

# Programmes & Activities

April 2023 – March 2026



# 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: Showroom Cinema, Sheffield, and HOME, Manchester.

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.

We look forward to continuing our work championing regional filmmaking talents and the film exhibition sector in 2026 and beyond!





**Above**  
HOME Cinema,  
Manchester  
© Paul Karalius



**Right**  
Showroom  
Cinema, Sheffield  
© fergusburnett.com

# Overview of Film Hub North investment for the 2023–26 period

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Year One April 2023 – March 2024

Total Awarded

**£293,122**

Specialised Screenings

**2,708**

Total Screenings

**2,985**

Total Admissions

**70,355**

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Year Two April 2024 – March 2025

Total Awarded

**£303,093**

Specialised Screenings

**2,681**

Total Screenings

**3,355**

Total Admissions

**82,283**

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Year Three April 2025 – March 2026

Total Awarded

**£342,488**

Specialised Screenings So Far

**4,465**

Total Screenings So Far

**5,214**

Total Admissions

**125,509**

# 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 engage with specific audiences.

The data provided is based on 4.4k surveys collected (2% response rate).

## Black and Global Majority

**17%** Year 3 Target  
**18%**

## Working Class

**17%** Year 3 Target  
**39%**

## Female

**60%** Year 3 Target  
**50%**

## LGBTQIA+

**27%** Year 3 Target  
**18%**

## Disabled\*

**44%** Year 3 Target  
**18%**

## Age 16–24

**13%**

\*including d/Deaf, neurodiverse and long-term health conditions



**I really enjoyed the film having subtitles (as I am deaf / wear a hearing aid) — it was helpful to me to follow the movie more.”**

— Imagine Futures Cinema attendee



**Extremely pleased with this concept, that allows my child to have the cinema experience without the pressure and judgement.”**

— Day Dream Cinema attendee



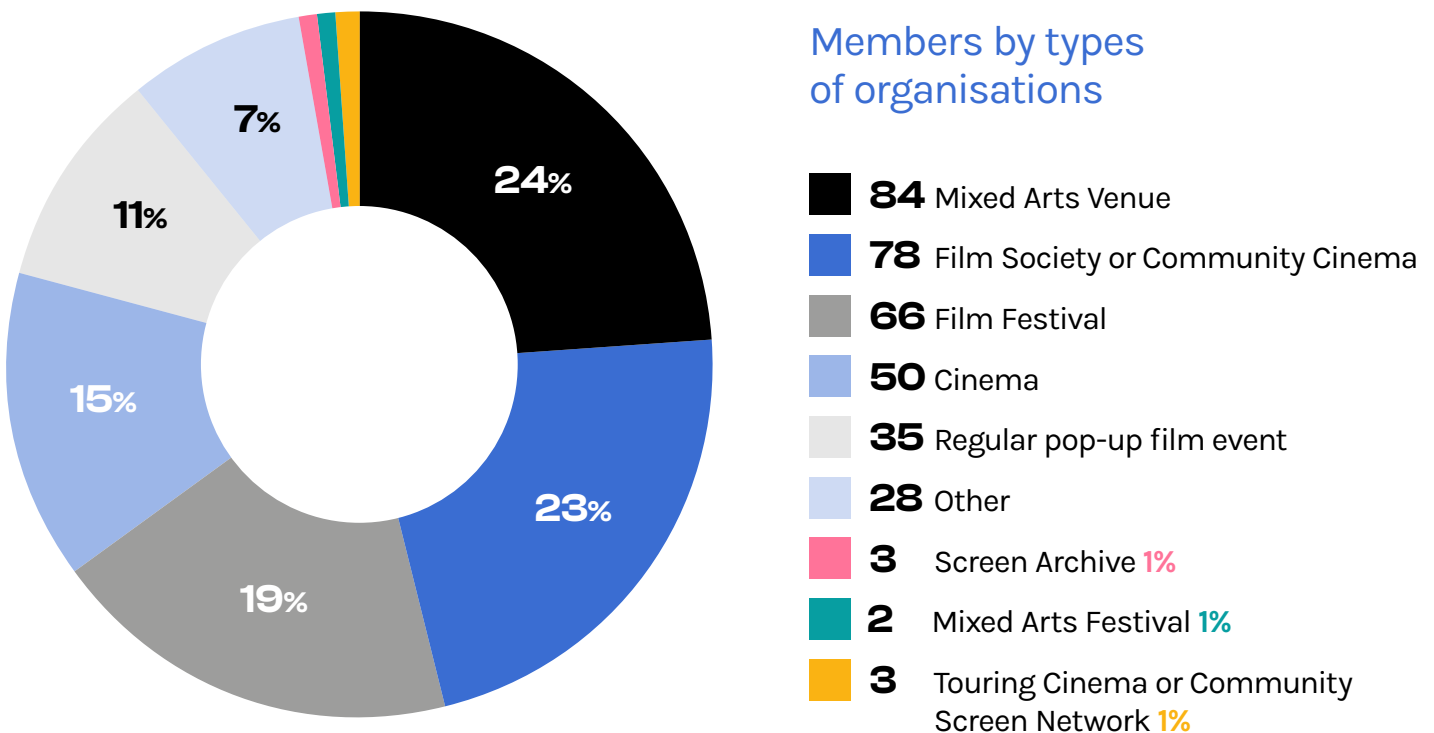
**Above**  
Imagine Futures Cinema  
© Imagine Futures CIC



