

Supporting

new talent

4Skills
Case studies





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Introduction



Identifying and nurturing talent is a vital part of our role at Channel 4: our remit to experiment with the new and to take risks means that a core part of our business strategy is to support both emerging and established talent across TV, film and digital media. I know how hard it is to break into the industry and therefore how important it is for Channel 4 to create routes in for people who might otherwise never get a chance.

Chief Executive

Alex Mahon

For almost 40 years, Channel 4 has been committed to ensuring that people from a wide range of backgrounds and walks of life can pursue successful careers in the media industry, helping to accelerate the UK's vibrant and innovative creative industries. We have consistently invested in talent from across the UK, often giving British talent their first big break.



At the heart of our talent strategy on and off screen, is social mobility. Supporting social mobility and encouraging new entrants into the wider media industries is crucial to our role as Britain's youngest public service broadcaster. This is particularly important as we help to rebalance the creative economy outside of London and across the UK's Nations and Regions through our ambitious '4 All the UK' plan.

Bringing new faces to TV, film and our digital media has enabled our output to stand out in a crowded market as well as strengthen our appeal to younger audiences. From the earliest stages of the career ladder, through to working with talent as they progress, we work hard to provide the next step and create shared success. This role has never been more important than it is today, when global streamers invest mostly in established talent.

Within Channel 4, we have found it is essential to both raise awareness of opportunities among young people and then to ensure that they can utilise those opportunities to further their careers. Therefore, we continue run several industry-leading schemes tailored to early outreach. This report pulls together some of the talent schemes that Channel 4 has pioneered over the years and highlights some of our key talent whose voices and vision we have helped bring to screen.

These activities are underpinned by a clear business rationale as well as by wider advocacy within – and beyond – our sector. You might ask, why is this important to us? It's a vital part of our remit, but it's also critical to ensure our continued creative and commercial success as a unique and essential public service broadcaster in the UK. That is why I am delighted that we are launching the 4Skills programme next.

Alex Mahon
Chief Executive



It is essential to
both raise awareness
of opportunities
among young people



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they can use those
opportunities to further
their careers.



4 SKILLS



Sinéad Rocks
Managing Director, Nations and Regions



4Skills will open up the industry to a much wider range of people, transforming their opportunities.

Sinéad Rocks
Managing Director, Nations and Regions

4SKILLS

To turbocharge our efforts to find, nurture and develop talent in the Nations and Regions, we've launched a new training and development initiative called 4Skills.

The programme, unveiled on the first anniversary of our national HQ in Leeds will bring together and build upon Channel 4's external talent schemes and initiatives to increase our overall impact. It aims to attract people from diverse backgrounds into broadcasting and production, address skills gaps and help those who are already in the industry to progress their careers.

"We have a greater presence in the Nations and Regions than ever before. We can reach out into the communities where we live and work, explore previously untapped talent pools and attract people who might never have considered a career in broadcasting," explains Sinéad Rocks, Channel 4's Managing Director, Nations and Regions.

4Skills includes an outreach programme to introduce school kids and college students to careers in the broadcast industry, plus apprenticeship schemes for people from diverse backgrounds – with the first cohorts starting in our Leeds and Manchester bases in early 2021.

Alongside game-changing development programmes such as the Production Training Scheme, the Factual Fast Track scheme in Wales and our De Montfort University investigative journalism MA, there will be a brand new initiative run in partnership with 4Studio focused on digital creativity and production, providing open days, workshops and paid placements.

We'll also be linking up with the likes of ScreenSkills, NFTS, TRC and PACT to offer bespoke training, and running virtual industry events from Bristol, Glasgow and Leeds to connect local indies and commissioners.

"4Skills will open up the industry to a much wider range of people, transforming their opportunities." adds Sinéad.



The impact of

Opening up opportunities to groups that are under-represented in the media industry and the wider jobs market plays a vital role in helping us deliver against our public remit. Channel 4 provides a variety of meaningful, paid opportunities to gain hands-on practical experience and skills for those at entry and mid-level in the TV industry on and offscreen.



