



First Cuts Strand



First Cuts exist to launch the careers of new factual directors with this career-defining strand.

Background

Prospective directors need to show that they are hugely creative and are passionate about pushing the bar of factual TV and making programmes that audiences will want to watch - and who indies know they can hire with confidence and want to work with in the future. The bar for First Cuts has never been higher or the opportunities more exciting.

We are matching director with ideas and production companies so directors should feel comfortable in sending across CVs, work samples and coming in for a coffee to introduce themselves (eligibility details below). Equally, indies should feel free to pitch ideas without talent attached.



What are we **looking** for?



There is a real opportunity to be inventive and showcase more constructed television in the strand but this also means that more than ever the films must have a seriously meaty narrative and compelling characters at their core.

The subject, tone and title should demand to be seen and feel like a treat rather than homework to watch. The subjects can be edgier but there is definitely a desire for entertainment so not all doom and gloom, please! The strand has very real ambitions for a 10pm slot – if they are good enough, they can play earlier.

The ambition is for the strand to showcase a variety of different factual approaches – we are obviously keen to see classic observational documentaries and access pieces but we are also very much on the lookout for entertaining formats, inventive cross-genre approaches and new takes on retrospective narratives or how we use on-screen talent - but each hour in its finished form should demonstrate a confident directorial perspective.

The films must have a strong UK connection or relevance. They should put the viewer in a privileged position either through access or insight, and aim to have viewers tweeting about their incredible content and beautiful craft – the slot is designed for new directors to make their mark and so the films should get people talking and demand to be seen.

First Cut Directors

Traditionally, First Cut directors have been Assistant Producers who have worked on a variety of factual programming or be recent film school graduates - we are looking for very best new directing talent.

The standard for entry is now typically at the level of a highly reliable DV Director with great references from established execs and series producers. They should be able to prove that they can work independently and understand the importance of great characters and narrative. Filmmakers without industry experience will be expected to showcase their narrative and technical flair through their own body of work .

New directors should be able to articulate and explain their vision and approach to an idea or give a distinct sense of what they would bring to a project. Ideally new FC directors will have worked closely with established directors and producers. Having spent years learning their craft on other people's programmes are now straining at the leash to approach their first hour on their own terms and with their very own directorial style.



The Boy Who Can't Stop Dancing

Who is eligible?

- This is not an entry level pitch. A commitment and passion for television documentary needs to be clearly evident and ideally also experience of working in television production at the DV Director/ Senior AP level. You must be UK-based, and be able to take up a freelance placement with a production company of Channel 4's choice.
- Anyone working within factual television who has not directed their own documentary hour on network television – for clarification this means BBC, (including BBC3), ITV, Channel 4 and Five – is eligible.
- Because of their house-style nature, those with director credits for single episodes of returnable series such as 24 Hours in A&E may be considered.
- Directors who have directed hours for a regional broadcaster such as BBC Northern Ireland or Scotland but have not had their film broadcast across a network are also eligible.
- Recent film school graduates or those from alternative background such as editors or photographers will be considered but they will need to prove their passion and technical skill to the same standard as those who are more experienced or conventional backgrounds.
- Applicants who are applying for directors' schemes for other terrestrials should not apply.