

# Innovative Training Fund

## *Guidance*

### **What is the opportunity?**

The Innovative Training Fund seeks to create opportunities for the joint exploration of new ideas and innovative solutions to enhance skills development, diversity and inclusion in the screen industries through non-traditional training approaches.

The Fund will provide awards to support innovative projects with the potential to create impact for the Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN) and help us further the goals of our strategy in a way that is original and stimulating.

We are looking to fund individual trainers or training providers (SMEs) who have an innovative training idea; the funding provided through this scheme will enable novel ideas for skills development schemes to be road-tested/pilot tested with little financial risk. It is hoped that this approach will enable training providers to develop projects in collaboration with the SIGN Skills and Training team, to bring fresh ideas to the known issues around skills gaps and skills development in the screen industries.

Through the scheme, UK-based trainers / training organisations will be supported to develop cutting-edge solutions, utilising new technologies and practises to improve the quality of skills training for adults based in Yorkshire and the Humber region. The scheme will provide funding to harness technologies to develop bespoke, flexible, inclusive and engaging training opportunities to support more people into employment.

For example, innovative training solutions might utilise microlearning, immersive technologies, interactive guidance, mobile learning, action-based learning or informal learning, a mixture of approaches, or something entirely new.

Applications for funding will seek to address a specific issue that is impacting the screen industries in Yorkshire and the Humber.

We are seeking proposals that demonstrate a strong and combined emphasis on innovation and viability. Applicants will be asked to answer a number of questions during the process and they will need to provide details on the costs of the proposed training activity.

Training must be delivered between April 2022 and March 2023. Funded projects will ideally include a cohort or series of sessions within this time period and trainers will be expected to provide their own evaluation report on the training delivery. The SIGN team will also review and report on success.

We encourage applicants who have not had previous experience in developing a training scheme to apply for this funding, and will offer a series of training sessions to support your own skills development in design and delivery of training activities.

## **Project Themes**

Please include information under the following headings in your application:

### **Innovative Approaches to Training**

The course or workshop you wish to develop should utilise new or non traditional technologies or delivery techniques to support learning or collaboration across the screen industries.

### **Addressing a Skills Gap**

Courses or workshops that address a gap seen as crucial to the screen industries. A project that addresses more than one skill gap is welcome.

### **Target Audience**

According to our training provision mapping, we have identified a number of gaps in support. Your scheme can seek to address or support one of the following:

- Support the progression of mid-career to next stage professionals
- Support individuals in decision making positions transition their teams into a more diverse workforce
- Support those from underrepresented groups in the screen industries in the progression of their careers

## **Scheme Activity timeline**

If your application has been successful, we will contact you to confirm participation and will then invite you to meet with the Skills and Training team to discuss your concept in a scoping meeting, during which we will confirm timescales and ascertain the support you will need. We recognise that for those new to training development that this might be a more intensive process than for those who have some experience in training already. We will invite you to meet with the other successful applicants to the fund, set up a Slack community to share progress and queries as well as confirm the dates of the workshops to your team as part of this scheme.

The project development phase will enable you to work on the content of your training course or workshop. This will include recruiting experts, creating training materials and working with SIGN to develop your concept into a feasible offer.

Once your course or workshop has been fully developed, SIGN will work with you to schedule course running dates and market this as part of the SIGN Short Courses in 2022-23. This collaboration will include marketing to your target audience, managing the recruitment of participants and support during the delivery of the training.

Once one iteration of the course or workshop is completed, we require you to submit an evaluation report on the course or workshop within 8 weeks of completion.

**Scheme start:** June 2022

**Workshop dates:**

- Workshop 1 - June 2022
- Workshop 2 - June 2022
- Workshop 3 - July 2022

**Development of your project**

- Project development - July & August 2022
- Pilot run of your course and feedback - August - September 2022
- Advertisement of your course / workshop - September 2022
- Delivery - October - November 2022
- Evaluation - December 2022

## **Budget**

You can apply for an award of up to £20,000. The funding can cover the following items: staff, staff time, development costs, specific equipment/facilities.

You should not include:

- The purchase of standard personal computers, including laptops, or standard software, however, the purchase of specialist equipment required to enable the delivery of the training will be considered
- Travel, subsistence or costs associated with attendance of externally arranged conferences or trade shows unless they are directly associated with the delivery of training.
- Payment of student stipends, internships or placements or course bursaries (there are other funding routes available for these activities).

## **Eligibility**

- Applicants in the scheme must be either an individual or a business no larger than a Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) - definition [here](#)
- You must be willing to deliver your project to participants in the Yorkshire and Humber region on a date agreed with SIGN (this will be dependent on delivery method and Covid19 restrictions set by the University of York)
- You must be willing to engage in evaluation activities associated with the scheme
- You must be committed to diversity and inclusivity in your working practice
- You must be willing and able to contribute time and resources to the project and fully participate in all aspects of the scheme, attending the workshops and collaborating with SIGN

- Your project must address at least one of the themes identified in the assessment criteria
- Your project will have a clearly defined budget
- You will be expected to collaborate with SIGN for your course or workshop recruitment.

## Main Assessment criteria

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of representatives from SIGN. You will be asked to submit a description of a project that you would work on during the scheme.

The main assessment criteria for your project proposal will be:

- Your plan for addressing a specific skill gap in the screen industries
- Your commitment to diversity and inclusion in the screen industries
- Demonstration of how your training activities will be utilising innovative approaches to training.

## SIGN

The [Screen Industries Growth Network](#) (SIGN) is a unique, business-facing initiative supporting the TV, film, games and digital industries in Yorkshire and the Humber. SIGN aims to make this region the UK's centre for digital creativity, and a model of diverse and inclusive activity. In order to do this, SIGN connects companies, support agencies and universities through a programme of training, business development, research and evaluation.

SIGN is a £6.4M project funded by [Research England](#), [the University of York](#), and its partners. The University of York leads the initiative, working with [Screen Yorkshire](#) and [eight other Yorkshire universities](#). An extensive network of collaboration ensures that SIGN is equipped to deliver maximum impact across the region.

The Innovative Training fund is managed by the Skills and Training Workstream of the SIGN programme. The aim of the fund is to support the development of new and innovative approaches to addressing screen industry skills gaps in the Yorkshire and Humber region. It also provides an opportunity for those new to delivering training to gain skills and explore course development and delivery.

## What has the SIGN Skills and Training Workstream delivered so far?

SIGN has provided a comprehensive range of training and development schemes, designed to create a larger, more diverse, more creative and more entrepreneurial screen industry workforce. Our schemes have included:

**Short courses:** aimed at addressing soft skills gaps in the screen industries. These have been delivered as one-off workshops for 60 -90 minutes in a group setting with a trainer and were open to anyone interested in the screen industries.

**Navigating career paths:** a series of varied training programmes designed to address specific gaps in the screen industries. The series included two programmes for women and other marginalised genders to explore working in sound, as well as a course for those working in scriptwriting for TV and Film interested in moving into Games writing.

**Early Careers and SIGN Up:** two mentoring programmes to support individuals looking to progress their careers in the screen industry. SIGN Up supported those whose work was impacted by the Covid19 pandemic. The Early Careers Scheme currently supports individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups to start a career in the screen industry.

**Inclusive Vision** is a project that seeks to support business leaders and their teams to move towards creating a more collaborative and inclusive creative workplace.