

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru / National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu / The Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee
Cynyrchiadau Ffilm a Theledu Mawr yng Nghymru / Film and Major TV Production in Wales
CWLC(5) FILMTV29
Ymateb gan Our Colab / Evidence from Our Colab

Faye Hannah is Director of leading Wales' based creative company 'Our Colab' working collaboratively with the creative and cultural industries, primarily for the screen industry in Wales and across the UK. Our Colab design, deliver and collaborate to manage a wide range of skills, training and education projects. Faye brings expert knowledge of Creative Industries skills development and experience of conducting research as well as business support to develop and enhance client aims and objectives around skills and training. Our Colab clients include Creative Skillset, Ffilm Cymru Wales, Arts Council of Wales, NextGen Skills Academy, Fiction Factory, Severn Screen, Rondo, Westminster Kingsway College and BFI – delivering BFI Film Academies in Cardiff and Swansea since 2015.

Faye Hannah is a funded PhD Candidate researching at [University of South Wales in Cardiff](#). Her PhD research examines screen industries talent and skills development, creative labour and related policy in the context of Wales as a small nation within the UK and in comparison, to other small nations in Europe.

Faye has worked with a wide cross section of the UK Creative Industries, including between 2010–2014 Creative Skillset as UK Partnership Manager for Apprenticeships and Interim Director, Wales. Here she worked with an experienced team to develop and pilot the first Creative and Digital Media Apprenticeships in Wales with BBC Cymru Wales and the independent TV and film production sector. She managed and delivered SPFP and ESF projects during this time. Faye has also

worked delivering learning and events for BAFTA Cymru. In 2014 she founded [‘Our Colab’](#).

Overview

1. I fully welcome the committee’s enquiry into major TV and Film production in Wales and am supportive of any discussion that provides greater transparency for all. I am pleased to be offered the opportunity to contribute. I acknowledge the need to provide greater clarity around Welsh Governments policy aims relating to film and major TV production in Wales– a priority sector for Wales’ economic growth.
2. **OVERVIEW:** I would be encouraged to see the following areas considered as part of this inquiry:
 - i. **That the committee consider the entire eco–system of Wales’ screen industries, particularly around labour market intelligence relating to skills development and related support.** In terms of labour market, there is a knowledge gap in terms of understanding clearly the demographic and needs of the screen sector in Wales. Mapping of the size, shape and needs of this industry in Wales on a longitudinal basis would be a step to ensure greater evidence–based policy making and offer a view as to how the entire ecology of film and TV can be supported and how funding can be accessed to ensure economic and cultural growth. Defining ‘Who we are and What we are’ in Wales TV and Film industries is a first step in terms of establishing a baseline.

From a policy and funding perspective, acknowledgment of the importance of the role that **all** indigenous and non–indigenous TV and Film production companies play in Wales, in relation to developing the talent pipeline, as well as for high end and major TV and Film production. This should extend to the inclusion of independent production companies of all sizes and Welsh language

production companies as an important part of the talent development pipeline in Wales.

- ii. **Wales screen industries should not operate in a vacuum and it is essential that Welsh Government are aware and engaged in Creative Industries policy and skills developments UK wide and associated activity.** A focus on this, will ensure link-up and monitoring of best practice and knowledge sharing as well as 'opening-up' of opportunities UK wide.
- iii. **That any focus on skills, training and employability for the screen industries acknowledges and supports the needs of an increasingly flexible, highly mobile, self-employed workforce.** It is important to future growth that current creative labour market and its accompanying challenges are taken into consideration.
- iv. **That tackling barriers to industry access and broadening the diversity of industry is embedded in film and TV development initiatives and funding.**
- v. **That consideration is given to include vital sub-sectors in Wales that are integral to the eco-system and who contribute to major TV and Film production in these screen industries including Animation, Games, VFX and SFX.**

3. How support for the sector may be affected by the Welsh Government's new Economic Action Plan;

- 3. As a priority sector of economic importance, the Welsh Government has placed Creative Industries more broadly as strategically important to the economic and cultural value of Wales. Overall it is encouraging to see skills and employability as a priority area in the Economic action plan (2017), however it is not fully clear as to how creative industries and screen industries specifically are focused or considered within this.

4. **Indigenous Welsh production companies play a key role in developing skills for the overall talent pipeline in Wales, that includes major TV and Film production and as such they are both economically and culturally important.** One practical example of this would be Rondo, who since 2008 (based pan-Wales deliver award winning factual, drama and documentary in both Welsh and English) have been a vital base for developing and nurturing talent in North and South Wales at all grades, including producers, editors, script writers, actors. Many remain and return to the organisation, some develop freelance careers and others move to work elsewhere in Wales and UK wide within TV and film.
5. Any individualised sectoral approach would be encouraged– as outlined in the Welsh Government’s accompanying Employability Plan (Mar 18). **It is vital that a focus on skills and employability for the screen industries acknowledges and supports the needs of an increasingly flexible, highly mobile, self-employed workforce.** Consideration should be given to the current creative labour market and its accompanying challenges. **The ‘labour market challenges of tomorrow’ (as outlined in the Employability Plan Mar 18) exist in Wales’ creative industries today.**
6. Underlining the responsibility of employers to up-skill their workers is vital in a high volume of industries. Almost 40% (Priority Sector Statistics, 2017) of the creative industries workforce in Wales are self-employed and freelance, often working on short term contracts. **Identifying who is responsible for training a largely freelance labour force is a matter of urgent concern.**
7. Consistent Wales-derivative research focused on encouraging development of higher and specific industry relevant skills for existing freelance industry practitioners in Wales has been markedly absent since the close of the Skills for the Digital Economy project (2015) funded through ESF, S4C and TAC. The project saw a £4.2m ESF investment with a £9.3m return (Arad, 2015).

