



Producer Development Programme 2010

This Producer Development Programme is designed to address management and leadership issues, and will specifically focus on Creative Management, Business Planning and Reaching the Audience. It will be supported by a high-level Mentoring Scheme, giving participants' access to top decision makers and company directors at successful film and media companies.

The Programme will forge and develop links between the creative and the business challenge of film production (and related content). It will highlight the critical role of the talent base that underpins the independent film (and related creative) industry, and explore how to discover, nurture, maintain and exploit Intellectual Property Rights and marketing value of key talent.

The course will also be of direct relevance to Producers / Companies producing long form television in a range of genre and will address exploitation across the distribution value chain.

Course Outline

SESSION ONE: June

INTRODUCTION: The Market and the Mentors

DAY ONE

9.30 Introduction to the Scheme and all members

To include: overview of the programme, personal introductions from each of the participants, introductions from course leader, Angus Finney. To point up key coursework, the mentor programme and the overall shape of the Programme.

9.45 Personal presentations from each of the participants – Background, experience, objectives, current status and development strategies of their companies.

10.45 Break

11.15 The Film Value Chain: This session looks at the links that take a film from first idea all the way through development, packaging, financing, sales, production, post-production, marketing, distribution, exhibition, merchandising and licensing and changing digital/Internet distribution. A section will explore how the Value Chain is currently being restructured due to changing technology and audience behaviour

To include input from group on key sections: Development; Sales; Financing; Distribution.

1.00 Lunch

2.00 The Changing Film Market: Looking at the changing global film market, and the key territories and their relative values and strategic importance. To examine vertical media rights, business approaches to rights, international sales companies and their specific roles and importance to the process of achieving international distribution in the independent sector. The session will cover the international festival and market calendar. Also to examine

who the leading players are, what they do, strengths and weaknesses, and the changing shape of the industry over the past 24 months.

3.30 Break

4.00 The Film Market: Case study (tbc)

5.00 Break

5.15 The market from a Welsh perspective and the challenge of building value:

Discussion. Lead by Finney, but designed to explore areas of market tension, failure, and knowledge gaps to assist in informing further sessions. The emphasis will be to move away from 'projects' and towards 'business models.'

6.00 End

DAY TWO

9.15 Introduction and discussion about the first day: Finney

9.30 The Mentors (indicative, tbc) – Ruby Films, Warp Films, Kudos, Element Pictures

This panel, by way of introduction, will explore the different companies: History, objectives, structure, talent relationships, main cash cows, ownership structure, and what makes each of them distinctive and different, and why they are thriving.

11.00 Break

11.20 Case Studies

Two key case studies will be selected from the 5 Mentors, focussing on:

1. Talent relationships
2. Business Strategy

1.00 Lunch

2.00 Meet Your Mentor

Each of the 8-10 participants will meet over a scheduled session their Mentor Company/Executive. They will also have one-to-one sessions with the Film Agency for Wales and Finney.

These sessions will run through to 6.00pm.

6.00 A wrap up discussion

SESSION TWO: July

CREATIVE MANAGEMENT

DAY ONE

9.30 Introduction

9.40 Creative Management - To look at what drives creative talent, what management and producing techniques can play a significant role in harnessing that talent (cases to have been read prior to the class). The main focus is on the producer's role in talent selection, management and negotiating and making the most of relations with third parties (agents, lawyers, managers etc.) during this introductory session.

Specifically:

To define and recognise creativity in a range of contexts and mediums

To cover the role of the creative; Intellectual Property Rights; and their respective and distinctive value – with input from the varying projects within the group

To distinguish between the creator's needs and drivers; in contrast to the manager/business entity's objectives

Specific skills for managing Creative Teams? If so, what are they?

Supporting or killing ideas/starting points: Green housing creative development

The role of money and power next to realising concepts and creative initiatives

Where entrepreneurial approaches can satisfy all – using time/incentives/shared ownership, not just cash

Being looked after by management in a positive dynamic: Managing space and time

Distinguishing between Project Management and running a Business

Small group cultures and accepting new voices and third party input

Writers/artists next to directors/managers – how do they differ and when do their roles change?

11.15 Break

11.30 Creative Packaging – Continuing from the opening session, how to work with the different elements most effectively. We will examine how to handle/organise different elements and capture value from their inputs, while keeping them onside. This session will also cover meeting management, pitching, sales and financing (especially closing) in the light of talent and attachments.

1.00 Lunch

2.00 Talent negotiation – workshop exercise

After the exercise, we will discuss how to handle negotiation with talent – do's and don'ts.

3.15 Break

3.30 Business models for development

What is a business model and how do film producers use them re development? What challenges are specific to the development process and how can you avoid them draining your business? How do producers keep talent and sustain relationships?