**Right**  
Women X  
© Rianne Pictures

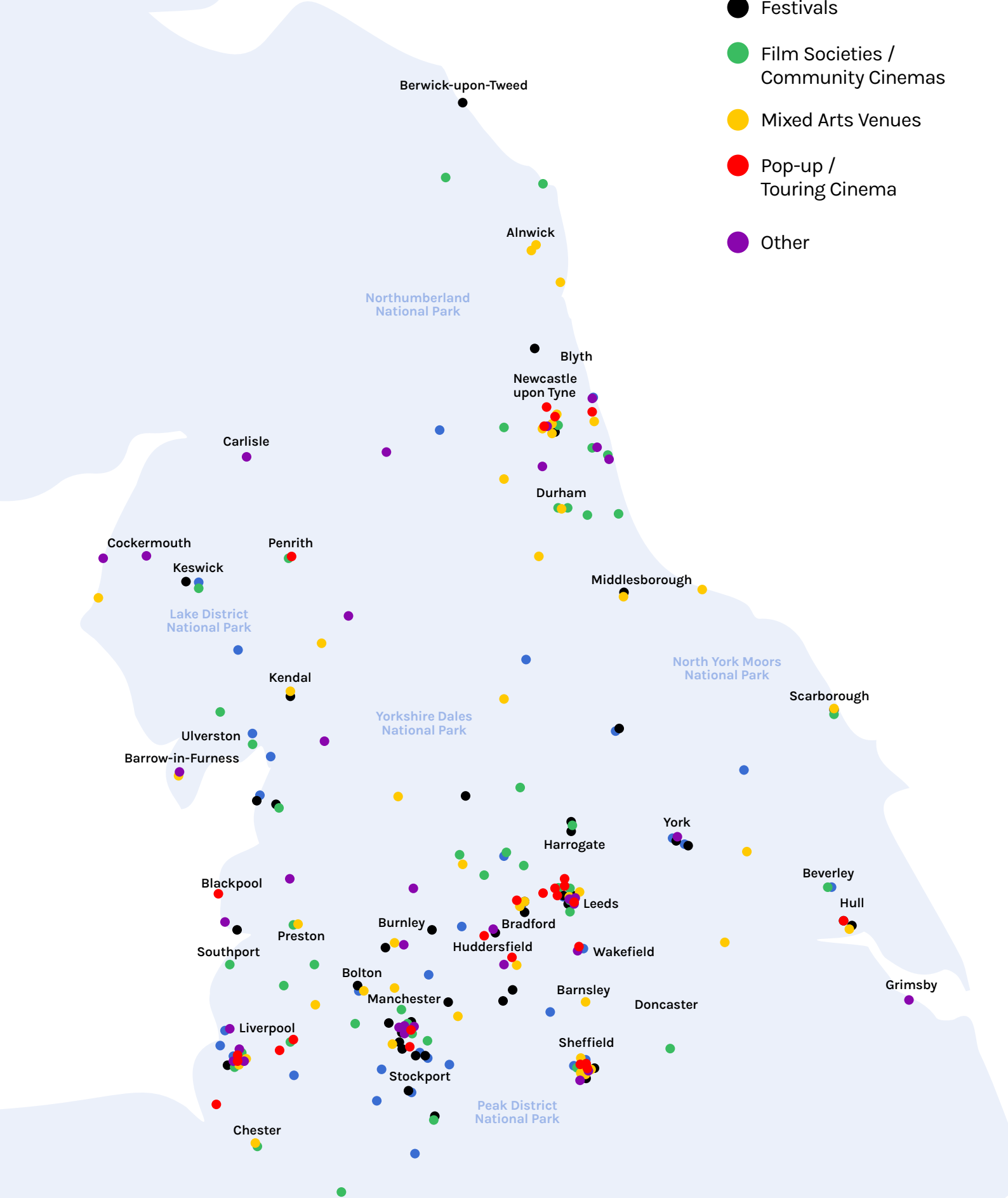
# Overview of our Membership

Film Hub North membership consists of 331 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), 117 new members have joined our Hub.



# Membership Map

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



# Membership Feedback



We can't believe the growth that has happened from last year to this year – we're so thankful for Film Hub North's support and really proud to bring this many people from across the **WORLD** to the North to watch these films."

– Women X Film Festival

# 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.

	April 23 – March 24	April 24 – March 25	April 25 – March 26
<b>Awarded</b>	<b>£79,242</b>	<b>£73,032</b>	<b>£102,878</b>
<b>Screenings</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>759</b>
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>15,795</b>	<b>14,887</b>	<b>29,171</b>
<b>Supported Members</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>



**An essential space for the queer community to see our lives represented in accurate and positive, affirmative ways.”**

— Bradford Queer Film Festival attendee



**I've never been to a film festival before, so I wasn't sure what to expect, but it was amazing. The films were so different from anything I usually watch and the whole experience felt welcoming and fun.”**

— Bolton 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.

	April 23 – March 24	April 24 – March 25	April 25 – March 26
<b>Awarded</b>	<b>£20,040</b>	<b>£23,079</b>	<b>£23,590</b>
<b>Screenings</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>6,403</b>	<b>2,923</b>	<b>2,988</b>
<b>Supported Members</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>