Since 2015, over 5300 people have taken part in training schemes, apprenticeships or skills workshops offered by Channel 4

– our schemes

Work Experience

Channel 4's Work Experience Scheme provides training and hands-on experience of working in a team at Channel 4. Since 2015, we have offered over 240 work experience placements across our different offices.

Apprenticeships

Our Apprenticeship Scheme is a cornerstone of our strategy for improving diversity. Apprentices spend 12-24 months attached to one of our departments in Leeds, London, Manchester, Glasgow or Bristol working on a range of in-depth projects that count towards their Level 3 or 4 qualification.

Sharon Chapendama
Agency Sales Apprentice
Manchester



New Material

Since 2015, Channel 4 has been hosting an annual series of events (branded New Material in 2019) across the UK aimed at identifying hard-to-reach talent from areas of high social disadvantage and tackling both the lack of diversity and in particular social mobility within the industry.

This meant connecting with parts of the country that typically don't receive opportunities to interact with media professionals. The events have reached thousands of young people across the UK, including Birmingham, Bristol, Derry, Glasgow, Leeds and Nottingham.



Our core goal was to reach hidden talent and discover untapped potential.





Production Training Scheme

Our Production Training Scheme is a 12-month salaried training programme where we place trainees at independent production companies across the UK.

Of our 2018/19 cohort an impressive 94% went on to get full-time roles in the industry. This scheme is targeted at bringing new and diverse talent into the industry.

Investigative Journalism Scheme

Channel 4 supports budding investigative journalists through the Dispatches Investigative Journalism Training Scheme and our partnership with De Montfort University for its MA degree in Investigative Journalism. We have now trained over 50 journalists through the Dispatches Scheme which offers an opportunity for people with solid professional experience to transfer their skills and experience to work in investigative broadcast journalism. We have also had twenty graduates pass through the MA programme at De Montfort University, many of whom have secured journalism jobs, including one, Hamza Syed, joining *This American Life* (one of the most prestigious shows on American public radio, and the makers of the podcast Serial).

Since 2015, over 70 trainees have gone through the Production Training Scheme, a 12-month programme to gain experience in the industry

4Playwrights

Since 2013, the Channel 4 Playwrights Scheme has awarded six bursaries a year to new theatre writers. Four bursaries are supported by Channel 4 and two by The Peggy Ramsay Foundation. Each bursary is worth £10,000. The Sonia Friedman Productions Award is given to the writer of the best play written by one of the previous year's bursary recipients. In 2019, writers we supported included Andy Brooks aka Testament ('Black Men Walking') with the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester and Josh Azouz ('Buggy Baby') with Headlong Theatre, London.

4Stories

4Stories, is Channel 4's talent initiative, designed to bring on and help establish the next generation of writers and directors. 4Stories is aimed at finding genuinely diverse voices, exploring contemporary stories of and by communities that are rarely seen on mainstream television. The scheme has proven to be a successful launchpad for emerging British talent. The first series of *On The Edge*, which was developed through the 4Stories initiative received 2 BAFTA nominations for Best Single Drama and Best Breakthrough Talent and 3 BAFTA Cymru nominations for Best Drama, Photography and Sound.

First Cut

Channel 4's critically acclaimed First Cut initiative was launched in 2007 as an eclectic documentary strand to showcase the best in bold, bright and original documentaries by up-and-coming filmmakers. Four First Cuts have been commissioned this year, including Lyttanya Shannon and Ashley Francis-Roy, who are now both working on high profile documentaries.



On the Edge: A Mother's Love

4Screenwriting

Creating the right conditions for new talent to flourish, to express its voice and bring it to a wider audience; are the key drivers behind 4Screenwriting. It's a hothouse for writers. The purpose of the course is to offer writers new to television drama an insight into how the industry works and to provide a "dry-run" of what it can be like to write under a television drama commission, specifically for one hour series and serial drama, and to work with them as they write an original drama script. Graduates from the course include those who went on to write for *Shameless* and *Indian Summers* for Channel 4 and *Youngers* and *Banana* for E4.



