

Programmes & Activities

Interim Report
Apr 2023 — Dec 2024



Introduction

Film Hub North supports film culture in the North of England through funding schemes, training programmes and by building vibrant local film communities.

We work with film exhibition organisations, filmmakers and young people aged 16–25, helping to get great films made, screened and seen in the region.

Our support is here to grow audiences, develop creative talent and introduce exciting new voices to the film industry.

Film Hub North is supported by National Lottery funding, and led in partnership by the North's two leading independent cinemas: HOME, Manchester, and Showroom Cinema, Sheffield.

We're proud to contribute to the British Film Institute's strategy for regional film culture. Film Hub North delivers projects as part of the BFI Film Audience Network, BFI NETWORK and BFI Film Academy.





Above
HOME Cinema,
Manchester
© Paul Karalius



Right
Showroom
Cinema, Sheffield
© fergusburnett.com

Overview of Film Hub North investment so far

Year One Apr 2023 – Mar 2024

Total Awarded

£286,505

Total Screenings

2,744

Specialised Screenings

2,242

Total Admissions

69,175

Year Two So Far Apr – Dec 2024

Total Awarded

£277,871

Total Screenings So Far

1,317

Specialised Screenings So Far

1,109

Admissions So Far

32,508

Audience Data

Film Hub North is committed to working towards a more accessible and inclusive film sector. Awarded members are provided with audience surveys to monitor how well they are engaging with specific audiences.

The data provided is based on 2.5k surveys collected.

Black and Global Majority

14% Year 3 Target
18%

Working Class

18% Year 3 Target
39%

Female

59% Year 3 Target
50%

LGBTQIA+

29% Year 3 Target
18%

Disabled

35% Year 3 Target
18%

Age 16–25

16%



I am disabled and the Storyhouse is both friendly and accessible: nothing is too much trouble for the staff. It is a much loved community asset which caters for all ages, abilities and interests.”

— Storyhouse attendee



A pleasure to see so many young Chinese people at the cinema enjoying and presenting the festival events.”