8. There are now significant differences between development of Apprenticeships in England (occupational standards) and Wales (frameworks) as well as the changes for employers brought in by the apprenticeship levy. This can be problematic, not least in ensuring parity between nations in provision and ensuring that industry focused higher-level qualifications are readily available for employers in Wales.

An example of this is the Level 4 industry developed standards by NextGen Skills Academy/AIM Awards in VFX in England, that are not currently available for industry in Wales. It would be key to understand the industry needs in Wales (mapping / measuring) to ensure that future solutions around apprenticeships are tailored to the needs of the TV and film industry. I understand as part of their BFI Future Skills funding- Creative Skillset in England are poised to undertake further work around development of apprenticeships for industry.

4. To investigate how Ffilm Cymru Wales, the BFI and others support the sector, and how this work complements the work of the Welsh Government in this area;

9. Ffilm Cymru Wales contribute significantly to the economic and cultural development for film and the wider screen industries in Wales. As an organisation alongside their extensive development and audience priorities, they fund and deliver several programmes that offer clear cultural access and opportunity at several entry points to industry.

Ffilm Cymru Wales highly successful Foot in the Door programme in the last 12 months, has seen them work with housing associations across Wales, including a pilot with Charter Housing Association to secure access and practical opportunities in Film and TV for 30 participants. These individuals were not in education, training or employment and faced socio-economic challenges that would act as a barrier to career in film and TV in Wales becoming a consideration, let alone a possibility. Many of these participants have much needed craft and technical skills more broadly that

are transferable to a range of skills gaps in Wales' TV, Film and creative industries in areas such as art department, production, sound, hair and make-up and costume.

Foot in the Door achieves success through Ffilm Cymru Wales and partners developing a more holistic, long term view to skills and talent development. It also delivers outcomes through building of long term partnerships with industry production companies such as Severn Screen, the housing sector and a deep understanding of industry access. The programme is funded through multiple channels, including Creative Skillset.

5. The support given to develop skills and address skills shortages in the industry, whether there is sufficient data to map existing skills.

10. Further connection and link up between Welsh Government Creative industries departments with Skills and Employability departments would undoubtedly support future activity to ensure that the screen industries are some way towards future-proofed in terms of workforce skills and talent development. It would also acknowledge the important link between growing skills, talent development and economic growth for the Film and TV industry in Wales.
11. In 2010, Professor Ian Hargreaves 'Heart of Digital Wales' report outlined (with reference to skills development and priorities) that; "There is no doubt that without a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach in this area, neither the Digital Wales agenda nor a refreshed Creative Industries strategy will enjoy sustainable success". The report also recommended that mapping the scale and needs of the sector was a first step, particularly in terms of measuring the progress of the creative economy. To date, neither of these key recommendations have continuously been carried forward in Wales.

At the time of this report, Creative Skillset Cymru (the sector skills council for the screen industries UK wide) had a base in Wales and the TV and Film industry expressed broad satisfaction with the arrangements in place to support skills development. Importantly, Creative Skillset Cymru linked in all elements of sectoral training and education, drawing and connecting training and creative industries provision through their work with research, Higher Education (The Tick, Wales Screen Academy) and Further Education (Digital media apprenticeships, mentoring support for FE and industry links) CPD (Skills for the Digital Economy programme) in Wales that was delivered based on regular research around industry needs.

In 2015, Creative Skillset Cymru (after 13 years of presence) ceased to exist in Wales as a base or as a support broker and funder of screen industries skills and talent. This was largely due to a reduction in central UK funding for Creative Skillset and Welsh Government funded projects ending: (ESF– Skills for the Digital Economy, Sector Priority Fund Pilot /2 Apprenticeships) and no wider commitment to fund the organisation in Wales going forward. **Since 2015, screen industries in Wales have experienced a gap in terms of the challenge of joining up, funding and supporting skills development and their talent pipeline across the board. This has specifically impacted independent production companies and freelance individuals in terms of targeting support where industry say it is most needed.**

12. In terms of mapping skills needs, gaps and industry demographic, there is existing data which is referenced and utilised in the absence of specific current data around the TV and Film industry within Wales.

- DCMS Economic estimates / Economic Estimates: Employment & Trade
- ONS Labour Force Survey
- Welsh Government Priority Sector statistics
- Creative Skillset (Census 2012) and Employment Surveys

There are challenges and limitations to some elements of this data. Individual methodologies need to be considered when evaluating the effectiveness of these metrics to be truly representative of Wales film and TV industry opposed to the broader creative industries.

