

**SCREEN SCOTLAND**  
**SGRÌN ALBA**



**BBC and Screen Scotland  
Partnership Agreement**

## **BBC and Screen Scotland Partnership Agreement**

### **Introduction**

This Memorandum of Understanding sets out the partnership agreement between Screen Scotland and the BBC to build a sustainable television industry in Scotland and to improve the on-air representation and portrayal of Scotland and its people. It is envisaged as the first stage in a long-term collaboration involving the BBC, Screen Scotland, and potentially other relevant parties.

Screen Scotland and the BBC share a common purpose: to support a vibrant, world class Scottish television industry that excels in the production of a diverse range of content, including ambitious projects which reflect Scottish culture and are enjoyed by audiences in Scotland, the UK and internationally.

The MOU identifies how the two parties will work together on a strategic level to achieve added value from the increased levels of funding being provided to Screen Scotland from the Scottish Government, from the additional investment the BBC is making into a new TV channel in Scotland, the BBC's ongoing commitment to invest at least 8% of network TV spend in Scotland, and from the range of content services already provided by BBC Scotland.

Cumulatively, the level of new investment in film and television offers a significant opportunity for the BBC, Screen Scotland and for other parties to work together. Our shared purpose requires a coherent, collegiate approach to build on initiatives that are already underway and set a shared framework for new development.

## **Our shared ambitions**

We have identified the following ambitions that we will work collaboratively to achieve.

### **Nurture Scottish talent and enable its progression**

- We will actively encourage the development of a more diverse and inclusive industry, by increasing on- and off-screen diverse talent and encouraging a broader range of voices, stories and perspectives to be heard.
- We will maximise the opportunities offered by the new BBC Scotland Channel, particularly as an incubator for new ideas, talent and formats.
- We will identify and support training initiatives and create professional development opportunities to strengthen the experience in senior roles.

### **Stimulate production growth and economic success across the film and television sectors**

- We will co-invest in production, with a view to securing returning series, in particular in TV drama, scripted comedy and factual formats.
- We will support the development of an internationally competitive screen industry in Scotland, which attracts additional production activity and investment into the nation.
- We will support the development of companies of scale and contribute to Scottish company growth.
- We will support the development of the Creative Scotland data centre through regular sharing of agreed relevant production and audience information.

### **Extend the range of Scottish film and television and its global reach**

- We aim to attract wider audiences to Scottish content by generating projects of greater ambition and commercial appeal.
- We will invest in world-class content – particularly in television drama – including shows that tell the stories and reflect the lives of the nation, representing Scotland to itself, to audiences across the UK and globally.
- We will stimulate inward investment by building links with co-production partners and overseas broadcasters who have the potential to co-commission or co-produce content.
- We will co-invest in piloting to test and strengthen ideas, where appropriate.

## **Delivery commitments**

### **The BBC commits to<sup>1</sup>:**

*The following commitments will strengthen and enhance the BBC's work in Scotland, please see section "Working together" on pages 5-6 for detail.*

- Deliver on its commitment to open up 100% of television content to competition in Scotland by 2027, other than where it is not value for money to do so.<sup>2</sup>
- Spend a minimum of £500,000, between February 2019 and March 2020, to support the delivery of ambitious projects which improve the representation and portrayal of the Nation<sup>3</sup>.
- Invest a minimum of £1m on the development of scripted and unscripted ideas for Network Television in Scotland over the next two years (to February 2021).
- Continue to invest in the "Writer's Room" to develop local writing talent.
- Ensure commissioners with decision-making power in a range of relevant genres visit Scotland to communicate their ambition and programming needs, and actively develop relationships with production companies who have ideas or potential to deliver against them.
- Deliver a minimum of 3 Drama series per year from Scotland and aim for 2 of those to be returning by the end of 2021.
- Deliver a minimum of 3 Comedy titles per year from Scotland - at least 2 of which will also deliver portrayal for Scotland -and develop ideas for returning series to replace the current successful shows.
- Deliver a minimum of 3 Factual series from Scotland per year (outside of Daytime), with at least one peak-time programme showcasing Scotland to the rest of the UK (this could be formatted or otherwise). The BBC is committed to working with the sector and Screen Scotland to developing a stronger format pipeline over time.