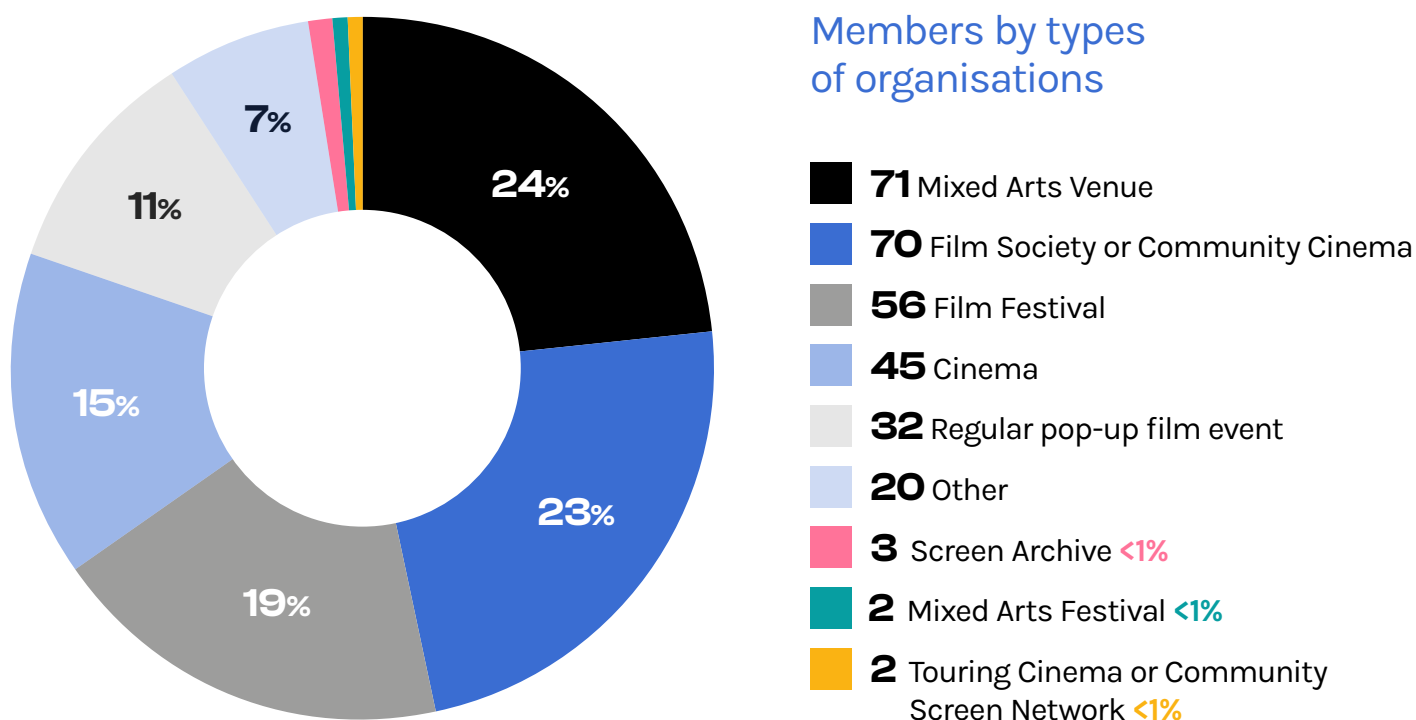
— Mint Chinese Film Festival attendee



Above
Mint Chinese Film Festival
© Mint Chinese Film Festival

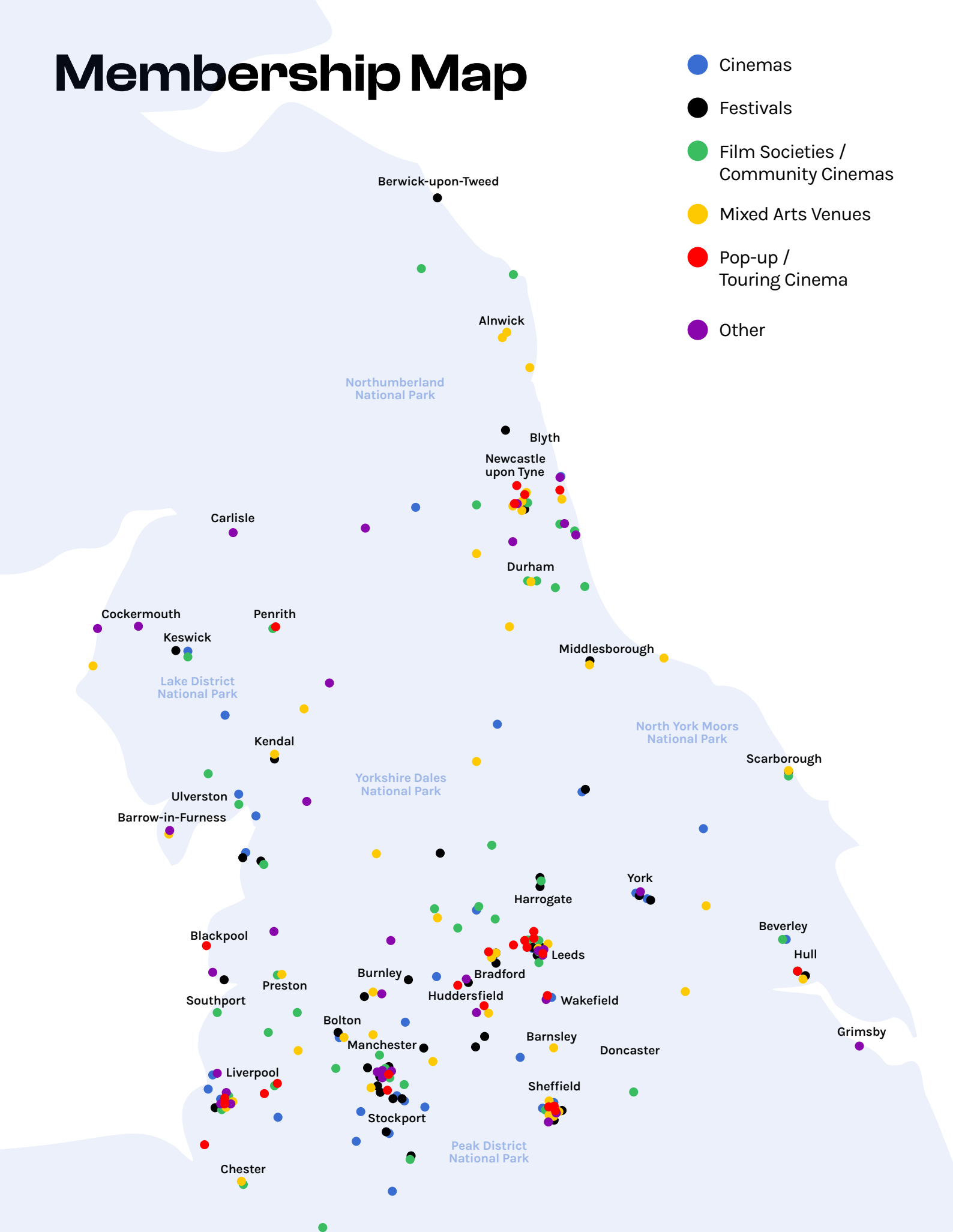
Overview of our Membership

Film Hub North membership consists of 301 members, from mixed art venues to film societies, cinemas to screen archives, pop-ups and film festivals. Since the beginning of FAN 3 (2023–2026), 63 new members have joined our hub.



Membership Map

- Cinemas
- Festivals
- Film Societies / Community Cinemas
- Mixed Arts Venues
- Pop-up / Touring Cinema
- Other



Membership Feedback



Without the funding we would not have been as confident that our usual programming would have attracted sufficient audience numbers to be sustainable. Instead, having funding support in place has allowed us to concentrate on delivering a diverse and high-quality programme while also giving us headspace to start looking at attracting audience members from community groups and demographic sectors we have not previously been successful at engaging with.”

— Hull Independent Cinema 2023-24



This funding has allowed the festival to happen [...] the response was beyond what we could have expected so it really is much appreciated and we can't wait to work further to develop the film exhibition scene in Scarborough.”

— Scarborough Film Festival 2023-24

Film Exhibition Fund

With up to £10,000 per project available per year for activity, our Film Exhibition Fund supports exhibitors to engage audiences with independent film programmes in a communal setting.

