows like **Hunted** and **24 Hours in Police Custody** - I stepped up to AP on **Gold Rush**, which I worked on for four consecutive seasons. Eventually stepping up to PD two years ago. I have since worked as a PD on a number of different shows such as **Traffic Cops**, **999: on the Frontline**, **Emergency on Sunny Beach**, **999: Critical Condition** and **The Cruise: Welcome Aboard**.

The single best thing about working in TV is variety. Working in docs you get parachuted into these little worlds and see different pockets of life you couldn't hope to see in a number of lifetimes - from filming a Canadian goldmine, riding around in the back of a police car, seeing paramedics save lives or following the inner workings of a cruise ship, no day or job is the same.

I always enjoyed working closely with my peers on training days and socials.

I hope to develop, produce and film some documentary films of my own.

“The Pact scheme is an invaluable opportunity to work at some of the most prominent production companies and the biggest shows in the UK, alongside industry standard mentorship and training.”



London Participants



2019

Darcy Dear

Assistant Producer – Global Entertainment Development, Fremantle

I started off my career in development at Wall to Wall, but halfway through the Pact scheme I was placed on the casting team on **Glow Up** series 2 and really loved my time there. I never knew casting was a job you could do in TV and I learned some amazing skills I still use today.

The scheme has really changed my life, not only are you placed with an amazing company that gives you invaluable experience, but you'll be doing the scheme alongside a group of other trainees who'll end up being your peers in the industry, which is so vital to have.

There was a 'working in development' training day we did on the scheme and I really loved that day, I always knew development was where I wanted to be, being able to explore and learn more about it was amazing and really solidified where I wanted to take my career.

I would love to start up my own production company that produces some iconic entertainment that my family would be proud of watching.



2022

Stefan Pollak

Production Trainee – Fremantle

Everyone has been a joy to work with and meeting so many interesting and engaging people and getting to collaborate on various productions has been fun. I've been fortunate enough to work on **Britain's Got Talent**, **Qi** and working in Scripted Development reading pilot scripts and writing feedback reports.

I would say the two main things I got from the scheme would be firstly the contacts, I've been able to network and build a rapport with many people working across different departments in various roles. Also skills such as speaking and presenting in pitch and development ideas sessions, and a greater sense of how to manage my time.

My ambition is to work in Scripted Development in the TV industry and to write more so that eventually I could have the possibility of getting my scripts commissioned and produced by a production company.

London Participants

“It’s the best way to equip yourself for a career in television, not only does it provide great networking opportunities, you learn invaluable skills through the ScreenSkills sessions which occur each month. The camera training in particular makes you a valuable asset to any company, and preps you for potential freelance work in the future.”

Dominic Christopher – Participant 2022

Junior Development Trainee, Unscripted TV



What 2 key things did the Pact Indie Diversity Training Scheme give you?

“Knowledge of working in the industry, the etiquette required and all the little intricate things that you don’t learn at school/college/university.

As well as this, the scheme also offers you some money you can’t buy, amazing training sessions that will equip and help you to further develop your skills for the industry.”

Sam Goodfellow – Participant 2015

Assistant Producer, Unscripted Reality and Factual Entertainment

What 2 key things did the Pact Indie Diversity Training Scheme give you?

“Firstly, giving me the chance to get my foot in the door, which can be really difficult.

Secondly, my mentor who was the Head Production for one of the indies on the scheme. She was a great support and an integral part of my time on the scheme.”

Elena Hamilton – Participant 2018

Production and Development Executive, Binocular



What would you say to people who are considering joining the scheme?

“Do it. For people interested in a TV career, it’s a no brainer. You learn. You network and you are given sufficient tools and support in preparation for your TV journey.”

Tyrone Paul – Participant 2019

Production Coordinator, Factual Entertainment

London Indies

Argonon Group

Investing in new talent is critical to the future success of the sector. The BFI recently reported that in high end TV alone, we're facing a workforce shortfall of 20,000 in the years ahead so identifying, enacting and embracing talent-led schemes and initiatives, with barriers broken down so they are open to as many talented people regardless of background or geography, will play an important part in recruiting and skilling up the next generation.

We have seen significant change in the last ten years, with greater recognition of the need to reflect society, both in front and behind the camera. There is much more work to do and we must remain restless in our mission to improve diversity and inclusion, from improving social mobility to increasing representation at all levels.