### **Screen Scotland commits to:**

- Allocate £500,000 to support the ambitions of this MOU in the first year. Through the Strategic Partnership resource, prioritise supporting mutually agreed strategic, developmental initiatives (such as production partnerships, in-company support, talent attraction, talent shadowing, piloting, placements and professional development) to strengthen the long term-health of the Scottish TV sector.
- At a minimum match-fund the BBC's commitment to develop talent, skills and businesses in Scotland – either through enhancing existing initiatives, or by developing and agreeing new, complementary ones.

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<sup>1</sup> Figures and commitments quoted below reflect current Network TV funding levels. In the event of any significant changes to funding, these will be subject to review.

<sup>2</sup> The Royal Charter & Agreement forms the constitutional basis of the BBC.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bbc-charter-and-framework-agreement>

<sup>3</sup> The BBC's £2million portrayal fund provides additional funding for programmes, ideas or partnerships that reflect lives, stories and communities across the UK.

- Allocate funds to support the cost of development and production of BBC-commissioned projects through the Broadcast Content Fund, via the competitive selection process, in accordance with the published guidance for the Fund.
- Ensure funds are allocated on merit according to the value they contribute to the shared aims and ambitions and in a fair and transparent way.
- Work with BBC and other partners to facilitate the discovery of and access to up and coming Scottish talent.

### **Screen Scotland and the BBC together will:**

- Support the production of HETV in Scotland through investment by Screen Scotland in infrastructure and by the BBC seeking to place high-end TV drama production in Scotland.
- Support piloting and production partnerships.
- Jointly identify and support talent and companies with a growth potential.
- Develop targeted training schemes, apprenticeships, shadowing, workplace-based experience and placements, complementing existing initiatives such as TRC's SuperSizer and Pact's Indie Diversity entry level scheme (Skills).
- Although this partnership principally pertains to Television, we will continue to work together on film opportunities in Scotland through BBC Films, including co-financing, to be agreed on a project by project basis. BBC Films will give particular consideration to first and second films from Scottish writers and directors, produced by Scotland based companies, alongside support for established Scottish filmmakers.

### **What we will achieve in our first three months**

Within 3 months of this MOU being signed the BBC and Screen Scotland will:

- Hold in-depth workshops by genre with local and network commissioning teams to share insights and identify the necessary steps needed to achieve success across the range of commissioning levers and suite of funding support available.
- Develop plans, and shape initiatives with partners, as appropriate, to enable progress to be made as swiftly as possible towards these goals.

### **Term and Review**

This initial partnership agreement covers the period 24 February 2019 to 31 December 2021, with a formal review at the end of the first 12 months. It is anticipated that it will be reviewed and revised as appropriate for renewal at the end of the second year for a further period.

The initiatives outlined in this partnership will be monitored and measured on a quarterly basis, with both parties exchanging information on current projects to identify and address any potential shortfalls within the Term.

Ongoing monitoring and review will be the responsibility of a convened group to include relevant representatives from BBC Scotland, BBC Network Television and Screen Scotland.

This is a Memorandum of Understanding and not intended to be legally binding. Both parties are committed to achieving the shared ambitions; however, there may be circumstances in which that is not possible.

## **Parties**

### **BBC**

The BBC is a public service broadcaster established under a Royal Charter. It is funded by the licence fee paid by UK households.

The mission of the BBC is to act in the public interest, serving all audiences through the provision of impartial, high-quality and distinctive output and services which inform, educate and entertain. Its vision is to be the most creative organisation in the world.

BBC Scotland serves a population of 5.3m people, providing services to all of Scotland's major urban conurbations, rural and island communities. Television services for audiences include BBC One Scotland, BBC Scotland (launched in February 2019), and the Gaelic language service, BBC ALBA (operated in collaboration with MG ALBA); speech and specialist music radio services are provided via BBC Radio Scotland and, in Gaelic, BBC Radio nan Gaidheal; there is online provision at [www.bbc.co.uk/Scotland](http://www.bbc.co.uk/Scotland); and The Social offers BBC Scotland content via social media.

BBC Content is a division of the BBC which operates four channels across the UK, BBC One, BBC Two and BBC Four via linear broadcast, and BBC 3 online, as well as the BBC iPlayer service. It commissions content for those channels and services across Drama, Comedy, Entertainment, Factual and Daytime.

BBC Children's is a department of the BBC which commissions content across two digital channels, CBBC and CBeebies, and online. It sits within the Radio & Education division and its production team remain in public service.