	Apr 2023 – Mar 2024	Apr – Dec 2024
Awarded	£79,242	£73,032
Screenings	426	138
Admissions	15,795	5,865
Supported Members	12	12



A brilliant selection of films diversely representing the filmmakers of today's culture. Put on by a great organisation of people who care."

— Scarborough Film Festival attendee



We are privileged to have the Film Festival in our locality. It brings top quality films from around the world that would otherwise not be accessible and it creates a real buzz locally. It's just wonderful."

— Hebden Bridge Film Festival attendee

Film Exhibition Fund

Pitch Pot

Through our Film Exhibition Fund – Pitch Pot, we provided organisations with quick-fire micro-grants of up to £3,000 for one-off events and short screening programmes.

Apr 2023 – Mar 2024

Apr – Dec 2024

Awarded	£20,040	£21,505
Screenings	284	48
Admissions	6,403	1,729
Supported Members	11	11



**A beautiful experience.
So thoughtfully curated.
More of this please!”**

— Mira Film Nights attendee



**The atmosphere at LQFF
is always so welcoming,
safe, nourishing. I’m so glad
it exists.”**

— Leeds Queer Film Festival attendee

Strategic Partnerships

Our **Strategic partnerships** support longer-term, large-scale audience development projects by established exhibitors providing a regular year-round cinema programme, or those providing an offer for audiences that is otherwise unavailable.

