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THE CHANNEL 4 CREATIVE CONTRACT

The Basics

- We believe the relationship between Channel 4 and producers is key to the channel's success. We want it to be a genuine creative partnership.
- We want you to bring us your best and most innovative ideas because you are confident that working with us will be rewarding and collaborative and allow you to produce your best work. We always want to be the place that takes risks on ideas where others wouldn't.
- Our Commissioners are all creative and skilled but inevitably have different levels of commissioning and programme making experience. We will introduce a new, comprehensive Commissioning Editor Training Programme to ensure that new Commissioners can hit the ground running. Existing teams will be given bespoke training and we will regularly seek your feedback on how we could do better.

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Development

- We will run a regular programme of briefings with our Commissioning team both in London and around the Nations & Regions. We will publicise these in advance and regularly update our Commissioning briefs on the Channel 4 website – so that you know what we are looking for.
- Our goal is to make programmes that reflect and speak to all of the UK. We will share more audience insight and performance data to help you focus developments strategically to reach your target audience.
- As we move towards being a multi-platform, digital publisher/broadcaster, we want to work with you to develop the right mix of content for each platform to give your show the greatest possible impact.
- We know you want quick and clear answers and feedback. We commit to answering your emails or calls in a rapid and timely fashion. Wherever possible, we will respond to your proposals within 10 working days with an indication of next steps. In scripted genres, it may take longer to give more detailed feedback and all Commissioning Editors sometimes have TX-critical issues to deal with that may prevent them responding as promptly as they would like. We will always keep you updated about the progress of your idea.

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Development continued

- We want to have an ongoing creative conversation with producers and appreciate you will want to do that in different ways. To ensure that meetings are as productive and creative as possible, we welcome you sending top lines or paragraphs before a pitch.
- We know meetings may require considerable travel planning and preparation. We will not cancel meetings with less than 24 hours' notice except in exceptional circumstances.
- We want our Commissioners to champion the programmes they love within the channel, and producers to feel respected and empowered to deliver their creative vision. All genre teams have the power to independently offer funded development.
- We use development funding to demonstrate a commitment to your idea, to pay for your time and effort, and to buy ourselves exclusive time to explore the project's viability.

- We commit to being better at saying yes and no more quickly. We recognise that the market is competitive and that it affects your business when we don't get back to you quickly. Where we have funded development and we've decided we don't want to proceed, we will tell you as soon as we can.
- We will reduce the maximum period of time before a project can go into turnaround from nine to six months in non-scripted genres. For developments of under £20k that we choose not to commission, we won't try to recover the money if you place it elsewhere.

Commissioning and Contracting

- In general, the process of getting from an editorial green light to a signed contract is taking too long. We want to work with you to make it quicker. We are currently reviewing all aspects of the process from agreeing the Editorial Specification to issuing of contracts. It's important to take the time to get Ed Specs right, but we'd welcome your feedback on how we can speed up the process. Our target for 2019 is to agree Ed Specs for most projects within one month, so we can issue contracts quicker.
- We want you to feel you are making programmes for a fair and realistic price, and we want to agree on our creative ambitions from the start. In return, we expect you to pick up the cost of overages, like overruns in the edit, save for exceptional circumstances or when the original editorial specification is changed at our request.
- In order to achieve our shared ambitions, it may be necessary for us to discuss different financing options with you. We welcome hearing new and innovative proposals for how to finance your creative ideas.

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Production

- We want to work together to make the production a creative and enjoyable process, which delivers great content for the channel that you and your teams are proud of.
- We expect our suppliers to meet the terms of their contract and, in particular, that Executive Producers will always review their team's work and have real input before the Commissioning Editor is asked to view material.
- In return, we expect Commissioners to be hands-on in supporting your show but to avoid micro-managing. It's a fine balance and requires good communication on both sides. We will encourage our Commissioning teams to make sure that their expectations are clearly outlined – from casting sign offs to viewing schedules – in a 'kick off' meeting. We ask that you also clearly outline your expectations and what sort of support you'd like in order for you to do your best work. And if you think we ever cross the line, please let us know. Our genre Heads of Department will always welcome an open conversation about this.

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- We know multiple sets of notes can be counter-productive and will endeavour to speak as one as a channel when giving you feedback.
- If we have asked for material changes that differ to the Ed Spec we will take responsibility for them in terms of the budget where the cost is approved in advance. In return, if work is not of an acceptable quality at first viewing we reserve the right to ask you to bear the cost of addressing it.

Our Shared Success

- We want your businesses to flourish and achieve global success with Channel 4 as a partner, and we'll do all we can to help achieve that.
- We always want to receive your candid feedback on how you find working with us, and how we can work together most creatively and productively.

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