Spotlight on Directors

Spanning 2017 and 2018 Channel 4 provided opportunities to 40 TV programme directors from under-represented groups – BAME, female and disabled people – in a bid to improve the diversity of directors and diversity of thought within the industry. Spotlight directors worked across all genres, everything from factual entertainment, documentaries, entertainment and drama. They directed both established and new brands including *One Born Every Minute*, *On the Edge*, *Indian Summer School* and *Hollyoaks*.

Factual Fast Track development programme

In May 2020, six of Wales' most talented producers were selected to be part of this ambitious, game-changing development programme, which is funded by Channel Four, BBC Cymru Wales and S4C.

The Fast Track package includes paid production and broadcast placements, bespoke training and commissioner and peer mentoring. The programme is responding to a need, identified by both indies and broadcasters, to invest in fast-tracking the next generation of factual creative leaders in Wales.

To maximise the impact of the scheme, the programme's training offering has been extended to all shortlisted candidates, broadening the reach of the programme to benefit an additional 16 freelance producers in Wales.

Commissioning Mentor Network

On the production side, our Commissioning Mentor Network focuses on identifying diverse rising stars. The network helps to elevate them to more senior posts in commissioning and production, both at Channel 4 and within the independent production community. This has created a pool of diverse talent: since launching in 2015, we have matched over 200 mentees through the network.

Channel 4 x NFTS

In 2020, we developed a package of bespoke NFTS and Channel 4 online training targeted at diverse talent and those in the Nations and Regions to support smaller regional production companies, mitigate the impact of covid-19 on diversity, and help those who had little or no work to develop their skills.

This reached almost 900 people from the freelance community and independent production companies, 74% of whom were based outside of London.



Over almost 40 years, we have consistently invested in talent from across the UK, often giving British talent their first big break.

Hollyoaks



Here are some
of the best case
studies of Channel 4
helping to develop
talent, provide new
opportunities and
nurture new visions. ►

Alex Brooker never thought he would have a career in television. "There weren't many disabled people on TV when I was growing up," he says. "It made me wonder whether we were actually supposed to be on screen."

All that changed in 2010 when Channel 4 launched its groundbreaking initiative, the Half Million Quid Talent Search, to find the best new disabled sports commentators to front its London 2012 Paralympic Games coverage. Brooker, who was working as a sports journalist for the Press Association, thought he'd give it a go. "I uploaded an audition video to YouTube but I didn't think anything would come of it," he says.

He was among just six presenters to make it through the process, and was flown out to Rio. "My first interview was with David Cameron," he says. "I'd never done live TV before and suddenly 11.5m people were watching me interview the Prime Minister."

Brooker was such a hit with the public that Channel 4 asked him to join panel show *The Last Leg*. "My life changed completely," he says. "Channel 4 found me a place to live and put me in touch with an agent. It backed me. It's nurtured me."

The Last Leg has gone on to pick up many accolades including four RTS Programme Awards and two Broadcast Awards, and Brooker has taken part in other hit programmes, such as *The Jump* and *Sink or Swim*, and is a regular guest on several other panel shows. His next goal: "To have my own show. I've been a co-host for nearly eight years and I'd love a project of my own".

Brooker has now become an inspirational figure for other people with disabilities. "I wish I'd seen someone with my hands or my leg on TV when I was young," he says. "I'm one of the first people with disabilities to break through. It's a lot of pressure but I'm so proud when people tell me I've given them hope."



I wish I'd seen someone with my hands or my leg on TV when I was young... I'm one of the first people with disabilities to break through. It's a lot of pressure but I'm so proud when people tell me I've given them hope.



Alex Brooker

Industry

Television

Role

JOURNALIST,
PRESENTER
AND COMEDIAN



I want to continue telling stories that shake the current status quo, open hearts and minds, and push boundaries.



Industry
Television

Role
ACTOR

"I always had a passion for performing and story-telling – but I never saw myself represented on the screen," says India, 26. "It made me feel like an alien."

India spent her childhood in and out of care. By her teens, she was homeless and surviving on the support of food banks. She struggled to afford train tickets to travel to auditions: "I had no connections in television or the arts, and was regularly told by agents that 'the parts just aren't there' for girls like me," she says.