Between April 2023 and March 2024, we invested £156,954 across 10 organisations, leading to 1,881 screenings and events and 42,803 admissions. Since April 2024, we've awarded £144,033 with activities still underway and taking place until March 2025.



Left
Hyde Park Picture
House, Leeds
© Ollie Jenkins

Cinema Unbound

The Creative Worlds of Powell & Pressburger

Cinema Unbound was a nationwide season from the BFI celebrating the UK's most distinguished filmmaking partnership between Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger. Film Hub North supported nine organisations, leading to 4,174 admissions across the 3-month season.

Regional highlights included Storyhouse's immersive screening of *Black Narcissus* complete with synchronised wind, volumetric light effects, and the aroma of the original Narcisse Noir scent featured in the film, and HOME's in conversation event with Thelma Schoonmaker, Michael Powell's wife and a 3-time Oscar-winning editor and close collaborator of Martin Scorsese.



Above
Thelma Schoonmaker
in conversation at
HOME, Manchester
© Ollie Jenkins

Right
Women X
© Rianne Pictures





The talk before the film was excellent. I have bought and read Pamela Hutchinson's book and have now booked to see the film again after absorbing her wonderful insights into the film."

— Cottage Road Cinema attendee (Leeds)



Watching this season of films has been one of the cultural highlights of my year."

— HOME attendee (Manchester)

Members' areas of focus

Our membership is committed to engaging with and developing diverse audiences for British, Independent and International film. Organisations we've supported through our awards have focused on the following areas of development:

Wider choice of film

Working-class audiences

Black & Global Majority audiences

D/deaf & disabled audiences

LGBTQAI+ audiences

Young people

Children & families

More diverse on-screen representation

Film heritage & archives



The legacy we hope to leave from Women X 2023 is a commitment to promoting diversity and inclusivity in the film industry. We believe that everyone should have access to films, regardless of their background, economic status or abilities, and we hope to continue to provide support and resources to ensure that this is possible in an inclusive and safe environment.”

— Caris Rianne

Founder of Rianne Pictures and Women X Film Festival

Member Support

Bursaries

Our Bursary Fund has enabled film exhibitors to access training opportunities and events in order to connect with the sector, improve their skills, and boost their confidence. Supported members attended BFI FAN Conference, ICO Screening Days, Aesthetica Short Film Festival, Sheffield Doc/Fest, London Film Festival and many more.

	Apr 2023 – Mar 2024	Apr – Dec 2024
Awarded	£8,147	£9,601
Supported Members	25	27



Above
BFI FAN CON
© BFI Film
Audience Network



Right
Lytham International
Film Festival
© Chris Holmes



The ‘Developing Your Film Festival’ course provided us with essential knowledge on programming strategies, marketing, audience development, fundraising, and partnership building. This has been instrumental in shaping our second edition of the festival.”

— Anna Henderson, The Bay International Film Festival
Attended ICO’s course Developing Your Film Festival

Member Support

Networking and Knowledge Sharing

We've held in person events across the region for local members, new and old, to connect, discuss challenges, opportunities, and learn from each other. Hosting partners included Aunty Social in Blackpool, Absolutely Cultured in Hull, and Gala Theatre in Durham.

Our online meet-ups allowed members to connect around common themes – from programming for and with young people, to engaging local audiences with screen heritage – as well as hear from experts such as Charlie Little, Film Hub Scotland's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion.

We also partnered with Amandeep Dhillon, founder of ReelN, who has been delivering screenings of South Asian cinema in selected venues, as well as advising members on marketing and engaging with South Asian audiences. Tull Stories and Reel Solutions delivered a series of bespoke advice surgeries on audience outreach, programming, business planning and development strategy.

Spotlight on Sunderland

As part of the new BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) wide initiative Spotlight, Film Hubs were invited to make a strategic intervention in parts of the region that currently have little cultural cinema infrastructure and provision.