4.30 Break

4.50 Business models/plans - Workshop

where the participants are split into 2/3 groups and given a specific creative/development model to work on and present after 40 minutes of planning.

6.00 Wrap

DAY TWO

9.30 Managing and leading small to medium sized creative companies - to cover experience, training, planning, hiring, expanding and contracting, partners, structures, reporting, bottlenecks, boards, advisors, stakeholders, and how all of the above can affect your Creative Management strategy, etc.

11.00 Break

11. 20 Developing Creativity – Manager or Creative Practitioner? Can a manager be both? Common scenarios in creative media environments and how to tackle them:
EG: Manager is also a film/commercials director; Manager is also a writer; Head of Development is frustrated producer; Producer wants to also direct and run a larger company; Director from outside company only wants to talk to the MD, not the project producer; Fast growth and reactive management: no planning and/or team management. Handling the outsider and/or new person in the team.

12.20pm Managing, Reviewing and Rewarding performance:

Setting goals
Achieving buy-in
Monitoring and measuring progress
Creatives also need critical paths
Giving constructive feedback
Achieving Collective Creativity

1.00 Lunch

2.00 MENTOR Case Study

Afternoon session to consist of Mentor Company input.

Will move to cover:

Development, agents, material, writers, writer/directors, directors, agents, partners, co-producers

Sessions will last to 6pm.

SESSION THREE: August

THE BUSINESS: Models, Plans and Planning

DAY ONE

9.30 Business models and business plans - What is a business model and how do film producers use them? What is required of a business plan, and how do entrepreneurs, producers, financiers and investors utilise them?

11.00 Break

11.20 Cases: Specific examples to be used and analysed in this follow up session. To include work on assumptions, contents and financials, profit and loss, balance sheet and cash flow.

1.00 Lunch

2.00 Business models/plans - Workshop where the participants are split into 2/3 groups and given a specific model to work on and present after one hour of planning.

4.00 Break

4.20 Case Study: A company going bankrupt. Why? What's wrong? What can we learn?

6.00 Wrap

DAY TWO

9.30 MENTOR introduction

Q&A in detail about their business experience, management experience and running a company.

11.00 Break

11.20 Business plan personal workshop: Finney and guest spend individual time reviewing how far each participant has come with their own model and plan.

1.00 Lunch

2.00 Workshops continued.

3.30 Break

3.50 Feedback: with guest and Finney, and overall discussion on progress.

5.30 Wrap

SESSION FOUR: September

THE USERS: Marketing, Branding and new way of reaching the audience

DAY ONE

9.30 Marketing – This session looks at film marketing principles, strategy and materials. It examines the role of the sales agent and distributor in the film marketing process respectively; and explores promos, trailers, teasers, posters and marketing through the internet and new digital media. Press, publicity and traditional platforms analysed. Traditional and New. Looking at classic strategies next to viral and Internet driven campaigns. To include case study that used both methods.

11.00 Break

11.20 MENTOR introduction:

Looking at 360 degrees business models, and how music/live/TV and film can work in unison. The session will also examine brand creation and user group awareness, and harnessing fan bases.

Break

Case study with Mentor (subject tbc)

3.30 Break

4.00 The future of film distribution and digital developments: A presentation that examines the current status quo, the studios' market domination, the independent approach, the multi-territory strategy and the (imminent) switch from DVD and free TV to Video On Demand.

5.00 Film marketing workshop exercise: Participants divided into groups, and posters from the 70s/80s are provided. Analysis and feedback is given by each of the groups.

6.30 End

DAY TWO

9.30 Discussion of where the group has reached on the programme and what outcomes they feel they can and have achieved.

Throughout the day: A series of presentations.

Each participant does a **Business Plan presentation** – and feedback is provided by group and expert guests. 10 x 30 minutes.

END

How to Apply

Applicants will be asked to submit their CV (for the company and key management – to capture credits from freelance producers who later set up production companies), along with an overview (2-4pp) of their current business strategy. This should identify the current members of staff and their core skills; the number of projects currently in production and active development; their planned levels of production/development activity going forward (3-5 years) and strategies for planning for and adapting to increased activity. The strategy should also identify current active partnerships/co-production relationships, and talent relationships.

Throughout the course participants will develop their own company business plan for final presentation to the group and will have some “Homework” interspersed over the workshops.

Participants will be charged a nominal administration fee of £75.

Applications should be received by 5pm on **Monday 24th May 2010**.
Successful applicants will be notified by the **1st June 2010**.

Participants will be selected for interview by the course leader, Film Agency for Wales and Academi+ representatives. Selection will be based on an assessment of the application materials; the applicant being of sufficient experience to fully realise the course benefits, and on the potential to gain from the course (based on evidenced insights in relation to the submitted business strategy).