India's breakthrough moment came last year when Channel 4 and BlackLight Television spotted her performing in a Southwark Playhouse showcase and called her in to audition for *Adulting*, one of three short films in the *On the Edge* anthology.

Developed through the 4Stories initiative, the channel's commitment to finding brand new diverse talent, the stories have a thrilling, fresh perspective on modern Britain. "On the first read-through of *Adulting*, I fell in love with the script," says India.

She landed the lead role of Candice, a young vulnerable woman who desperately wants some independence. Written by Chinonyerem Odimba and directed by Ash Morris, the story follows Candice's blossoming relationship with Kems (played by *Born to Kill*'s Jack Rowan), a young man trying to escape his alcoholic dad. "Channel 4 and BlackLight Television were incredibly nurturing and supportive through the whole process" says India. "It never mattered that the only thing I could bring to the table was raw talent and a passion to tell the story. They let me spread my wings as an actress and really sink my teeth into a complex, beautiful, three-dimensional character."

Following her appearance in *Adulting*, India was selected as a winner of the 2019 BAFTA ELEVATE programme, designed to help those from underrepresented groups progress in their careers and help tackle the issue of diversity in the industry.

India Eva Rae



I have cerebral palsy, which could have held me back... Compared to other TV organisations, Channel 4 goes over and above to try and bring diversity in and make the team look more like society as a whole.

Alastair was working night shifts in the Peterborough Passport Office when he received a call that changed his life. "I had always wanted to work in TV or film but had been doing odd jobs since graduating," he says. "It was really dull work." Alastair had applied for a place on the Channel 4 Production Training Scheme but didn't hold out much hope. "It's a tough industry to break into," he explains. "Then the phone rang and I was invited to interview for Channel 4's *The Superhumans Show*," he says. "That was my big start."

Alastair would commute three hours from his home in Peterborough to the Channel 4 offices each day. "After a couple of months, I didn't have the money to keep commuting," he says. "Channel 4 was brilliant. It gave me the money for a deposit and first month's rent in London. Without that, I never could have afforded to move out and establish myself in London."

Alastair worked as a researcher on various programmes over the next four years. Among his career highlights was being part of Channel 4's 2016 Summer

Paralympics coverage: "I went to Rio as part of *The Last Leg*," he says. "That was an amazing challenge – making shows every day that went out live."

The Channel 4 Production Training Scheme taught Alastair many invaluable skills, he says: "You learn to be tenacious. You learn composure under pressure. I can solve problems very quickly and don't flinch if something goes wrong."

"I have cerebral palsy, which could have held me back," he adds. "Compared to other TV organisations, Channel 4 goes over and above to try and bring diversity in and make the team look more like society as a whole."

Currently an assistant producer, Alastair hopes to become a series producer or programme editor. "I'm grateful that Channel 4 took a chance on me, and gave me the opportunity to broaden my experience," he says. "I'm so lucky that I get to do what I love every day."

Alastair Meichan



Industry

Television

Role

ASSISTANT PRODUCER



This is not just a film for me, it's my life,
my greatest loss, my greatest happiness.



Waad Al-Kateab

When the Syrian uprising began in Aleppo in 2011, Waad al-Kateab taught herself to film and captured some of the most memorable images of the conflict.

She initially started documenting the horrors of Aleppo for a Channel 4 News series, *Inside Aleppo*, in January 2016, while living in a makeshift hospital run by her husband. Her short news films became a worldwide sensation, revealing the relentless horror of the events in Aleppo. The films won more than 20 awards, including the International Emmy for News in 2017.

In December 2016, Waad and her family fled Aleppo with over 500 hours of footage. Channel 4 introduced her to Emmy-award winning director Edward Watts, and together they produced the remarkable film *For Sama*, an intimate and epic journey into the female experience of war.

A love letter from a young mother to her daughter, the film tells the story of Waad's life through five years of the uprising in Aleppo, Syria, as she falls in love, gets married and gives birth to Sama – all while cataclysmic conflict rises around her.