**Events like MIRA support the queer community in Manchester and provide a platform for marginalised creative voices. It's important we continue to fund and support these projects – especially in the current social and political context.”**

– MIRA Film Nights (MIRA Presents Trans Tales) attendee



**“The screenings were fantastic with the workshops, children and adults both enjoyed. Such brilliant value too.”**

– Friends of Stretford Public Hall (Family Film Passport) attendee

# Strategic Partnerships

Our **strategic partnerships** support long 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.

In the last 3 years, we invested £477,154 across 11 organisations, leading to 8,974 screenings and events and 190,075 admissions.

	April 23 – March 24	April 24 – March 25	April 25 – March 26
<b>Awarded</b>	<b>£174,454</b>	<b>£144,033</b>	<b>£159,527</b>
<b>Screenings</b>	<b>2,193</b>	<b>2,726</b>	<b>4,055</b>
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>44,145</b>	<b>57,446</b>	<b>88,484</b>
<b>Supported Members</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>



**Phenomenal curation,  
great communication  
with it's members,  
constantly going above  
and beyond with special  
screenings/events.  
This cinema has allowed  
me to see films and prints  
I would never would have  
a chance to otherwise.  
My favourite place in  
the world.”**

– National Science Media Museum cinema attendee

# Too Much Melodrama

**Following on from *Unbound: The Cinema of Powell and Pressburger* and *Art of Action*, *Too Much: Melodrama on Film* was a nationwide season celebrating the visual excess and dramatic potency of a form of cinema which champions emotional intensity over propriety and ‘good taste’, and evolved to incorporate a wealth of genres and stories.**

Film Hub North supported 7 organisations for a total of £25,501, leading to 3,792 admissions across the 3-month season.