With on-the-ground support from Chris Allen, Festival Director of Sunderland Shorts Film Festival, our team has been working with existing and new film exhibitors across the Sunderland district to develop independent film screenings in a variety of venues and places.

Activity highlights include a special screening of *Typist Artist* at the Fire Station with director Carol Morley, sold out screenings of *Blue Jean* (Georgia Oakley) and *The Old Oak* (Ken Loach), and ongoing support for Arts Centre Washington to develop a screening programme to reach younger audiences and more local audiences.

From 2024 we are supporting the University of Sunderland to open up their new cinema to local audiences, with films perfect for big screen viewing and showcasing North East talents, both on-screen and behind the scenes.



Above
Sunderland Short
Film Festival
© Wycombe 89 Media



Right
Bradford Industry Day
© Maxine Trowbridge

BFI Network

Supporting Filmmaking Talent

Our Talent team is here to nurture and support the next generation of filmmaking talent. Through training opportunities and funding, we help regional writers, directors and producers develop their craft to make and tell great stories.

Since April 2023 we've funded 16 films through our Short Film Fund and 4 Early Development Feature projects, with talent hailing from Manchester, Bradford, Liverpool, Cumbria, Northumberland and more.



Left
Still from
Toxic Relationship
© Lauren Yvonne
Townsend

BFI Network

Festival Highlights

Some key festival selections and wins for our funded shorts include:

The Last Cowboy in Salford

[Jake Lancaster](#)

Clermont-Ferrand Short Film
International Film Festival 2024
– International Competition

Bury the Dog

[Beth Rowland](#)

Clermont-Ferrand Short Film
International Film Festival 2024
– International Competition

Fairview Park

[Ellie Hodgetts & Aymeric Nicolet](#)

Iris Prize 2024
Best Performance in a Male Role
Dennis Grindel

Safe

[Debbie Howard](#)

Best Writer and Best Director
Aesthetica 2023

Predators

[Jack King](#)

UK Critics Circle Award for Best Short
BFI London Film Festival 2023

Halfway

[Alfie Barker](#)

Best British Short
Leeds International Film Festival 2023

Starling

[Matthew Boyle](#)

Best Made Up North
Bolton International Film Festival 2023

Filmmakers we supported were recognised in the 2024 BIFA longlist:

Hollie Bryan and Lucy Meer for Breakthrough Producer, Jack King and Luna Carmoon for the Douglas Hickox award (Debut Director), and Luna for the Best Debut Screenwriter. Luna and Loran Dunn were also selected as 2024 BAFTA Breakthrough participants for *Hoard*.

Filmmaker Training and Development

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Writers supported through our Script Lab

Our **Script Lab** programme helps writers hone their craft and develop scripts through a series of feedback sessions that combine peer-to-peer learning with development support from industry mentors.

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Emerging producers supported through Creative Producer Lab

Creative Producer Lab, delivered with Film Hub Midlands, is a 6 week programme covering topics such as producing fundamentals, building a slate, budgeting and scheduling, pre-production, shooting, post-production, casting and distribution. Alumni have gone on to produce features, Associate Produce on major productions, be funded by BFI, Film 4, BBC, and receive funding from business development schemes.

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Directors supported through our Director schemes

Our previous scheme – a collaboration with Leeds’ National Film and Television School – saw emerging directors receive 3 days of development, support and technical training. Our new training, **Film Generator**, in partnership with North East Screen, sees new directors shooting scripts written by local filmmakers under our guidance.

“

The whole experience has been immense and I still can’t believe that I’ve been given the opportunity to develop my idea with you lovely lot, truth be told. So, thank you all for your support, expertise, and generosity with your time. You’ve really given me the belief that I can (with a lot of luck) make a successful transition to screen work.”