"This is not just a film for me, it's my life, my greatest loss, my greatest happiness," says Waad. "It is everything I struggled for and dreamt of, my duty to the city I belong to and a message to my daughter Sama."

For Sama has been a huge and highly-acclaimed hit in Britain and internationally. The film made history when it was nominated in four categories in the 2020 BAFTAs, making it the most nominated documentary ever – and it won Best Documentary. "I have been overwhelmed by the positive reaction," adds Waad. "This has given me a huge boost to work harder and use the documentary to create awareness and push for accountability for war crimes."

Since leaving Syria, funded by Channel 4, Waad has started training as a producer for Channel 4 News and has since worked on some of their coronavirus specific documentaries.

Industry

Television

Role

JOURNALIST,
FILMMAKER,
AND ACTIVIST



I started out supporting other teams and now I'm looking after my own Channel 4 shows... I feel like my skills just keep growing.

"I was born in Zimbabwe and moved to South Africa when I was six months old," says Tafadzwa, an apprentice with the Channel 4 social media team. "I came to the UK as an economic migrant with my parents when I was 12 and I made my life here. But my right to remain was wrongfully revoked while I was at university. I spent years not knowing whether I would be sent back to Zimbabwe, a country I couldn't even remember."

Tafadzwa was unable to work or attend university while the Home Office considered his case.

"When I was 22, I finally had the opportunity to fight for my right to stay in court – and won," he says.

Tafadzwa, now 24, was accepted onto the Channel 4 Apprenticeship Scheme at the beginning of 2019. "When I found out that I had been accepted, it finally felt like things were falling into place," he says.

He now has the freedom to focus on his career, and start making plans for the future. "I started out supporting other teams and now I'm looking after my own Channel 4 shows," he says. "I feel like my skills just keep growing."

During his time at the organisation, Tafadzwa has been able to work on shows that resonate with him, and that have helped him to process his experience as a migrant. "I was lucky enough to be involved in Black History Month campaign," he says. "It's made me very passionate about creating art that gives a voice to the voiceless."

"It's incredible that I am able to come here every day and work," he adds. "I hope other people, who are going through a dark time, can see me and decide never to give up."

Industry

Digital media

Role

SOCIAL MEDIA
ASSISTANT



Tafadzwa Muchenje

Camilla Arnold

Industry

Television

Role

PRODUCER/
DIRECTOR





We create opportunities for deaf raw talent and we collaborate with the best in the industry to make programmes that break down cultural stereotypes and encourage new perspectives on the world around us.

Camilla had her heart set on becoming a lawyer – until she got a summer job in a deaf-led production company called Remark and fell in love with television.

She went on to set up her own company, Buckinghamshire-based Flashing Lights, in 2015, making programmes that bridge the gap between the deaf community and mainstream television. “We want to make programmes that surprise and challenge our audience,” she explains. “We create opportunities for deaf raw talent and we collaborate with the best in the industry to make programmes that break down cultural stereotypes and encourage new perspectives on the world around us.”

