



Why the cultural sector should be investing in young, diverse producing talent

The National Producers Taskforce is a UK-wide network of organisations committed to job creation and facilitating employment pathways for young and emerging producers in the arts



Why we exist

How and why we created the
National Producers Taskforce

Solving Problems

In November 2020, Poet in the City brought together a network of 40+ organisations from across the UK creative industries to respond to issues being faced by producer training programmes including...

Lack of **sustainable pathways** into employment and leadership roles

Challenges faced by institutions in **recruitment** of young producers

Ensuring those from already **underrepresented** backgrounds don't fall through the gaps during the current employment crisis

Key issues

Why we set up this taskforce

'Single use' talent development programmes

Young people are 'scheme-hopping' before they turn 25 due to lack of sustainable employment opportunities following programmes

Lack of diversity in the sector

Diversity tends to be caged in participation programmes and isn't reflected in or doesn't filter up to leadership within the organisations that are training young people

No interconnectivity between schemes

Meaning the opportunities that do exist are not being shared and leveraged well enough (pre-taskforce)

Further needs and challenges

Raising awareness

There is a need for **awareness-raising** and **clearer signposting** to opportunities. There is no shared understanding or consistent definition of 'producer' across the industry resulting in lack of awareness of producing roles outside of the creative industries.

Funding restrictions

Confusing **applications and processes** stop young people applying directly. The 16-25 age limit is a barrier to funding long-term development and job roles beyond training programmes. There is **no standard rate card** for Producers in the creative industry

Responding to needs of different age groups

What is a 'young' person? People leaving programmes have **different needs** to those starting out. The 25 upper age limits development for those who are early in their career but about to 'age out'. Covid-19 has impacted **career progression** and halted 'free' opportunities for young people.



Key objectives and focus areas

Our established aims and priorities as a
taskforce



Connect across sector

Connect across sector and build a network to share advice and establish best practices.



Evidence issues to influence policy change

Evidence the issues faced by training programmes and disconnect between talent development and direct employment into the sector. Change this.



Partner and develop projects nationally

Where are producers needed? Can we jointly apply for funding, pool resources to create opportunities etc.



Change hiring practices

Change the way organisations and institutions hire young producers and build connections to create better opportunities.

Immediate actions

Use the network to share jobs and opportunities to collaborate

National online producer training

Internal training and CPD for members

Long term goals

Establish collective understanding as a sector:

- What is a producer?
- 'Young' vs early-career

Employment Conditions

1

What **structures, policies and behaviours** need to be in place for organisations to employ young producers (either freelance or on a permanent basis)?

Internal advocacy and culture change

Big organisations can be slow, though the pandemic has shown they can move quickly if need be. Why not in this regard too?

Policies and processes

Safeguarding and well-being of young people is paramount. Youth programmes need review built in. Recruitment processes should be transparent and supportive.

Support and progression

Prepare young people for how to leave you – not all organisations will be as open as those focused on young people are.

Culture change

2

The cultural sector needs to be **investing in young, diverse producing talent** to ensure long-term sustainability. Better employment pathways for emerging talent are needed and the best way to deliver this is through collaboration and a joined-up approach. These conversations need to be heard by bigger, wealthier organisations who have the means to employ a younger workforce. As a taskforce, we will be advocating industry-wide and to larger organisations.

Crucial success factors:

1

SENIOR LEVEL BUY IN &
ADVOCACY

2

LARGE INSTITUTIONS
ON BOARD

3

OPEN TO YOUTH-LED
CHANGE

Funding

3

Accessible funding is needed for **long-term and sustained development**

Project funding

- Doesn't always lend itself to long-term and sustainable change or role development
- Young people face barriers to applying for funding directly
- Some cases require us to step away from the 'numbers game'. How can we invest more intensively in fewer people?

Proposed actions

- Get funding groups in the room to break down the restrictions and barriers to funding
- Broaden the definition of 'young person' when it comes to funding - what happens to those aged 26+ and early-career?

Towards an Action Plan for the Sector

Making Structural Change

Building on the idea that we are facing an **entry-level jobs crisis**, we need to think about ways we can make structural change. How do we build on brilliant **training programmes**? How do we harness the power of us as **individuals** who want to start making immediate change? What **resources and capabilities** are available to make that change?

We will develop a **simple** and **specific** action plan together that hits our key objectives as a taskforce and will make a significant step towards achieving **policy-level change**. We will ensure that we:

- Develop **meaningful partnerships** to aid the transition from training schemes/participatory programmes to employment;
- Focus on a simple tangible **actions and commitments** that employers can sign up to which achieve structural change;
- Encourage greater industry **transparency and accountability**.

Key actions



Sector-wide campaign: **The 'Budget Line'** **commitment**

To build in role for a young creative on all projects (from fundraising stage).