- Ensuring that data is reflective of the current and changing landscape in Wales
- Standard Industrial and occupational codes (SIC & SOC) prove to be a challenging metric by which to measure an industry where there is a high volume of micro-enterprises (<4 employees) and fluid/multiple occupational titles and roles that may not always be reflective of specific job roles and descriptors within the industry. I understand that ONS are updating / have updated recently their data to reflect some of this.
- Data collection sources (i.e. APS– Annual population survey samples)
- The methodology of self-selection ensures industry employers and self-employed individuals are positioned to ‘stand up and be counted’ and that any UK wide data collection is fully representative of the workforce in Wales.
- Ensuring data and metrics are current.

Accurate representative data as to who works within the screen industries in Wales has been lacking. **Prior measurement of the wider creative industries (an often-problematic grouping to measure due to there being 11 broad sectors grouped to make up the creative industries) that includes Wales and its screen sector workforce are undertaken through a UK wide lens and UK focused organisations.** Developing an accurate picture of where the industry is now would be a starting point.

Initial research I have conducted as a PhD funded research candidate at the University of South Wales, highlights **the extent that existing creative industries and screen industries policies specifically centred around workforce and skills development, is derived from a UK (England) based standpoint across the last twenty years;**

encouraging if the Welsh Government could engage to ensure that this is truly representative of Wales and its labour market across the board. Methodology as well as industry engagement in Wales 'on the ground' will be key to how successfully this is truly representative of the industry here in Wales. A more accurate picture will be developed if it is assured that the entire ecology and nuances of Wales are considered – **very specifically it is vital that TV and film production more broadly as well as Welsh Language programming are a key consideration within this and not solely the economic driver of high end TV and film.**

14. Clear data and measurement of the workforce in Wales would support a further greater accuracy and specificity when targeting support for skills development, ensuring that support is placed where needs are greatest, dually linking to sectoral and government priorities. **Due to the fast moving, agile pace of the screen industry, any consideration of measurement needs to be longitudinal and iterative to ensure that any data on the size and shape of workforce in Wales is current and accurate.** It will also require specialist skills and knowledge to deliver this effectively.

Existing Wales based education, training and development initiatives in film and TV

15. An eco-system exists within the film and TV industry in Wales. There comparatively exists education, training, support, and a development eco-system in Wales for the screen industries. Organisations and programmes offer a range of careers advice, CPD, embedded vocational opportunity, qualifications, mentoring and training. These often act as progression steps and opportunities to and from each other. This is broad and ranges from primary school through to high-level industry CPD. These include (but are not limited to) Into Film, BFI Film Academies, It's my Shout, Foot in the Door, Creative & Digital Media Apprenticeships with Sgil Cymru, Cult Cymru, TAC, RTS, TAPE, Wales, BFI Network Wales, BAFTA Cymru, HE, FE as well as independent companies who undertake a range of

training activity for staff including any training delivered by companies and broadcasters for their own employees such as BBC Cymru Wales and Bad Wolf.

16. Any independent overview and joined-up approach to investing and supporting skills and workforce development that considers the whole of Wales TV and Film industry and its existing training and education offer would be welcome. Any funding support for training related to skills gaps should benefit a wide cross section of the industry and be informed by clear independent research and evidence of need. **An experienced and representative function focused on creative screen industries skills needs and labour/workforce development in Wales that is representative of and collaborates with all organisations already working to deliver industry training activity would be worthwhile considering.**

A clear 'one stop shop' that outlines purpose and scope of all education, training and development initiatives for Wales' screen industries would be beneficial for increased industry join-up and for those wishing to enter and progress within the industry.

Industry Access and Skills

17. There is significant UK wide focus currently on issues of diversity and class that highlight some of the socio-economic challenges (amongst others) that act as a barrier to entering the Film and TV industry. Recently this has stemmed from academia and industry including (but not limited to, as the body of research is extensive) the much-publicised Panic! 2018 research, that highlights the extent of the issue of class inequalities as a barrier to entry and progression within industry. It is worth noting the important use of longitudinal data in this study and how this synergises with goals encompassed in Wales' 'Wellbeing of future generations Act' (2015).

18. Developing a more diverse workforce in the screen industries in Wales, should be included at the heart of any strategy that focuses on training, skills and talent development. The 2017 'Rewriting the Script' report (Welsh Government / Diverse Cymru) is a positive step – however practical delivery and embedding of the recommendations within industry is complex with no quick fix and needs considerable 'buy-in'. Greater clarity as to how the whole industry in Wales can embed and deliver on a more diverse workforce and be practically supported to overcome barriers and exemplifying best practice would be welcome.
19. A plethora of brilliant, dynamic activities and initiatives exist across the UK where demonstrative collaboration and partnership between education, training and industry, supported by government, work to overcome the barriers facing those from diverse and under-represented backgrounds entering the industry. Understanding this would allow us not to 'reinvent the wheel'. There are far too many to highlight, however a number I have worked with or engaged with in terms of best practice and pioneering activity are: 'Access VFX', 'London Mayors Digital Talent fund' initiatives and 'Raising Films'.

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