Regional highlights included Hyde Park Picture House’s presentation of *Living in Bondage*, a Nollywood film shot and distributed on tape in association with the New Black Film Collective and Leeds-based, Black Women’s Project; Showroom’s listening party of Lorde’s *Melodrama* and sold-out screening of Wong Car Wai’s *In the Mood for Love*; HOME’s special presentation of late silent masterpiece *The Wind*, brought to life by accompanist Stephen Horne; and Day Dream Cinema’s inclusive, relaxed screenings of *Peyton Place* (1957) and *Twin Peaks Northwest Passage* (1990) at Newcastle Library.



**I love coming to these events, they're always very different to what is usually on offer in Blackpool and the staff are always lovely."**

– Audience member, Aunty Social, Blackpool



**We've had a brilliant night, the intro talk was really well researched and presented and seeing the film at the cinema was just perfect. We're so lucky to have this at the end of our road"**

– Audience member, Aunty Social, Blackpool



**Above**  
Bradford Queer  
Film Festival  
© Karol Wyszynski



**Right**  
Melodrama,  
Hyde Park Picture House  
© Daniel Johnson

# 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

LGBTQIA+ audiences

Young people

Children & families

More diverse on-screen representation

Film heritage & archives



**Scarborough has been identified as the most deprived district within the North Yorkshire region and in the UK [...] the funding we receive for the festival enables us to provide cinematic experiences to those who would otherwise be unable to afford them.”**

– Martha Cattell, Scarborough Film Festival



**We are the first women-organised Chinese film festival in the UK [...] Our audiences encounter new kinds of films and cultural experiences through our curated programmes. Based in one of the least ethnically-diverse counties in the UK, we strive to engage local audiences as well as to bring diversity to Cumbria.”**

Yixiang Shirley Lin, Mint Chinese 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 events such as the BFI FAN Conference, ICO Screening Days, Sheffield Doc/Fest, BFI London Film Festival and took part in training courses about marketing, audience development, business skills, cinema projection and more.

	April 23 – March 24	April 24 – March 25	April 25 – March 26
<b>Awarded</b>	<b>£8,147</b>	<b>£10,677</b>	<b>£6,602</b>
<b>Supported Members</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>



Above  
100 Years of  
Community Cinema  
Cinema For All Gala  
© Film Hub North

Right  
The Bay  
Women in Film Forum  
© Christopher Holmes



**As a programmer of repertory cinema, I thought it was vital I attend this year's Cinema Rediscovered. It was a wonderful opportunity to see newly restored films on the big screen, both films I was familiar with, and those new to me.”**

— Holly Rowley, Paraphysis Cinema



**Attending this event has been an enormously rewarding experience [...] Through conversations and shared experiences, I gained a deeper understanding of the innovative approaches others are using to reach new audiences, address barriers to participation, and strengthen inclusivity.”**

— Honorata Mikolajew, Cinema Social Club

# 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 and opportunities, and learn from each other. Hosting partners included FACT in Liverpool, Aunty Social in Blackpool, Absolutely Cultured in Hull, Gala Theatre in Durham, and more.**

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 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion champion Charlie Little.

We also partnered with Amandeep Dhillon, founder of ReelN, on developing programmes for South Asian audiences in selected venues, while Tull Stories and Reel Solutions delivered a series of bespoke advice surgeries on audience outreach, programming, business planning and development strategy.

# Member Support

## Networking and Knowledge Sharing (continued)

We have delivered member sessions in new formats that focus on specific sector needs. The first were in-person study days hosted by Storyhouse in Chester and Hyde Park Picture House in Leeds, respectively exploring how to create a safe space for young people and rethinking organisational structure and audience development plans.

Alongside these in-person events, we have also delivered online workshops on fundraising, audience insight and leveraging marketing resources and capacity. These were attended by members with some experience under their belts and by completely new members, all attending the workshops with real-world issues in mind.