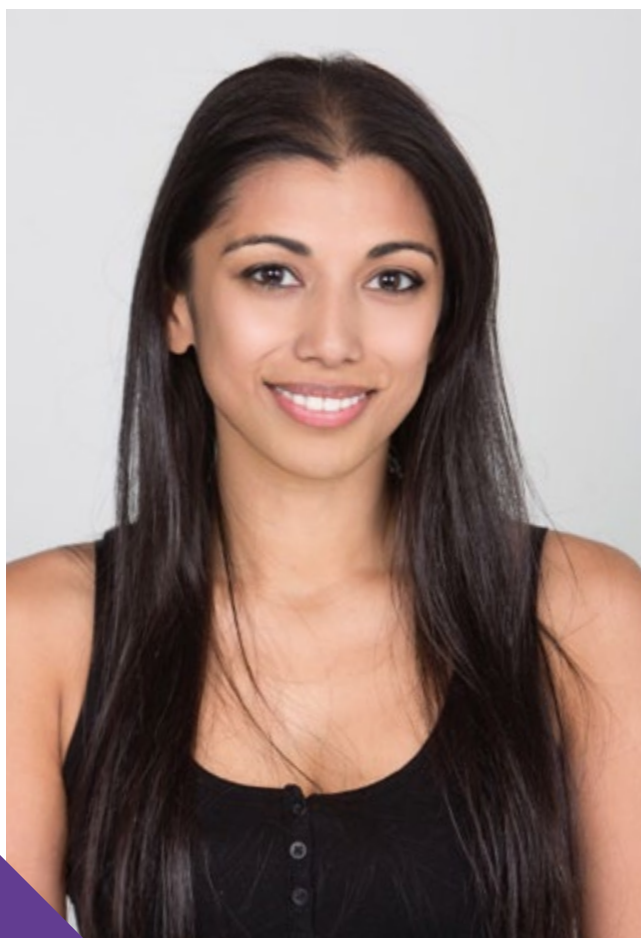
Camilla was commissioned by Channel 4 to make a First Cut documentary – *School of Life and Deaf* – which revolved around the trials and tribulations of pupils at Mary Hare residential school for the deaf in Newbury, Berkshire. The aim: to show that deaf teens are just like hearing teens. “We wanted to normalise deafness and disability,” says Camilla.

While Camilla has worked with several broadcasters over the years, she says Channel 4 is “by far the most supportive and brave”. She explains: “They really understand the importance of giving a voice to minority communities – and not making a disability film feel tokenistic.”

Producing and directing *School of Life and Deaf* has opened new doors for Camilla. “I’ve been given opportunities that I could only have imagined,” she says. “Channel 4 not only gave me the opportunity to network with fellow producers, directors and production companies but they also gave me the tools and the confidence to navigate the very tough, competitive industry that we work in.”

Describing Channel 4 as the “catalyst” for her career, Camilla is now a series producer on the BBC’s *See Hear*, a long-running magazine show for the deaf community highlighting the issues affecting the community. Her ambition is to eventually become a commissioner within Channel 4 and work on programmes that are “bold and journalistic with creative freedom”.

Jasleen Kaur Sethi



Industry

Film

Role

DIRECTOR AND
PRODUCER



Getting support and advice on where to go next after having made a first film, and being introduced to new contacts, was exactly what I needed. You don't often get much career advice as a freelancer, and mentorship is hard to find.

Jasleen grew up on a council estate in Feltham and, when she was 10, won a scholarship to study at Claremont Fan Court School, a private school in Surrey. "The school offered great opportunities in media and the arts. I'd always wanted to direct films – and that was probably the first leg up in helping me achieve my ambitions," she says. "Being able to experience two very different worlds at a young age also helped me relate to people from all kinds of backgrounds without too many stereotypes and assumptions getting in the way."

After completing a master's degree in human rights and violence at the University of Sussex, she worked as a freelance photo and video journalist in Madagascar before returning to the UK to study documentary-making at the National Film and TV School.

Jasleen's first experience with Channel 4 was at the First Cut Pitch in Sheffield in 2014. "It was a great opportunity to introduce myself to the broadcasting industry and meet people whose work I admire," she says. "The pitch led to opportunities to work with great directors, develop my own ideas with funding and support, and ultimately direct my first observational hour, *Miss Transgender: Britain's New Beauty Queens*."

She went on to work on a range of projects for Channel 4, most recently directing *Safe At Last: Inside A Women's Refuge*, an hour-long documentary filmed over a year. "We had first-time access to a women's refuge, following the brave and resilient women and children escaping abuse, and the extraordinary work of staff," she explains.

She has taken part in Channel 4's Spotlight On Directors programme and Cutting Edge Directors scheme, which was for more experienced directors. "Channel 4 takes a real interest in developing individual directors and that really stands out as something unique," she says. "Getting support and advice on where to go next after having made a first film, and being introduced to new contacts, was exactly what I needed. You don't often get much career advice as a freelancer, and mentorship is hard to find."

Jasleen is currently directing a three-part series for BBC2 exploring the mysterious death of a Bollywood actress. "I'm keen to keep working on bold, ambitious projects," she says.