Filmmaker Training and Development



The whole programme has been really beneficial for me... I learnt loads and have a much clearer idea of my next steps. I'm feeling really motivated and re-energised! I also had the BEST time at Aesthetica. It was such a brilliant few days with great talks and screenings and I have connected with some fab writers and producers."

Channel 4

In partnership with Channel 4, we supported the delivery of an 8-month development programme for unrepresented writers looking for their first writing credit. Participants benefited from expert industry training and insights, mentoring, and introductions to scripted drama production companies.

ITV Academy

In 2024 we partnered with ITV Academy on a 1-day storyliner workshop, led by John Whiston (Head of ITV in the North), for writers looking to forge careers in television.



The work the Film Hub North does for filmmakers is so important and beyond any organisation I have ever worked with in my career... For someone like me, who has suffered significant barriers financially, geographically and physically in TV and Film it's so important to feel seen and heard as a filmmaker."

Film Academy

Supporting Young Filmmakers

Through Film Academy, we support young people aged 16–25 who want to get to know more about film and how to forge a career in the screen industries. Since April 2023, we've engaged 2,207 young people across our programmes.

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Filmmakers
supported through
our Micro Short
Film Fund

Our BFI Film Academy: Micro Short Film Fund is designed for emerging filmmakers to receive a grant of £1,000 to make a short film, which will then be developed with us at Film Hub North. So far we've supported filmmakers hailing from Manchester, Sheffield and Lancaster.

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Filmmakers
supported through
our DIY Filmmaking
Challenge

Our DIY Filmmaking Challenge is an opportunity for aspiring filmmakers aged 16–25 in the North of England to practise their filmmaking skills and create original short films in response to a theme. Shortlisted films were screened at festivals and events including Celluloid Screams, LEEDS INDIS and Sunderland Film Festival. The winning filmmaking team received £1,000 and mentoring from our team to develop their idea further.



**The stakes are lower:
experiment! Take the chance
to work with new people, or
in a different medium or style
from what you're used to."**

— Dylan Scott, DIY Filmmaking Challenge winner

Film Academy

Supporting Young Programmers

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**Young Programmers
Screenings Across the North
including Northern Exposure**

Northern Exposure is a touring film programme showcasing the best short films from the North of England. This programme has been selected by our Young Film Programmers, a group of emerging Northern film curators who have scoured the region to discover the stories that matter to them and the local filmmakers to get excited about. The programme has screened at festivals and venues across the North including Storyhouse, Leigh Film Society, The Dukes, HOME, Showroom, Sunderland Film Festival and much more.

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**Young Programmers
Trained across the North**

After receiving training from industry experts, our Northern Exposure trainees take over our Northern Exposure short film night – working collaboratively to create a brief and pulling together a programme of films showcasing the best of Northern filmmaking. These specially curated programmes have been screened at cinemas and festivals across the region, where participants are invited to host filmmaker Q+A's and networking sessions.



My time as a Young Programmer has been so rewarding as my first step into the film industry and I'm excited to bring these experiences with me as I venture on in my career. I've learnt about the entire process of organising a short film night, from the creative stages of collaboratively forming a brief right through to independently presenting our programmes at a variety of northern venues. The team at Film Hub North are super supportive and have given me a number of opportunities to attend other short film events, which made my time with them even more valuable and consistently inspiring!"

— Jasmine Broome, BFI Film Academy Young Programmer 23/24



Showing Films

Film Hub North

info@filmhubnorth.org.uk

Making Films

BFI NETWORK North

bfinetwork@filmhubnorth.org.uk

Starting Out (16–25)

BFI Film Academy North

sam@filmhubnorth.org.uk

Instagram

[filmhubnorth](https://www.instagram.com/filmhubnorth)

X / Twitter

[filmhubnorth](https://twitter.com/filmhubnorth)

Bluesky

[filmhubnorth.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/filmhubnorth.bsky.social)

LinkedIn

[film-hub-north](https://www.linkedin.com/company/film-hub-north)

Below
Northern Exposure at FACT