### **Screen Scotland**

Screen Scotland was launched in August 2018 to grow the film and TV sector in Scotland. Screen Scotland sits within Creative Scotland and is a partnership with Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Funding Council, with funding from the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. The Scottish Government is investing an additional £10m, bringing the total budget for screen sector in Scotland to £20m, in addition to the support and resources of the partner agencies. This includes a £3m per annum Broadcast Content Fund and additional funding for strategic partnerships with content commissioners.

## **Working together – adding value**

In establishing our new delivery commitments, the BBC and Screen Scotland will also work more closely together on existing activities. This section sets out these activities and how the partnership between us could maximise their value.

### **Content**

BBC and Screen Scotland recognise the importance of local production, IP asset ownership and creative talent in the long-term development of a sustainable sector. We also acknowledge the benefits established world-class players can bring to the development of ambitious projects, economic activity and talent development.

#### *Portrayal*

The BBC already invests in projects, people and companies to strengthen the development pipeline of programmes which reflect Scotland to the UK and the world. The BBC and Screen Scotland will work closely to align investment with the ambitions of this partnership agreement, whilst acknowledging there may be exceptions. The focus will be on bold, ambitious programming in Scotland, which regularly tells the stories, reflects the lives and showcases the landscape of the nation, in a way that is compelling for audiences globally and generates pride locally.

We will partner to fund and broadcast Gaelic language programmes which meet the aims of this partnership agreement.

#### *Scripted – Drama and Comedy*

With BBC and Screen Scotland co-financing production, there are clear opportunities to build on the current success and drive sustainability of the Scotland-produced BBC Drama and Comedy slate, that embraces the best creative minds in the business and ignites the imagination of audiences.

We will seek to increase the range of Scotland-produced returning series commissions on BBC television networks (on BBC One, Two, Three and Four), which will drive sustainability and over time become a regular, much-loved fixture of the schedule.

There are also opportunities to develop and produce television drama and comedy series in Scotland that can attract international co-financing. This may involve the co-funding of development and, given the nature of these genres, this may involve some testing or piloting to achieve that over time.

BBC Scotland and Screen Scotland will support the production of short form scripted comedy content for the BBC's digital platforms.

Children's and Gaelic productions will also be considered in these genres where they match the aims of Screen Scotland.

#### *Unscripted – Factual and Entertainment*

The BBC and Screen Scotland will work together to encourage local producers to develop returnable unscripted formats, including Factual Entertainment programming, which could come from either Factual or Entertainment genres.

The focus will be to develop a pipeline of both contemporary and specialist formats, which have the potential to play on UK Network and work as tape and/or format sales for international markets. The parties will collectively consider co-financing of the development of pilots to support this pipeline.

Additionally, BBC and Screen Scotland will explore other unscripted opportunities which help support the overall aims of the partnership, including but not limited to feature documentaries or premium factual with strong international potential.

Children's and Gaelic productions will also be considered in these genres where they match the aims of Screen Scotland.

### **Skills development**

Screen Scotland and the BBC are committed to working together to address the ongoing development of an ever increasingly skilled production sector. As is the case right across the UK, skills development is the critical challenge facing the ongoing successful growth of the screen industry in Scotland. There is an urgent need to address skills shortages at every level within the screen industry and across every genre and in particular in the middle and senior level talent e.g. Script Editors, Executive Producers.

We will also ensure that the co-financed projects offer the maximum possible opportunities for Scottish talent and crew. In practice, this will include a formal discussion around the maximum use of resident talent and crew on each supported project, to include the production company, the relevant BBC commissioner or executive and representation from Screen Scotland.

To enhance Scottish Government's direct investment of £475,000 for the National Film & Television School, BBC Scotland will provide ongoing in-kind support to the NFTS, established at BBC Scotland's headquarters at Pacific Quay and at the BBC facilities in Dumbarton.

### **Reach of content and platforms**

As part of ideas and talent development, the parties will explore opportunities to utilise the BBC's broadcast, digital and social media platforms to provide outlets for new, creative content from across Scotland's creative community. The BBC will support small and emerging companies in this space where possible.

BBC Studios launched as a wholly-owned commercial subsidiary in April 2017. Screen Scotland acknowledges the intention that BBC studios will operate on a similar basis to any other production company in the UK and agrees to deal with BBC Studios on the same terms. The BBC commits to openness and fairness with regards to the status of BBC Studios in relation to the wider market.



## **Signatories to this MOU**

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Lord Tony Hall  
Director-General, BBC

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Iain Munro  
Acting Chief Executive, Creative Scotland

Glasgow, 24 February, 2019