Just for new members, we have also offered foundational sessions on marketing and audience development, led by our Marketing and Communications Lead and our Finance and Data Officer. We plan to run these sessions twice a year in the future, targeting new and inexperienced members as first steps for applying for our funds.

# 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 included a special screening of *Typist Artist Pirate King* 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 talent, both on-screen and behind the scenes.

# Spotlight on Sunderland (continued)

Our support enabled the small network of independent film exhibitors in Sunderland to try new ways of working and to test programming and marketing to reach wider audiences. Notable activities include a monthly programme of horror films at Diego's Joint, cult and classic films screened by POP Flix, and Sunderland Film Club's first edition of *The Weird And The Eerie*, selling out three horror-adjacent screenings at Sunderland Minster, with a second edition planned for late spring 2026.

Our Spotlight programme in Sunderland is supported by an advisory board of industry partners including Sunderland Culture, the University of Sunderland, North East Screen and Fulwell 73, masterminds behind the stunning development of Crown Works Studios.



**Above**  
Sunderland Film Club  
© Chris Allan



**Right**  
Sunderland Short  
Film Festival  
© Film Hub North

# BFI Network

## Key Highlights

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.

Since April 2023 we've funded 25 films through our Short Film Fund and 14 Early Development Feature projects, for a total of £613,835 – with talent hailing from Manchester, Bradford, Liverpool, Cumbria, Northumberland and more. Some key festival selections and wins for our funded shorts include:

### **The Last Cowboy in Salford**

[Jake Lancaster](#)

### **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

# BFI Network

## Key Highlights

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*.

### The Ceremony

[Jack King](#)

Project developed through EDF.  
Winner: Sean Connery Prize, Edinburgh International Film Festival 2024.  
Received a BAFTA nomination for outstanding debut in 2026

### Softy

[Joshua Reeves](#)

Best UK Short Film at British Urban Film Festival 2025

### Giants

[Andy Berriman](#)

Best screenplay at Aesthetica 2025 and North East Recognition award at Sunderland Film Festival 2026

### Meat Raffle

[Stuart Armstrong](#)

Best comedy at Tees Valley International Film Festival, streamed on Channel 4

### The Test

[Hsieh Meng Han](#)

Best Short Film UK at the 2025 225 Film Club and the Jury Prize at the 2025 Hebden Bridge Film Festival. The film was also a finalist in the 2025 Sony Future Filmmaker Awards

### Vestige

[Joe Simmons](#)

Currently streaming on Disney+



**Right**  
Still from  
*The Test*  
© Jay Chow



**Left**  
Still from  
*Meat Raffle*  
© Harry Shaw

# Developing Filmmaking Talents

## 30

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.

## 24

Emerging  
producers  
supported through  
our Creative and  
In Development  
Producer Labs

**In Development: Producer Lab** delivered with Film Hub Midlands, is a weekend 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.

# Developing Filmmaking Talents

## 6

### Directors supported through our Director schemes

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What sets Northern Directors apart is its genuine commitment to supporting filmmakers in the North. Many development programmes overlook regional talent, so having a programme specifically designed to nurture and create opportunities for Northern directors feels both necessary and impactful.”

– Em Gilbertson

In 2024 we ran **Film Generator**, in partnership with North East Screen, supporting new directors to shoot scripts written by local filmmakers under our guidance. These included *Birder* wri. Emmy Kay, *Dead Weight* wri. Raj Uddin, *Pinkface* wri. JD Stewart, and *Why Are You Like This?* wri. Richard Ampeh. Since then, *Birder* has received a positive response on the festival circuit screening at Manchester Film Festival and Sunderland Short Film Festival.

In 2025–2026 we supported mid-career directors through our shadowing programme **Northern Directors** in partnership with BBC Drama. We worked with several production companies including Sister on *The Split Up* filmed in Greater Manchester; Left Bank on *This City is Ours 2* filmed in Liverpool, and Clerkenwell Films on *Shy & Lola* filmed in Grimsby. In total we supported six directors with shadowing and mentorship.