Creating an inclusive culture should be at the heart of every business. At Argonon, it's runs through our DNA and has played a critical part in our successes. At the heart of every business are people, they are the bedrock of our company. Having deep-rooted values – where you put your people first – has never been more important to attract and retain talent. Without good people, you don't have a business.

We have been hugely impressed by the quality of the Pact candidates at Argonon who have made a significant impact and offer new creative and personal perspectives on the world. We keenly track the progress and development of those who pass through our doors and welcome them back in the future.



James Burstall
CEO

“We have been hugely impressed by the quality of the Pact candidates at Argonon who have made a significant impact and offer new creative and personal perspectives on the world.”

London Indies

RSA Films



Louis Mole

Head of Programming & Development

Ridley Scott Associates (RSA) are delighted to be taking part in the Pact Indie Diversity Scheme and supporting the next generation of creative and production talent. We hope that by furthering our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity, we contribute to the progressive steps that the wider industry has made to date.

Banijay



Bella Lambourne

Director of Human Resources and Operations

We have been privileged to be part of the Pact scheme since its inception. The programme has consistently responded to the industry needs by finding and supporting under-represented talent in their first steps within production. Pact is able to bring together multiple indies as a cohort to make a truly attractive and inclusive proposition for new talent. Now more than ever the scheme is able to respond to industry skills shortages and reach new talent. Pact supports the industry from an inclusion perspective in a way that goes over and above my expectations of the industry body.

All3Media



Clare Welch

Group Head of Resourcing

The Indie Diversity Scheme was one of the first indie training partnerships, and with the support of Pact, we have worked together to create a solid platform to attract and nurture inclusive talent. The 10th anniversary is a perfect opportunity to celebrate the alumni, champion their continued progression in the industry and highlight the importance of diversity and inclusivity.

The Pact Scheme in Scotland supported by Screen Scotland

RUNNING SINCE 2017.

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

pact.

Scotland Participants

OVER THE PAST 7 YEARS, 36 NEW ENTRANTS HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE SCOTLAND EDITION OF OUR SCHEME, WHERE PLACEMENTS ARE MATCH-FUNDED BY CREATIVE SCOTLAND.



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Scotland Participants

2019

Haider Al-Shybani

Assistant Producer, Documentaries and Specialist Factual

After coming on board the Pact diversity scheme in 2019, I found myself working in a wonderful indie that gave me lots of experience and responsibility in a supportive environment. After the initial contract I was kept on at Caledonia TV making historical and travel docs. I then drew on my background as a medical Doctor to find roles with health and science themes; landing a series researcher role on the historical health hybrid **Extra Life** in the midst of the pandemic. I was then fortunate enough to be handpicked for the BBC Studios Assistant Producer Accelerator Programme which provided another structured step forward. Since then, I've been working as an AP within two main areas - documentary and specialist factual.

Along the way I've consolidated the slate of skills required at the AP level whilst clarifying my own particular strengths and interests. I've discovered just how important it is to me to be at the sharp end of access and story shaping. Currently working at Raw TV where I am being encouraged to look for roles at the story producer level.

Things feel exciting and I still have that drive to one day bring my own ideas to an audience.

“Along the way I’ve consolidated the slate of skills required at the AP level whilst clarifying my own particular strengths and interests.”



Scotland Participants

2022

Alex Barker

Production Trainee, TV Drama & Film

Tells us about your career route to your current role?

I worked in hospitality and office temp jobs after uni, worked on one film as a location marshal then [the Pact scheme] was my first 'real' job in the industry.

What do you love best about your job in TV/Film?

It doesn't feel like work most of the time; I actually enjoy and am interested in whatever the job throws at me.

What 2 key things did the Pact Indie Diversity Training Scheme give you?

A job I love [and] expert advice and training on different industry facets.

What was your most memorable or favourite part of the training programme?

My company were nominated for a Scottish BAFTA, meaning I was invited to the ceremony.

What would you say to people who are considering joining the scheme?

Absolutely do it.

"It doesn't feel like work most of the time; I actually enjoy and am interested in whatever the job throws at me."



Scotland Participants

2022

Ines Serrano

Team Assistant, Scripted

Tells us about your career route to your current role?