I can't believe how much has happened over the last nine years. I never thought I would be in this role, leading on the Paralympics. It's almost surreal.

Paul joined Channel 4 as part of its apprenticeship scheme back in 2011. He was one of the first apprentices to join the organisation. Now, nine years on, he's an associate product manager, responsible for leading on the Paralympic Games. "In some ways, I've come full circle," he says. "I got my first big break working on the 2012 Paralympics for Channel 4. That apprenticeship has been everything to me."

Paul started as an online assistant. "I was asked to tweet live about the Paralympics from the Channel 4 account, which had over 100,000 followers," he says. "The opportunity just blew me away. It was an incredible amount of responsibility and I can only thank my manager for having faith in me."

The apprenticeship gave Paul the chance to move around the business, trying out different roles and departments. "If I said I was interested in something, I was given the opportunity to try it," he says.

"Once you find a passion for something, Channel 4 helps you to make it happen." Over the years, Paul has brought many of his own ideas to life. His personal highlight: "I interviewed the writers of *Father Ted* about the show for the tenth anniversary – it was an honour to be in their presence."

"Channel 4 is very open to new ideas," he continues. "If you have what it takes to drive it forward, it lets you run with it."

Having made a success of his apprenticeship, Paul was approached to become the line manager for a young apprentice, Jacob. "I wouldn't be here without that scheme so it was a chance to give him the same experience that I'd benefited from," he says.

"At 18, I didn't know what I wanted to be. That's why I never went to university. Through this process, I found my passion," he adds. "I can't believe how much has happened over the last nine years. I never thought I would be in this role, leading on the Paralympics. It's almost surreal."

**Industry**

Television

Role

ASSOCIATE
PRODUCT
MANAGER
FOR PARALYMPIC
GAMES

Paul
Constable



People of colour and women are part of the rich and diverse fabric of society. Hopefully seeing me on screen will resonate with other people too.

Industry

Television

Role

PRESENTER



Yinka Bokinni

After completing a law degree, Yinka Bokinni was at a crossroads. The weight of her parents' expectation weighed heavily on her. "My dad was so proud. I'm one of seven siblings – and only two of us had degrees," she explains. "I specialised in maritime law but it was just so boring; I had no idea what I wanted to do as a career."

Yinka decided to put law on the backburner while she found her passion in life. She began volunteering at Rinse FM. "I would wake up at 5am, finish the breakfast show at 10.30am, go home and nap, then work in a pub till 3am and get one hour sleep before it all started again," she recalls.

In late 2019, she began presenting the breakfast show on Capital Xtra but always knew she wanted to break into television. "TV is such a dynamic medium but my career was all focused on radio," she says.

To test her on-screen ability, Yinka delivered a talk for TedX Peckham, talking about her childhood growing up in north Peckham next door to Damilola Taylor, her childhood friend, who was murdered in 2000. That video has now had more than 120,000 views on YouTube.

When Yinka's agent heard that Channel 4 was scouting for new talent, she set up a meeting – Channel 4 then placed Yinka with BAME production company

ACME and a new documentary was commissioned about Yinka's life.

"My home became hell when I was 10," she says. "My eyes were opened to the evils of the world. This documentary is about me, Peckham, Damilola Taylor and that whole experience."

"Channel 4 helped me take my first steps down a new path," she says. "I've never worked on anything as big, serious and important as this project."

The experience was "a baptism of fire" but ultimately cathartic, she says: "Channel 4 supported me through it all, whether it was people to speak to, days off, or help easing into uncomfortable issues. I'd never done a documentary before, so it was intense but I'm totally hooked now."

Growing up, Yinka didn't see many people like her on television. "I always thought TV was reserved for the glossy and glamorous," she says. "People of colour and women are part of the rich and diverse fabric of society. Hopefully seeing me on screen will resonate with other people too."

She hopes this is the start of an exciting new chapter in her life. "Radio is great for telling stories, and it's an honour to broadcast to millions every day, but it's anonymous," she says. "With TV, you get to go out into the world and experience life rather than being in a studio."

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