# Filmmaker Training and Development



I had the opportunity to meet and observe the entire crew and to see how every department contributes to the final product. I was able to spend time in the producers' room, sit down with the director, speak to writers about story development, and even observe the colour grading process. Experiencing these different parts of the production pipeline gave me a holistic understanding of television production that I have never had before. That level of access and immersion is incredibly valuable for emerging directors.”

– Iqbal Mohammed

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## 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.”

– Anonymous

# Film Academy

## Supporting Young Filmmakers

Through Film Academy, we've supported 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 over 4,000 young people across our programmes of screenings, in person events and online workshops and training.

# 6

Filmmakers supported through our Micro Short Film Fund

Our BFI Film Academy: Micro Short Film Fund was designed for emerging filmmakers to receive a grant of £1000 to make a short film, which will then be developed with us at Film Hub North. Filmmakers hailing from Manchester, Sheffield, Stockport, Salford, Lancaster and York were supported through this programme.

# 6

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 freedom and trust with the money was invaluable and allowed me to direct with a professional crew on a personal project for the first time.”**

— Darshan Gajjar – *Shop Dada*,  
Sheffield DocFest DIY Filmmaking Challenge Winner



**The script notes and edit notes really helped me understand what makes a successful short film. It gave me a solid foundation to experiment and work on my craft which is usually only achievable by going to film school and come out with a successful product in which to showcase my artistic sensibilities to funders or employers in the future.”**

– Finn Chadwick, *The Rest is Silence*,  
Celluloid Screams DIY Filmmaking Challenge Winner

# Film Academy

## Supporting Young Programmers

# 43

**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 screened at festivals and venues across the North including Storyhouse, FACT, the Dukes, Brewery Arts, HOME, Hyde Park Picture House, Showroom, Tyneside Cinema, Stephen Joseph Theatre, Forum Hexham, Sunderland Film Festival and more.

# 22

**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.



**We developed a lot of brainstorming skills, organisation, discussion and – primarily – programming. It was the most involved programming project I'd ever been able to take a part of – we were given total creative freedom to chase ideas we enjoy with the constant guidance and advice when required [...]  
Getting access to industry speakers was excellent – their engagement with us was really encouraging. Nia Childs in particular was excellent! Down to earth, realistic and so insightful.”**

– Isaac McKenna, Young Programmer 2025



Above  
Northern Exposure  
© Film Hub North

# Film Academy

## Supporting Young Film Crew

# 6

Paid Runner placements  
on BFI Network shorts

We offered runner placements on 4 BFI Network-funded short films. This was an entry-level opportunity designed for young people with some experience on short films, student films, or small productions, who want to build professional credits and get hands-on experience of how a professional film set works. Shoots took place in Harwood (Northumbria), Huddersfield, Bradford (West Yorkshire) and Salford (Greater Manchester).



**We really enjoyed having two Film Academy graduates on set. The energy and enthusiasm in which they approached tasks is a credit to their training. As part of the Film Hub North family ourselves, we were more than happy to be a part of their journey and give them experiences working and shadowing in different departments – so they may have a better understanding of what they want to pursue in the future.”**

– Kenton Thomas, Producer, *My Man*



**“I started to attend Film Hub North mixers [...] where I got to meet the wonderful Ben Taylor. Since I am BFI Alumni he told me there were opportunities through Film Hub North for new entrants. I then got to meet amazing Nora Murphy at the BFI Academy Showcase [...] fast forward a couple of months I got offered the amazing opportunity to work on ‘Hen House!’ It was an incredible experience, the people, the plot of the film and the set were all equally amazing [...] I am proud to call it my first paid job in industry. I cannot wait to watch the film.”**

– Matilda Mutchell, runner, *Hen House*

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## Showing Films

Film Hub North

[info@filmhubnorth.org.uk](mailto:info@filmhubnorth.org.uk)

## Making Films

BFI NETWORK North

[bfinetwork@filmhubnorth.org.uk](mailto:bfinetwork@filmhubnorth.org.uk)

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## Instagram

[filmhubnorth](#)

## X / Twitter

[filmhubnorth](#)

## Bluesky

[filmhubnorth.bsky.social](#)

## LinkedIn

[film-hub-north](#)

### Below

Still from *Hen House*  
© Ahmani Vidal