I did an MA in film at Screen Academy, then I was a Front of House runner at Onsite, and then I became team assistant at Synchronicity.

What do you love best about your job in TV/Film?

I love reading scripts and seeing how they transform over time, ultimately culminating in their materialization.

What 2 key things did the Pact Indie Diversity Training Scheme give you?

Confidence that I have what it takes to work in this industry as well as an understanding of the path I want to take.

What would you say to people who are considering joining the scheme?

It's a great way to enter the industry and get an idea of what being part of it will look like. Moreover, all the courses provide great support to understanding how to move forward in the industry. As an added bonus, everyone is super helpful and kind.

What is your big ambition?

I would like to become a story producer or head of development.

“It’s a great way to enter the industry and get an idea of what being part of it will look like.”

Scotland Indies

Raise the Roof Productions

Schemes and initiatives are a vital part of industry diversity strategy and are necessary within the context of an overall approach. Supported by inclusive practice they are a solid and proven way to break down barriers to entry and open up our industry to under-represented groups. However, whilst schemes and initiatives break down entry barriers to get people into the industry in the short-term, what is of vital importance is the ongoing work to support and nurture careers in the long-term, to ensure barriers to retention and progression are also broken down. Getting people into the industry is one thing, but making sure they stay is of equal importance in ensuring we progress the diversification of our workforce and ultimately serve our audiences with the best and most diverse programmes and stories that we can produce. The Pact Indie Diversity Scheme has been running since 2013; and now ten years down the line, there are numerous examples of individuals who have sustained successful, creative, and varied careers. Tracking the progress of alumni and ensuring that they receive ongoing support, training, and mentoring is an essential part of the ongoing work that Pact undertakes. Freelance careers are tough. Individuals go from job to job. Therefore, having a point of contact to help manage careers through support with CVs, identifying skills gaps/training needs, and contacts and introductions is critical. Much has changed since 2013 and commitment to opening up the sector to be more diverse and inclusive is now embedded into broadcasters' approach to commissioning and this has positively impacted indies and the strategy of the wider sector. There is still a lot of work to be done but placing it at the forefront of the commissioning process is a huge step towards bringing about the change that our industry needs.



Jane Muirhead
Managing Director

“Much has changed since 2013 and commitment to opening up the sector to be more diverse and inclusive is now embedded into broadcasters’ approach to commissioning.”

Scotland Indies

Screen Scotland



Steven Little
Head of Production

“Screen Scotland is committed to growing a sustainable and diverse workforce for Scotland’s screen sector. We believe that a career in film or TV can be highly rewarding and one of our key aims is to make that opportunity as available, fair and inclusive as possible. Pact’s collaboration with Screen Scotland promotes these values, helps to make Scotland one of the most diverse and rewarding places to have a career in the screen industry.”

Firecrest Films



Nicole Kleeman
Managing Director

“This is the fourth year we’ve taken part in the Pact Indie scheme. It’s allowed us to meet and hire brilliant talent on our own doorstep, and provided a vital route in to TV for those under-represented in our industry.

The scheme has supported employment in Scotland at challenging times.”

Studio Something



Andy Maas
Head of Production

“Studio Something is a company built on opportunities and we are delighted to give an opportunity to someone as a first step into the industry from an underrepresented background. We were really impressed by the calibre of applicants and it was a tough selection process. It’s important to always make sure we give opportunities to the next generation coming through and via this scheme it is a perfect way to do that. It’s brilliant to be part of and PACT has made the whole process super easy to be part of while in the middle of various productions”

Looking ahead...

Ensuring that solutions work for business as well as talent is the only way to build sustainable, scalable diversity and inclusion initiatives.

We have worked hard with our indie partners to ensure that we provide talent with paid on-the-job experience, training and mentoring. We are incredibly proud of the high percentage of Pact trainees who have been retained in the sector across the ten years of the Scheme.

As our alumni step into their freelance careers, we provide on-going support and track their outcomes and progress. Through our Pact Next Level initiative, we provide them with training, masterclasses, career advice and access to employment opportunities.

I believe that a focus on Diversity and Inclusion is central to our sector's future and I hope that we can continue to build on this work over the next 10 years.



Anjani Patel

Head of Inclusion & Diversity, Pact

“We are incredibly proud of the high percentage of Pact trainees who have been retained in the sector across the ten years of the Scheme.”

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