Transparency **The Producer Rate Card**

Industry-recognised standards for how much to pay young producers.



Building partnerships: **The Producer Pipeline**

Connecting young talent with employers/institutions without their own Young Producer programmes.

Supporting you



Training for Large Partners

Small organisations already leading the way in youth employment to deliver bespoke training and consultation for large institutions via sector-buddy programme



National Producing Workshops

Free online public skills development workshops delivered by partners for early-career producers (of any age) to bridge skills gaps



Internal Skills Sharing

Internal training and CPD for taskforce members delivered by partners with key specialisms



Cross-Sector Training Sessions

Specialist skills-sharing sessions from other sectors bringing new skills into the creative industries to be better equipped to hire young people

What **you** can do next

Practical actions you can take to help
move things forward today



Immediate changes you can start to make in our own organisation

- ✓ Review recruitment and safeguarding policies
- ✓ Review company JDs and run them past young people you work with
- ✓ Remove 'experience' as requirement on entry-level roles
- ✓ Put lines in your budgets for shadowing and/or assistant roles to help people get on-the-ground experience
- ✓ Identify useful freelance opportunities in projects as a way to immediately bring young talent in as part of the process of changing overall hiring practice
- ✓ Bring in senior leaders to listen to these conversations.



What we can do together

Learning from outside the sector

- Alternative routes into apprenticeships and traineeships exist outside the arts - invite heads of those programmes into these meetings
- Share information, especially recruitment best practice

Advocacy

- Who can we influence within our own orgs and networks?
- Share these conversations/meeting notes with your colleagues, especially senior leaders
- Utilise alumni networks
- Freelancers as advocates for change

Building and leveraging this network

- Sharing opportunities for young people by creating an industry-recognised platform for this;
- Platforms for young producers and peer networking
- Greater recognition of work that is already happening
- Connecting with groups from other organisations if your organisation does not currently work with young people e.g. for consultancy, employment pathways, etc
- Reverse mentoring/mentoring – senior leaders across network connected with young producers from different orgs.

Transparency

- Demystify language about producing (within and outside of sector)
- Make public recommendations; creating a rate-card for producers

Summary of next steps

Our next steps together will be:

Getting funders on board

- Meeting with major funders to discuss key principles and application processes

The 'Budget Line' commitment

- HR sub-group to demystify HR processes
- Senior Leaders focus group (in the Autumn)

The Producer Rate Card

- Rate Card sub-group to work on benchmarking and principles
- Start benchmarking current rates

The Producer Pipeline

- Map producer schemes across the country

Are you **ready to sign up** to
this campaign?

We need **everyone** on board to make change happen.

Please talk to your teams and then **confirm your support**
by emailing:

sarisha@poetinthecity.co.uk

Case Studies

A photograph of a person on a stage with their arms raised, projected onto a large screen. The screen has the text 'SIGNKID' above the projection. The audience in the foreground has their hands raised, and the room is lit with a greenish light. The text 'Case Studies' is overlaid in the center.

Working with Young People

Contact Theatre

Why employ young people?

- Your biggest advocates are the young people whose lives have been changed by your work.
- Employers don't need to worry that they won't be a good fit for the organisation.
- It's good for modelling pathways – inspiring young people to see people like them in paid employment in those roles.
- We know them, they know us, and we have reciprocal trust.
- As organisations that work with young people, we're best placed to give them their first job.

London Transport Museum

Training programme which employs young people across the organisation

- The forms of training are varied.
- Freelancers are employed for 100 hours a month across the team and paid London Living Wage + 20% for freelancing. We do not undercut our freelance workforce.
- Scheme designed by Young Consultants.
- There's been an incredible amount of internal advocacy, and the senior leadership team are very committed to keeping the scheme going. Young people who came in as part of the initial workforce have now risen through the ranks in the sector increasing alumni advocacy.

Employment Pathways

Theatre Peckham **Transition into** **Employment**

Contacted cultural organisations in Southwark to continue the conversations about recruitment – e.g. “why don’t you commit to interviewing our producers?” Risk removed by providing them with training on appropriate subjects beforehand.

Trigger **Building Trainee** **Roles into the** **budget as** **standard**

Every single role on The Hatchling has a traineeship attached to it. We create a mix in every department: producing, production and on-stage. A project is not considered funded until all roles have been funded.

Poet in the City **Young Core Team** **with Development** **Embedded**

The majority of our hires have been young people, often coming into their first creative job. Everyone has creative direction in their work. This has been instrumental in our ability to grow quickly: taking a capabilities rather than experience-based approach.



Get in touch

If you are interested in joining the taskforce, pledging your support or finding out more, please contact:

sarisha@poetinthecity.co.uk

www.poetinthecity.co.uk